

The Evolution and Influence of Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs in the American West

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts

with a

Major in History

in the

College of Graduate Studies

University of Idaho

by

Anthony M. Saia

Major Professor: Ian Chambers, Ph.D.

Committee Members: Rebecca Jager, Ph.D.; Joseph DeAngelis, Ph.D.

Department Administrator: Sean Quinlan, Ph.D.

May 2015

Authorization to Submit Thesis

This thesis of Anthony M. Saia, submitted for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in History and titled “The Evolution and Influence of Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs in the American West,” has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates below, is now granted to submit final copies to the College of Graduate Studies for approval.

Major Professor: _____ Date: _____
Ian Chambers, Ph.D.

Committee Members: _____ Date: _____
Rebecca Jager, Ph.D.

_____ Date: _____
Joseph DeAngelis, Ph.D.

Department Administrator: _____ Date: _____
Sean Quinlan, Ph.D.

Abstract

In American society, there is a romanticized yet violent view of who and what outlaw motorcycle clubs are. The aim of this research is to confirm or refute some myths that surround outlaw motorcycle groups. In addition, this research is an attempt to explore how outlaw motorcycle clubs have been influenced and have influenced by the American West. I will explore these ideas by examining outlaw clubs and their creation, their exclusionary principles (through race and ethnicity, and sex), as well as explore the outlaw motorcycle clubs' current image in today's media.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the University of Idaho and the History Department for assisting me in achieving my academic goals thus far. In addition, I would like to thank the Winkler Memorial Scholarship fund for providing me with the assistance needed to focus my time of my schoolwork.

Dedication

To my darling love and our little monkey: You are my everything.

Table of Contents

Authorization Page	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedication	v
Table of Contents	vi
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Start Your Engines	3
The Creation of the Machine.....	3
The Use of the Machine.....	13
The Formation of Motorcycle Clubs.....	19
Chapter Two: The Transformation	27
The Rise of the Outlaw	27
Cultural Influence On Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs.....	32
Women In the 1%er World.....	37
Sonny Barger, Hells Angels and The End of Innocence.....	42
Chapter Three: Exclusion In the 1%er World	51
Race and Exclusion In OMCs.....	51
Emergence of African American and Multi-Racial OMCs.....	57
Determining Whiteness.....	63
Exclusion of Women	68
Chapter Four: OMCs and Mass Media	70
OMCs In the Headlines, Books and Novels	70
OMCs In Music	74
OMCs On the Screen, Big and Small.....	83
Conclusion	95
References	97

Introduction

The noise. The noise that causes on-lookers to turn their heads and stare. The deep, throaty rumble spewing from the two-cylinder heart of a motorcycle is the culprit. The rider, perched on top of the iron horse grips the handlebars confidently before flicking their wrist, akin to spurring a stallion into picking up the pace. This romantic image is a symbol of freedom, but also a symbol of ingenuity by the human being. Whether it is parked in the driveway gleaming in the sun, or out on the open road, the motorcycle is a truly magnificent machine.

Despite the romanticism that surrounds this engineering marvel, questions loom as to where this two-wheeled chariot of fire came from. In North American culture, the ultimate machine of freedom has been explored by authors such as Brock Yates, Herbert Wagner, and Paul Garson to name a few, but in the course of their research, there seems to be a gap between the origin and creation of the machine and the reasons for why the motorcycle simultaneously became an extension of freedom, exclusion and anarchy.

During the course of research, the goal is to explore the origins of the motorcycle in order to answer the larger question of why this machine became so engrained in American culture in the first half of the nineteenth century. In addition, there will be exploration as to why some motorcycle riding groups evolved into what would become outlaw motorcycle clubs. In American society, there is a romanticized yet violent view of who and what outlaw motorcycle clubs are. The aim of this research is to confirm or deny some of the myths that surround outlaw motorcycle groups. In addition, this

research aims to explore how outlaw motorcycle clubs have been influenced and have influenced the American West.

In mainstream media, we have seen the American outlaw romanticized in literature, music and film, a phenomenon explored by Paul Kooistra, department chair and professor at Furman University in his book *Criminals As Heroes*, author Frank Prassel in his book *The Great American Outlaw*, as well as Richard Slotkin, author of *Gunfighter Nation*, and professor of English and American Studies at Wesleyan University.

More specifically, investigations and autobiographical materials have been written about outlaw motorcycle clubs (OMCs) and members. Of those authors, I have chosen to include work by authors on both sides of the law in order to gain perspective and information about OMCs. Ultimately, what I am aiming to discuss is how and why we as a culture are perpetuating the outlaw myth surrounding these organizations. In doing so, I am aiming to fill a niche and make connections within the historiography by discussing the development of motorcycles and riders before looking at those who choose to participate in OMCs. Following this there is an examination of exclusionary principles at play regarding race, ethnicity and sex. Finally, the end chapter will provide a scope of outlaw motorcycle clubs and how they are perceived in media from past to present with an investigation into literature, music, film and television.

Chapter One: Start Your Engines

The Creation of the Machine

The motorcycle has not always been the two-wheeled marvel it is now. Ironically, the motorcycle conceptually started out as one of the least menacing modes of transportation. The parent of the motorcycle was the non-engine powered, manually operated bicycle. For some, the correlation between the two is odd because some of the first bicycles were esthetically different from the motorcycle. The first bicycle started out with an over-sized front wheel with a much smaller back wheel. Initially a man named Eugène Meyer, a resident of Paris, first created these "high wheel" bicycles, also termed Penny-farthing in France in 1869.¹ The use of the bicycle was a replacement for the horse, during the latter end of the Second French Republic. During this time, the high-wheeled bikes were also termed "boneshakers" due to the uncomfortable ride.² This discomfort was due to the disproportionate wheel sizes, but also from the rudimentary shock absorber located underneath the seat that may have caused more harm than comfort for the rider.³ Despite these design flaws, the Penny-farthing was a much faster than earlier bicycles. The larger wheel also gave the rider better maneuverability through the rudimentary cobblestone streets in Nineteenth Century Europe.

¹ The "Penny-farthing" name came from the British penny and farthing coins. These coins differed in size, much like the wheels of the high-wheeled bicycle.

--- David V. Herlihy, *Bicycle: the History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 155-200.

² Herbert Wagner, "The World's First Motorcycle, On Steam Velocipedes, Motocycles, and the Motor Cycle," *The Antique Motorcycle*, Summer 2011, 26-38.

