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Journal of Criminal Justice

Volume 37, Issue 2, March–April 2009, Pages 174-179

Crimes of the Big Four motorcycle gangs

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2009.02.005>

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Abstract

Motorcycle clubs (MCs) can be divided into conventional and deviant clubs. The most deviant clubs are those known as 1 percent or outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMGs). The Big Four OMGs are the Hells Angels MC, the Outlaws MC, the Bandidos MC, and the Pagans MC. The first three, although American based, have international chapters and are the largest motorcycle gangs in the world. All four are known for their criminal activity and violence toward each other. There has been little scholarly research on these secret and dangerous motorcycle clubs. This research, utilizing a LexisNexis newspaper search classified the criminal activity of each of the Big Four gangs using a biker criminality typology developed by Quinn and Koch. The study found that the members of the Big Four gangs are involved in a wide range of criminal activities with the most common being ongoing enterprises/organized crime such as drugs and weapons trafficking. There were also numerous instances of spontaneous and planned violent acts against rivals and others. The study added to the limited body of knowledge on these deviant groups and suggests further areas of research.



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