³ See Figure 1.1. "Antique Bicycle" (photograph), *Antique Bicycle: Penny farthing parts*, accessed January 20, 2014, <http://antiquebicyclecollection.blogspot.com>.



Figure 1.1: This is the “Penny-farthing” bicycle. Note the disproportionate wheels and “leaf spring” style shock absorber underneath the seat.

The Penny-farthing made its way to America but was quickly replaced by a newer model of the bicycle. In 1878, Founder of Pope Manufacturing Company Albert Pope began designing and manufacturing the Columbia bicycle in Boston, Massachusetts.⁴ Pope initially bought all patents pertaining to bicycles in America thus monopolizing the market and amassing money earned by royalties.⁵ With this money, Pope was capable of advancing bicycles exponentially in the late 1880s. Initially, bikes were made from wrought iron frames but Pope found that he could use hollow steel tube frames to create a lighter weight bicycle.⁶

⁴ Herlihy, 157

⁵ Herlihy, 182

⁶ Herilhy, 183



Figure 1.2: The Columbia “safety” bicycle from Pope Manufacturing Company.

Later, following the purchasing of patents, Pope developed the “safety bike” that would transform the bicycle forever.⁷ This bicycle’s shape would give way to the structure seen in bicycles of present day, and subsequently, a very similar structure to the modern motorcycle as well. Unlike the Penny-farthing, these bicycles were much easier to control because the rider could place their feet on the ground when coming to a stop. Furthermore, safety bicycles were quicker, particularly for the rider who was trying to ascend hills. According to David V. Herlihy, author of *Bicycle: The History*, Penny-farthing bicycles were quick, but they were not able to navigate up hills very well.⁸

⁷ See Figure 1.2, “1891 Columbia Light Roadster” (photograph), The Online Bicycle Museum, accessed August 26, 2014, http://www.oldbike.eu/centurycolumbia/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/1891_Columbia_Light_Roadster_10.jpg

⁸ Herlihy, 156

Ultimately, these later models developed by Pope allowed for a replacement to the horse as a mode of transportation in cities but were also used for work purposes and also for leisurely activities. Not only did the creation of more stable bicycles stimulate the economy, but those that could afford to participate in bicycle riding for leisure also began to participate in bicycling as a sport in the 1860s in Europe and America. Sporting events such as bicycle racing became commonplace in North America and Europe. Racing competitions led to the first world champion bicycle races held in Europe in 1893, as well as the Tour de France.⁹ The Tour de France has become an annual bicycle-racing event that still continues to this day. Bicycle races were extremely popular once the safety bicycle was invented and during this time in the United States bicycle races were so popular that they drew more spectators than any other sport, including baseball.¹⁰

In addition to its use in sporting events, in the 1890s, the bicycle was one of the most popular modes of transportation. The condition of roads made it difficult for horses and horse-drawn carriages to navigate. Despite the dangers of riding a bicycle on such poor roads, travel became more practical. Moreover, travel became less difficult to arrange for an individual who did not have a horse or horse-drawn carriage, thus creating more independence at the turn of the century.

In 1885, with the popularity of bicycles, also came the creation of a new model of bicycle: one retrofitted with an internal combustion engine. Named motorcycles, the converted bicycles still had pedals but were used for pacing at racing events as well.

⁹ Christopher S. Thompson, *The Tour de France: a Cultural History*, Updated ed. (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2008), 8

¹⁰ Peter Nye, *Hearts of Lions: the History of American Bicycle Racing* (New York: W W Norton & Co Inc, 1988)

Despite the primary use of the motorcycle as a pace bike, the creators Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach sold their creation to the public.¹¹

These motorcycles, in the racing world, were used to keep pace for bicyclists.¹² The cyclists would use the “pacer” as a way to shield themselves from wind and would also allow for drafting – a way to pick up more speed in the velodromes cyclists raced in.¹³



Figure 1.3: A pace bike and cyclist in a velodrome, France, 1897.

¹¹ Wagner, 37

---- The term motorcycle was adopted to term anything that was a horseless carriage. Keith Gill, “Chicago Times-Herald Race of 1895,” *Chicago Times-Herald*, November 28, 1895, accessed April 28, 2014, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/2380.html>.

¹² See Figure 1.3, “Anzani Pace Bike” (photograph), The Vintagent, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://thevintagent.blogspot.com/2008/12/board-track-racing-on-film.html>.

¹³ Wagner, 37

The step forward from pedal power to motorized power happened when inventors were toying with the idea of the motorized bicycle. In 1895, Daimler built a motorcycle out of wood with a single cylinder engine. Unlike the motorcycles created and used for pacing in bicycle races, this contraption was made for legitimate transportation purposes. Although Daimler earned credit for the creation of the motorcycle, like many great discoveries, numerous engineers seemed to be inspired by the same idea around the same time. It was the small company of Hilderbrand and Wolfmüller of France who would invent the first production motorcycle.¹⁴ From there, multiple motorcycle manufacturers started to create their machines in the United States, England, Germany, and France. In the United States, the two most notable motorcycle manufacturers were the Harley-Davidson Company and the Indian Motorcycle Company.¹⁵

Following the creation of the pace bike motorcycle came the inception of one of the first motorcycle manufacturers in the United States. In 1901, George M. Hendee and Oscar Hedstrom, who were both former cyclists, formed the Hendee Manufacturing Company.¹⁶ When the company opened, the duo began creating and selling more advanced motorcycles and adopted the name Indian for all their creations.¹⁷ After the creation of the Indian motorcycle came the most famed motorcycle of our time: Harley-Davidson.

¹⁴ Roland Brown, *History of the Motorcycle* (Bath, England: Parragon Publishing, 2005), 10-11.

¹⁵ They are not only the most notable but are still leading motorcycle production companies in the United States.

¹⁶ Tod Rafferty, *The Indian: the History of a Classic American Motorcycle* (Philadelphia: Courage Books, 2001), 8.

¹⁷ Rafferty, 8

In 1901, 21-year-old William Harley and 20-year-old Arthur Davidson decided to build a motor-powered two-wheeler. Arthur promised another brother, Walter a ride on it when he came into town for a wedding. Little did Walter realize that he would have to put it together himself before riding it, and he would get caught up in their dream. In 1903, working in their spare time, the three friends built three identical black cycles using single cylinder engines modeled after the first single cylinder combustion engine created by Marquis Jules Félix Philippe Albert de Dion, in Europe in 1883. The De Dion, Bouton et Trépardoux company, founded in Paris in 1883, started as an automobile company, however, when the company lost Charles Trépardoux as a partner, De Dion and Georges Bouton created the De Dion-Bouton Motorette Company in New York in 1901, likely exposing the infantile Harley-Davidson company to the single cylinder motor created by De Dion.¹⁸ In those early models, a leather belt stretched between the motor's drive shaft and the rear wheel to power the motorcycle. This style, though rudimentary, was the basis for future Harley-Davidson motorcycles; however, it was the styling that is the most prominent. The aunt of the Davidson brothers, Janet, created the original Harley-Davidson logo seen on the fuel tank of the first models. Shortly after the initial models were created, the general public became interested in owning their own machines, leading to an influx of orders. Despite the demand for their machines, the Harley-Davidson Company built their first motorcycles

¹⁸ Ian Ward, ed., *The World of Motorcycles*, vol. 3, *Carb/cycle* (London: Orbis, 1977), 510-4. --- See Figure 1.4, "De-Dion-Bouton Single Cylinder Motor" (photograph), Yesterdays, accessed February 28, 2015, <http://www.yesterdays.nl/excelsior-1912-500cc-p-2163.html>.

with a very simple style.¹⁹ Harley-Davidson's very first "factory" was a wooden 10' by 15' shed that stood in the back yard of the Davidson family home.²⁰

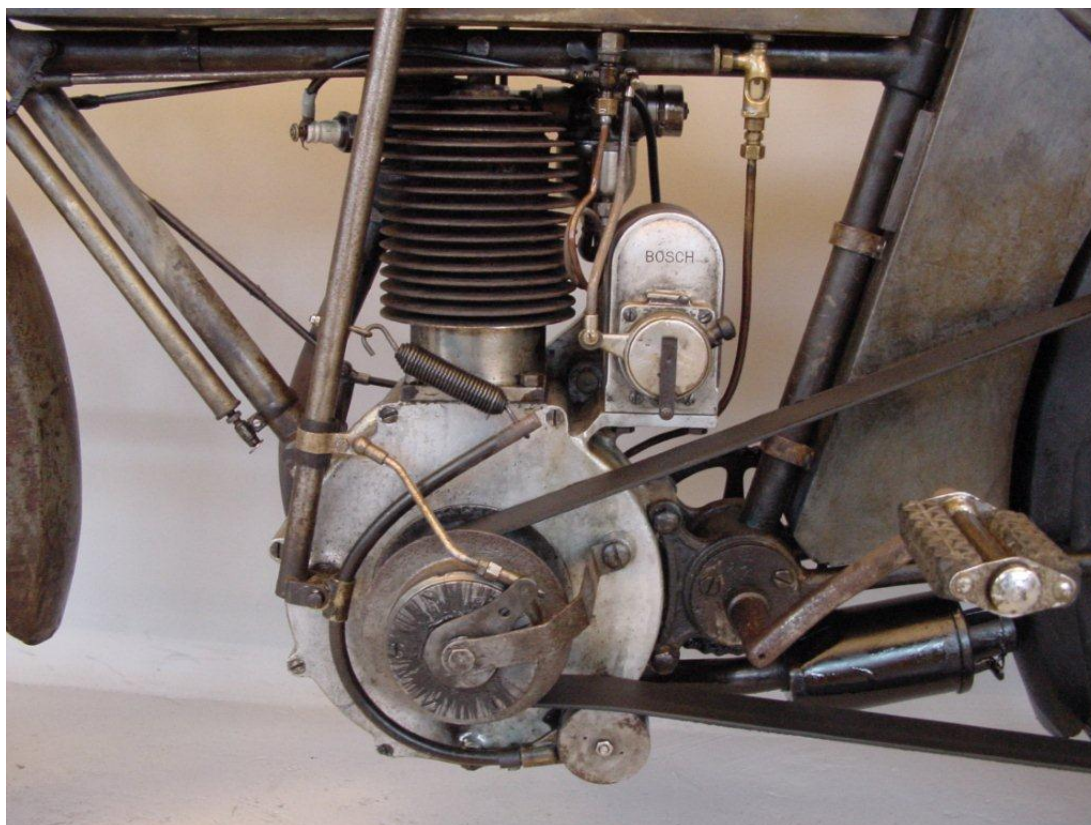


Figure 1.4: An early De Dion-Bouton single-cylinder engine.

As the company grew, the men began running out of room, and what started out as projects in the shed, expanded into the backyard of the Davidson home.²¹ In 1907, the business was so successful that the founders brought in the third Davidson brother, William A. Davidson and opted to incorporate the business. That year, the company

¹⁹ The Davidson family consisted of William A. Davidson, Walter Davidson, Sr., and Arthur Davidson.

---- Coincidentally, in 1903, Henry Ford founded the Ford Motor Company and built his model A.
---- Herbert Wagner, *Classic Harley-Davidson, 1903-1941* (Osceola, WI: Motorbooks International, 1999), 13.

²⁰ See Figure 1.5, "First Harley-Davidson Factory" (photograph), Harley-Davidson Museum, accessed April 10, 2015, http://www.harley-davidson.com/content/h-d/en_US/home/museum/explore/hd-history/1900.html.

²¹ Wagner, 13.

completed around 250 motorcycles and the company was valued at \$14,200.²² Steadily, their production increased so much so that the Davidson brothers and Harley were able to fully devote themselves to their new company in 1907.



Figure 1.5: The small shed Harley-Davidson started from in Milwaukee, Wisconsin ca. 1903.

In 1909, Harley-Davidson had started experiments with a twin cylinder motor prototype: the 45-Degree V-Twin.²³ The single cylinder engines mentioned earlier had used what was called a vacuum operated intake valve, which didn't work well with two cylinders on one carburetor, so the company put the mechanically operated intake valves on the motor, created the first successful twin engine. Initially the Harley-Davidson's displacement was comparable to the Indian motorcycle, however, with this increase in size, Harley-Davidson began to distinguish themselves. In addition to the larger engine, the machines had a loop-frame design that was reminiscent of the

²² Willie G. Davidson, *100 Years of Harley-Davidson* (Boston: Bulfinch, 2002), 47.

²³ Davidson, 26

bicycle.²⁴ This evolution moved motorcycles out of the motorized bicycle category and helped define what the modern motorcycle would become in later years.²⁵

In 1913, another change came for the Harley-Davidson. This was the first year for the chain drive. The motorcycles now had two chains because the motorcycle had bicycle pedals to pedal and start it. Reversing the bicycle pedals, much like typical safety bicycles, operated the brake. The machine was capable of speeds of over 60 miles per hour. The following year, consumers began seeing the company focusing on comfort for the rider with the 7D model. 1914 was the first year of the footboard so; the rider did not have to rest their feet on the pedals. In addition, the gearshift was moved to the top of the gas tank. This handle was used to operate a two-speed transmission located in the back axle. The transmission in the 7D was only used for one year before the machine earned the nickname “The Silent Gray Fellow” because each of the 7Ds produced were painted gray until 1918. In addition, the motorcycle ran quietly for their time, unlike the Harley-Davidsons of today. 1915 marked some major changes for Harley-Davidson motorcycles. The bike now had a three-speed transmission and it came with a battery, electric headlights, taillights and horn. The handle installed on the side of the primary case served as an auxiliary hand clutch. The rider still had to use the pedals to start. Rather than having the rider remove their left foot, which was actually the starter to use the foot clutch, the rider had to move a hand clutch in and out until the motorcycle started. Then, the rider had to employ the use of the foot clutch so that their left hand could then control the spark of the distributor, horn and steering. With

²⁴ Davidson, 26.

²⁵ More recently Harley-Davidson motorcycles still contain the loop frame design, but the engines have increased exponentially in size at a whopping 1800 cubic centimeters.

these innovations from Harley-Davidson, it was apparent that the transformation of the motorcycle in the United States from a bi-pedaled, self-powered machine to a more reliable, faster machine was well under way.

The Use of the Machine

With the creation of a more reliable motorcycle and larger engines from Harley-Davidson, and subsequently, Indian, came the new sport of motorcycle racing. Akin to bicycle racing, motorcycle racing began to spur a desire by Americans to experiment with their machines, innovating the build of the motorcycle, shedding unnecessary weight in order to gain an edge over competition. Since the engines were starting to become larger, the machine's power increased creating a tougher, faster, and ultimately more reliable motorcycle. By 1914, it was obvious that the motorcycle had transformed from bicycles with engines to a machine in their own category despite the fact that motorcycles still maintained bicycle elements such as the seat and suspension. Despite the rigidity of both bicycle elements, they were not removed from the machines when the motorcycle was needed for the war effort and the United States' entrance into World War I.

Until WWI, the Hendee Manufacturing Company and the Indian were seen as the largest motorcycle manufacturer in the United States. Once the United States made the choice to enter World War I, the US government opted to purchase Indian motorcycles to assist with the war effort.²⁶ Though the Indian was the exclusive choice of the government, Harley-Davidson produced motorcycles for the war effort as well.

²⁶ Rafferty, 6

Harley-Davidson devoted its efforts to military production, producing approximately 8,000 motorcycles during World War I. During the war, the paint changed from gray to an olive drab, a shade that continued for some years after the war. Conservative as always, the Army would not accept electric lights, so the motorcycles produced during the war had carbide gas headlights. A canister located underneath the handlebars contained carbide and water. To make the light function, the rider had to open a valve and allow water to drip slowly onto the carbide. The chemical reaction would create an acetylene gas that would illuminate the headlight. William S. Harley personally inspected the Army issued motorcycles before they were sent to the troops. Corporal Roy Holtz was the first American to enter Germany riding a Harley-Davidson November 11, 1918.²⁷



Figure 1.6: Corporal Roy Holtz, the first American to ride a Harley-Davidson into Germany, 1918.

²⁷ See Figure 1.6, "Roy Holtz riding into Germany" (photograph), Harley-Davidson Museum, accessed April 10, 2015, http://www.harley-davidson.com/content/h-d/en_US/home/museum/explore/hd-history/1910.html.

Much as the bicycle had begun to replace the horse as a mode of transportation, the motorcycle had become that replacement for the bicycle.²⁸ Unlike the bicycle, the motorcycle became a mainstay for the U.S. military during World War I, transforming the U.S. Cavalry from using actual horse power, and instead, increased the use of motorcycles to transport mail, supplies and soldiers from place to place instead of having to use cars since there were locations that cars could not navigate, but motorcycles could. In fact, the motorcycle was championed so much that it was attributed as one of the determining factors in how the United States carried out successful campaigns in WWI.²⁹



Figure 1.7: Used as an advertisement and propaganda image, this poster attempted to illustrate the use of the Indian Motorcycle following the end of WWI, 1918.

²⁸ Though some bicycles were still used during World War I.

²⁹ See Figure 1.7, “1918 Indian Powerplus Motorcycle Advertisement” (advertisement), The Selvedge Yard, accessed October 23, 2014, <http://selvedgeyard.com/2009/11/28/indian-americas-first-motorcycle-the-golden-powerplus-era>.

Unfortunately for the Hendee Manufacturing Company and Indian motorcycles, the exclusivity of the use of their machines during the war saw the company lose many of the dealerships because they were deprived of stock. Though they were building motorcycles for the United States government. Subsequently, dealerships closed leaving Harley-Davidson to fill the niche that Indian had left. In 1912, Harley-Davidson supplied this increased need by building a larger facility on Juneau Avenue in Milwaukee.³⁰ This allowed the company to expand and create motorcycles for consumer use while providing the military with the motorcycles they needed to assist in the war effort.

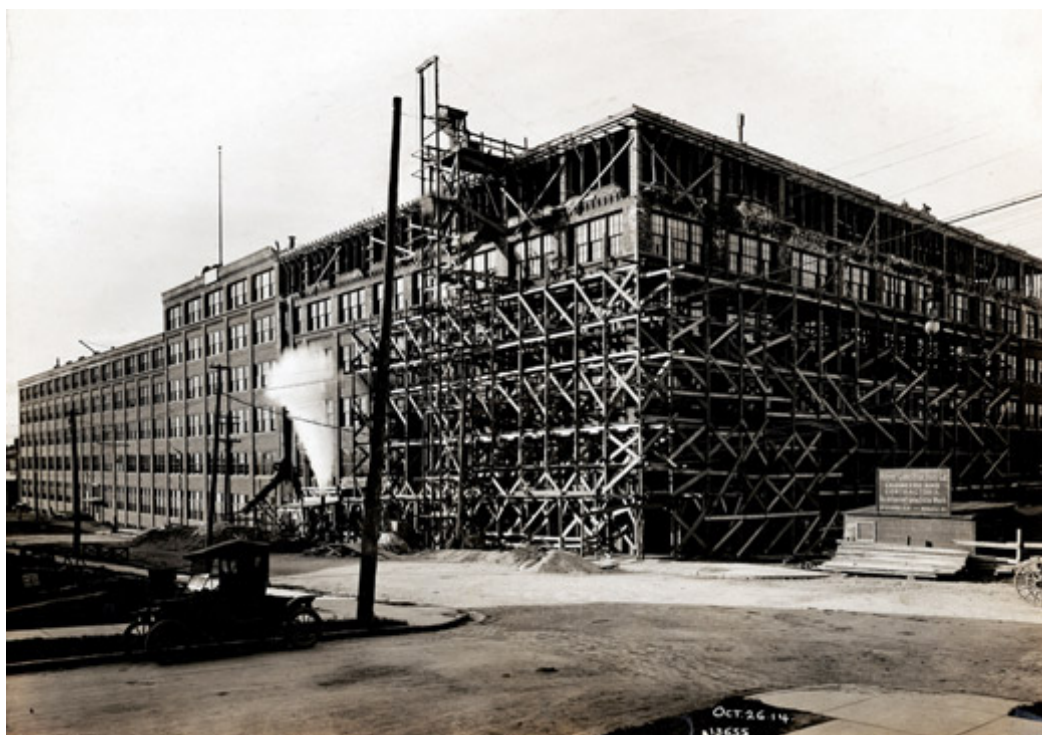


Figure 1.8: Main factory building at Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, under construction in 1912, the same year Harley-Davidson would expand their dealer network into Japan.

³⁰ "Harley-Davidson Timeline," 2015, accessed January 30, 2015, http://www.harley-davidson.com/content/h-d/en_US/home/museum/explore/hd-history/1910.html.

---- See Figure 1.8, "Main Factory Building At Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, Under Construction" (photograph), Harley-Davidson Museum, accessed April 10, 2015, http://www.harley-davidson.com/content/h-d/en_US/home/museum/explore/hd-history/1910.html.

With Indian falling to the number two spot in the American motorcycle market, Harley-Davidson became the largest manufacturer following World War I.³¹ Although Harley-Davidson also sold machines to the United States government, it was Walter Davidson who would prove capable of keeping Harley-Davidson away from early financial issues. According to William A. Davidson, Walter Davidson was a world traveler and by the 1920s, Harley-Davidson had already established a network of dealerships in 67 different countries around the world.³² Had Walter Davidson not sought to expand the business in the early years of the company's creation, it is likely that the Harley-Davidson Company would have succumbed to the wrath of the Great Depression like many of their other competitors in the United States.

In addition to the worldwide dealer network by Walter, the company began employing useful techniques in order to assist in their growth. The company chose to create an extensive array of corporate signage, provided manuals for all models of motorcycles they created, offered instruction and schools to train certified repairmen, while also creating guidelines in accounting practices for dealerships.³³ The Harley-Davidson company developed the belief that in order to be a successful dealer of their product, the person selling their motorcycles needed to have two qualities about them: They needed to be a true motorcycle enthusiast and the dealer also had to have a keen business sense.³⁴

³¹ While the Indian continued to manufacture motorcycles up until 1953, the company ceased production altogether until the company returned in 2006.

³² "Harley Davidson History," Harley Davidson USA, accessed April 28, 2014, http://www.harley-davidson.com/en_US/Content/Pages/HD_Museum/explore/hd-history.html.

³³ Jack Supple, *100 Years of Harley-Davidson Advertising* (Boston: Bulfinch, 2003), 5-6.

³⁴ Supple, 7.

The development of Harley-Davidson did not rely on internal factors only. Prior to WWI, motorcycles were much more affordable when compared to the purchase of a car. The cost of a pre-Ford vehicle was extremely high when compared to the motorcycle due to the complex parts that were being manufactured for those vehicles. Improvements were being made on car mechanics. Engines and carburetor design evolved, while transmissions began to shift into a multi-speed gear ratio. Manufacturers realized that mechanical brakes were needed, and solid frames were developed to make the vehicle more rigid. In addition, suspension systems became much more sophisticated, allowing for better performing vehicles. Despite all of these improvements to the car ended up costing the manufacturer, and subsequently the consumer a lot more money. In fact, by the middle of the 1920s, the cost of a smaller cubic centimeter Harley-Davidson or Indian was around \$275 and a full-size or "big-twin" model was roughly \$375, and the price of a Ford Model T was \$545.³⁵ With the climbing costs for those vehicles and the decline of the economy in the 1920s, only two American motorcycle manufacturers survived the stock market crash and Great Depression: The Harley-Davidson Motor Company and the Indian Motorcycle Company, which in 1925, changed their name from the Hendee Manufacturing Company.³⁶

Following the economic downturn in the 1920s, the early 1930s saw a number of motorcycle manufacturers increase in the United States and Europe. The main reason for the increase was that production was being intensified in order to satiate the want

³⁵ Thomas C. Bolfert, *The Big Book of Harley-Davidson: Official Publication by Harley-Davidson, Inc.*, New, ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Motorbooks Intl, 1991), 94.

---- The "big twin" was Harley-Davidson and was known as the Superpowered Twin, which developed 18 horsepower.

³⁶ Rafferty, 50.

for motorcycles for personal use. Governments had seen the usefulness of the motorcycle in the First World War and knew that having motorcycles available would prove beneficial. Almost ten years after the increase in production of motorcycles, America found itself in WWII. Much like WWI, the United States military called on the use of the motorcycle as a Calvary to aid in the war effort. With Franklin Delano Roosevelt's motivation to bolster the military industrial complex, funding for motorcycle manufacturing companies was readily available. Ultimately, the use of motorcycles in WWII seemed to further integrate the machine into human culture.

The Formation of Motorcycle Clubs

Following World War I, and subsequently World War II, motorcycle clubs began to form. These clubs, much like bicycle clubs in the early 1900s, were used for the purpose of strengthening communities with communal rides, the exchange of information and parts, and general camaraderie and bringing together people with like-minded interests. In addition, these clubs also spawned competitions, particularly with races, and in the western United States, hill climbs.

The creation of the first motorcycle club can be traced to New York following the creation of the Harley-Davidson in 1903. New York City, the location of early bicycle races, also started hosting motorcycle races. These races drew like-minded individuals together and spawned the Yonkers Motorcycle Club, which according to the club's history started as a bicycle club.³⁷ Under George Eller, the club transformed into a

³⁷ "Yonkers Motorcycle Club History," Yonkers Motorcycle Club, accessed April 28, 2014, <http://yonkersmotorcycleclub.net/>

motorcycle organization, therefore creating the oldest motorcycle club in the world.³⁸ This club, along with others, started competing regularly. Following World War I and II, veterans were returning from the service and began migrating to California. Some of these servicemen were avid motorcycle riders prior to the war and chose to begin holding races in California following their tour of duty. On October 29, 1921, motorcycle races started being run simultaneously with automobile races in California, thus, beginning the influence of the eastern United States culture in the West.³⁹

As motorcycle races began to migrate west, it was apparent that Harley-Davidson manufactured some of the fastest machines available. Following the establishment of the Racing Department, Harley-Davidson created a racing team. In 1914, Harley-Davidson dealer and racer William F. Specht, Jr., won the National F.A.M Championship using a stock Harley-Davidson.⁴⁰ Following this win, Harley-Davidson's racing team expanded to include more racers like Lawrence Ray Weishaar of Wichita, Kansas.⁴¹ In 1916, Weishaar began racing for the Harley-Davidson team and in 1920, Harley-Davidson introduced the "hog" mascot.⁴²

³⁸ "Yonkers Motorcycle Club History."

³⁹ *Motorcycle Illustrated*, What Motorcycle Clubs and Riders Are Doing, October 5, 1922, 1, accessed April 28, 2014, https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=ndI_AQAAMAAJ&rdid=book-ndI_AQAAMAAJ&rdot=1.

⁴⁰ *Popular Mechanics* Editorial Board, "Why the 1915 Harley-Davidson Won the National Championship," *Popular Mechanics*, May 1915, 178.

⁴¹ "Ama Motorcycle Hall of Fame | Ray Weishaar," Motorcycle Museum, 2014, accessed April 28, 2014, <http://www.motorcyclemuseum.org/halloffame/detail.aspx?RacerID=59>.

⁴² See Figure 1.9, "Racer Ray Weishaar With Pig Mascot" (photograph), Harley-Davidson Timeline, accessed April 27, 2015, http://www.harley-davidson.com/content/hd/en_US/home/museum/explore/hd-timeline.html.



Figure 1.9: Weishaar with the hog, c. 1920.

When the team won a race, they would take the hog, “Johnny” on a victory lap with the winning rider. Such a lap transpired in the 1920 race in Marion, Indiana, which Weishaar not only won, but also set a new race record. Named the International Championship Motorcycle Road Race, this competition was 200 miles of road racing that lasted almost three hours.⁴³ Despite one stop early in the race, Weishaar set the race record, but also lowered the race record by an astounding 18 minutes, thus further solidifying the Harley-Davidson as an outstanding racing machine.⁴⁴

The sport was not only exciting, but also dangerous. Men like Weishaar, earned a great deal of respect from race-goers, which may have established a streak of masculinity seen in motorcycle clubs later in history. Racing motorcycles at high speeds on a dirt track was not an easy task and more than one racer during this time paid with

⁴³ “Weishaar Victor in Big Labor Day Cycle Race,” *Marion Daily Chronicle*, September 2, 1919.

⁴⁴ “Ama Motorcycle Hall of Fame | Ray Weishaar.”

their life. Ironically, in those early days of racing, though Harley-Davidson sponsored racing teams, the company was not keen on motorcycle races. To them, the danger and mayhem that was brought forth during these races was bad for their brand image.⁴⁵ Over time, the company changed their view on racing when they started gaining more business. They saw the races as a way to get new customers into their dealerships. The company ultimately adopted the idea, "Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday."⁴⁶ In fact, Harley-Davidson's competitors Indian and the lesser-known Excelsior motorcycle soon followed suit carrying the same slogan regarding racing.

Racing was not the only dangerous thing happening in the world of motorcycles though. In Somers, New York in 1931, popularity spread for racers to participate in motorcycle hill climbs. The idea for this event was the rider had to use the motorcycle to ascend a hill as fast as possible. This event was equally if not more dangerous than racing and was physically challenging and exciting. Later, hill climbing also migrated west and ended up in Oakland, California where organizations like the Hill-Climb Hellcats & the Dirt Devils would form.⁴⁷ These events would start to change the machine as well. In the west, the terrain could be less forgiving, and with the advent of larger motorcycles gave way to more weight. Hill climbers began to strip down their bikes and starting experimenting with custom rear sprockets, tire changes and other gear to give them a winning edge over their competition.

⁴⁵ Davidson, 28

⁴⁶ Allan Girdler, *The Harley-Davidson and Indian Wars*, Reprint ed. (publication place: Crestline Books, 2013), 96.

⁴⁷ Interestingly enough, names like these were another facet of biker culture. Though there were car clubs such as the Road Devils and Road Angels founded in 1946 and 1952 respectively, the "evil" imagery seen in the biker clubs were the first to do so.

Non-hill climbing motorcyclists started customizing their bikes too. This trend of customization starting in the west later filtered back east thus establishing a development of influence from the west to the rest of the country in the motorcycle world. In 1941, racing and hill climbing came to an end as the men who were participating were called to serve in the military during World War II. In addition, there was also fuel rationing, so even if people still wanted to race, there simply was not enough fuel justify events like this. Following World War II, fuel rationing came to an end as America saw a large boom in the economy, but as it came to a close, there was also an influx of veterans returning home who found it difficult to assimilate themselves back into civilian society. Some veterans would choose not to attempt to rejoin society in a conventional way. Transforming the idea of motorcycle riding and racing clubs that existed prior to war, men created their own organizations in an effort to reestablish the bonds of masculine camaraderie they had in the military.⁴⁸

Typically, men dominated motorcycle clubs, however, women also sought feminine camaraderie and had a desire to ride. One such woman is Bessie Stringfield.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ This notion is explored throughout the scholarship that exists on outlaw motorcycle clubs. Ultimately, the focus of OMCs outweighs the scope of non-OMCs, but the idea of masculine camaraderie stem from military bonds.

⁴⁹ See Figure 1.10, "Bessie Stringfield" (photograph), American Motorcycle Hall of Fame, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.motorcyclemuseum.org/halloffame/detail.aspx?RacerID=277>



Figure 1.10: Bessie Stringfield posing next to her Harley-Davidson, c. 1946.

Stringfield, born in Jamaica in 1911, came to America and became an orphan at age five.⁵⁰ As Stringfield grew, she became enamored with a motorcycle owned by a woman in her neighborhood. At the age of 16, Stringfield asked the owner, an Irish woman, to give her a chance to ride the motorcycle.⁵¹ This woman granted her request and three years later, Stringfield, now the owner of the motorcycle, began traveling all over the 48 lower states. This travel led Stringfield to be alone on the road a majority of the time. According to Ferrar, Stringfield's faith, both in people and religion got her through many nights. "If you had black skin you could not get a place to stay," Stringfield said.

⁵⁰ Ann Ferrar, *Hear Me Roar: Women, Motorcycles, and the Rapture of the Road* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1996), 21

⁵¹ Ferrar, 22

"I knew the Lord would take care of me and He did. If I found black folks, I'd stay with them. If not, I'd sleep at filling stations on my motorcycle."⁵²

Following Stringfield's tour of the United States, Stringfield felt it was her duty to participate in the forthcoming war-effort in 1941. Stringfield served as a civilian motorcycle dispatch rider for the Army. Stringfield was the only woman in her unit, but she learned skills that would help her later in life.⁵³ Following WWII, Stringfield became a nurse and purchased a house in Miami, Florida. Her love for motorcycle riding stayed and caused her to found the Iron Horse Motorcycle Club.⁵⁴ Initially, like other motorcycle clubs founded after WWII, the Iron Horse Motorcycle Club was created for motorcycle riders to enjoy the camaraderie and participate in sanctioned AMA events such as races and hill climbs. Once, while participating in such a race, Stringfield placed first. After she had removed her helmet, she was denied the win as well as the prize money because she was a woman.⁵⁵ Though the denial of this win details sexism in the motorcycle world, it did not stop Stringfield from riding. Instead, Stringfield drew even more attention to herself by doing stunts on her motorcycle, such as riding while standing on the seat of her Harley-Davidson, attracting press coverage, however, she was an anomaly in the motorcycle world. Reporters nicknamed her the "Negro Motorcycle Queen."⁵⁶ Later, she became the "Motorcycle Queen of Miami."⁵⁷ Following

⁵² Ferrar, 23

⁵³ Ferrar, 26

⁵⁴ Ferrar, 29

---- When Stringfield participated in competitions, she would register as a male rider. This notion alludes to the idea that the Iron Horse Motorcycle Club, which is no longer in existence, was publically a male-only organization.

⁵⁵ Ferrar, 30

⁵⁶ Edward Winterhalder and Wil De Clercq, *Biker Chicz: The Attraction of Women To Motorcycles and Outlaw Bikers* (Jenison, MI: Blockhead City Inc, 2014), 19.

Stringfield's fame in the racing world, she was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2002.

Stringfield was not the only woman to be a pioneer for women in the motorcycle world. 1940 saw the creation of an all-women's riding club, the Motor Maids. Founded by Linda Dugeau and Dot Robinson, the Motor Maids were created for women that enjoyed sisterhood, but also like to ride motorcycles. Dugeau and Robinson sought to form their organization around the same idea's as "Amelia Earhart's sorority for women pilots called the 99ers."⁵⁸ In addition, the Motor Maids were founded on the principle of being a lady's riding club. Robinson strived to make sure that the Motor Maids were always seen as ladies, thus establishing a rule that all members were to wear white gloves when they were riding. The Motor Maids see them self as part of a group of motorcycle riders that seek to ride for a good time.

⁵⁷ Ferrar, 32

⁵⁸ Ann Japenga, "Motor Maids: More Like the Mild Ones Than the Wild Ones," *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 1986.

Chapter Two: The Transformation

The Rise of the Outlaw

Two years after the first reliable motorcycle came to life, motorcycle clubs began to form.⁵⁹ Initially, these clubs were for men and women who had the desire to ride motorcycles collectively, thus spawning a culture that has existed since the 1920s.⁶⁰ Following this evolution in culture was the creation of the American Motorcycle Association in 1924.⁶¹ The formation of the AMA drew its origins from organizations such as the Federation of American Motorcyclists, which, in turn, has roots from to the New York Motorcycle Club, which was founded in 1903, as well as the Motorcycle and Allied Trades Association.⁶² In 1924, following the creation of these two groups and the swell of membership, the Motorcycle and Allied Trades Association proposed to create the AMA.⁶³ The main purpose of creating the AMA in 1924 was to "control rider registration and activities, as well as issue sanctions for national events and serve motorcycle industry members."⁶⁴ However, for some motorcycle riders, control was not something they wanted anything to experience. Instead of joining the ranks of the AMA, some of these men chose to separate themselves from the group of "law-abiding riders."

What came from this alienation was an American creation: The outlaw motorcycle club. Many combat veterans, particularly those residing in California, sought

⁵⁹ Arthur Venno, ed., *The Mammoth Book of Bikers*. (New York: Running Press, 2007), 3.

⁶⁰ Venno, 3.

⁶¹ Abbreviated as "AMA" for the remainder of the document.

⁶² The American Motorcycle Association. *The History of The AMA*. <http://www.americanmotorcyclist.com/about/history> (accessed September 29, 2013).

⁶³ The American Motorcycle Association.

⁶⁴ The American Motorcycle Association.

new outlets to cope with their feelings of hostility and alienation. For some, prior to the war, or during the war, riding motorcycles was where they felt comfortable. Initially veterans used military surplus motorcycles to ride together. The idea of the motorcycle clubs during this time was that veterans would be able to engage in quasi-military camaraderie, while also allowing them to be around others who understood what they had gone through overseas.⁶⁵ These men came home and were trying to fit back into civilian life after being put into high-adrenaline situations.⁶⁶ The motorcycle and the clubs formed were their way of being able to satisfy the need for the adrenaline they had felt during combat. Clubs also allowed veterans to feel a sense of camaraderie and companionship they were not able to gain from their civilian lives. These men were young and dealing with what is today classified as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and the motorcycle and the clubs were therapeutic for them. Loud exhausts, large machines, associated with anti-social activities like drinking and fighting were alluring to these young men, and without anyone to tell them what to do, chaos was imminent.

One of these early clubs started in California in 1937. The 13 Rebels Motorcycle Club was not an outlaw organization but had members who served in the military. Fortunately for them, following the war, they were able to come back and participate in club events almost immediately. Ernest "Tex" Bryant and 12 other motorcycle racers in

⁶⁵ Outlaw motorcycle clubs had not been termed as such, yet.

⁶⁶ As seen in multiple pieces of scholarship and memoirs, but specifically discussed in William L. Dulaney, "A Brief History of 'Outlaw' Motorcycle Clubs", *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies* 1, no. 3 (November 2005): 1, accessed April 12, 2014, http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_Artcl.Dulaney.html and George Wethern and Vince Colnett, *A Wayward Angel* (New York: R. Marek Publishers, 1974), 43-44.

Southern California started the club, which was, and still is an AMA sanctioned club.⁶⁷ In addition to “Tex”, some of the club’s legendary members included Shell Thuet, who raced and built many independent factory-sponsored racing bikes. Two other racers John and Ernie Roccio, who participated during competitions in the United States as well as the United States Motorcycle Racing Team throughout Europe in the 1950s. The previous three members kept the organization as a racing team, but another member, William “Wino” Forkner, chaffed at the limits and structure of the club and left to create the Boozefighters MC at the All-American Cafe in Los Angeles California in 1946.⁶⁸ The move of Wino to create the Boozefighters was the catalyst to create the first outlaw motorcycle club (OMC) and helped shape the image and myth of outlaw bikers in America.

This myth furthered when members of the 13 Rebels, Boozefighters MC and Pissed Off Bastards of Bloomington converged on a small town in California named Hollister.⁶⁹ The two clubs were there to participate in races at a neighboring farm. According to an account documented by *Life Magazine* and C.I. Doughtry, Jr. of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, “A riot that broke out in the streets of Hollister and some 50 persons were jailed during the ruckus and as many were injured, several seriously.”⁷⁰ While Doughtry, Jr.’s scope reflected what the police reports said, *Life Magazine* made

⁶⁷ “13 Rebels Motorcycle Club,” 13 Rebels, 2014, accessed April 28, 2014, <http://www.13rebelsmc.org/>.

⁶⁸ Bill Hayes and Jim Quattlebaum, *The Original Wild Ones: Tales of the Boozefighters Motorcycle Club* (St. Paul: Motorbooks, 2009), 30.

⁶⁹ The Pissed Off Bastards Of Bloomington are also known as P.O.B.O.B. and have members who would later separate the Hells Angels as seen in Jerry Langton, *Fallen Angel: the Unlikely Rise of Walter Stadnick in the Canadian Hells Angels*(Mississauga, Ont.: Wiley, 2006), 180-184 and Hayes and Quattlebaum, 250.

⁷⁰ C.I. Doughtry, Jr., “More On Hollister’s Bad Time,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1947.

the event seem much more violent than it was. In the section entitled "This Weeks Events" *Life* stated, "On Fourth of July Weekend, 4,000 members of motorcycle clubs terrorize Hollister, California."⁷¹ In addition to the scathing headline, photos were taken of seemingly drunk motorcyclists in an effort to show the debauchery that took place.⁷²



Figure 2.1: A photo of a motorcycle enthusiast printed in *Life* Magazine "depicting" the debauchery that took place in Hollister, Calif., 1947.

⁷¹ *Life* Editorial Board "Cyclist's Holiday," *Life*, July 21, 1947, 31.

---- Motorcycle-centric events had been taking place in Hollister, California since the 1930s that were termed as wholesome. Following World War II, the AMA revived the tradition which led to the Hollister "riot" as seen in Mara Bovsun, "Motorcycle Riot in Hollister, Calif., Captures the Attention of Writers and Hollywood and Gives Birth to Great American Anti-Hero," *New York Daily News*, October 19, 2013. There did not appear to be any problems prior to this outbreak of lawlessness.

⁷² See Figure 2.1, "Cyclist's Holiday: He and His Friends Terrorize Town" (photograph), Selvedge Yard, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://selvedgeyard.com/2009/06/10/13-rebels-mc-wild-motorcycle-gang>.

Paul Brokaw, who, at the time was the editor of *Motorcyclist*, wrote a letter to *Life* speculating on the authenticity of the photo. Brokaw's letter, published in *Life* stated,

"Sirs:

Words are difficult to express my shock in discovering that motorcyclist picture [see *Life* July 21, 1947: 31]. It was very obviously arranged and posed by an enterprising and unscrupulous photographer.

We regretfully acknowledge that there was disorder in Hollister – not the acts of 4,000 motorcyclists, but rather of a small percentage of that number, aided by a much larger group of non-motorcycling hell-raisers and mercenary-minded barkeepers. We in no manner defend the culprits – in fact drastic action is under way to avoid recurrences of such antics.

You have, however, in presentation of this obnoxious picture, seared a pitiful brand on the character of tens of thousands of innocent, clean-cut, respectable, law-abiding young men and women who are the true representatives of an admirable sport.

Paul Brokaw
Editor, *Motorcyclist*
Los Angeles, Calif.⁷³

This letter served as a scathing critique of *Life's* view of fringe culture. More recently, Bill Hayes, the Boozefighters MC historian and Dave Nichols, the editor of *Easy Rider* Magazine have challenged the authenticity of the photograph. The two argue that the photo was staged, thus sensationalizing the events that transpired in Hollister even further, adding to the outlaw mythos.

The article and photograph had a lasting effect on motorcycle culture and following the alleged "riot" the AMA released a proclamation regarding the incident. The statement said, "that 99% of motorcyclists are good, decent, law-abiding citizens,

⁷³ Paul Brokaw. Letter. *Life*. August 11, 1947, 7.

and that the AMA's ranks of motorcycle clubs were not involved in the debacle.⁷⁴ According to the AMA, they have no record of releasing such a statement.⁷⁵ In retrospect, it is clear that the statement was made to protect the AMA from any action that may have sullied the organization's name. The Hollister races were part of a sanctioned AMA event called The Gypsy Tour and had the fights not been refuted, the organization would likely lose money and attendance for future events. Nevertheless, with this statement made, came forth the true outlaw motorcyclists, who looked to the AMA announcement and proclaimed themselves 1%ers.

Cultural Influence On Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs

Six years after the Hollister incident, Hollywood and the mainstream media opted to develop a film that used the events that transpired to be the basis for a new film that focused on motorcycle organizations. In 1953, *The Wild One* and starred Marlon Brando.⁷⁶ Brando portrayed 13 Rebels leader Shell Thuet, and co-star Lee Marvin played the character of "Chino" who represented Willie "Wino" Forkner. It was apparent that the reality of Hollister paved the way for a fictional retelling in this film. In turn, the fiction of the film would seep into reality. At this time, one club in particular was allowing the media to inspire them.

The Outlaws Motorcycle Club was this organization. The Outlaws original patch only used a skull on the back of their jackets, but, after the released of *The Wild One*, the

⁷⁴ Dulaney, 2005

⁷⁵ Dulaney, 2005

⁷⁶ Synopsis: Two rival motorcycle gangs terrorize a small town after one of their leaders is thrown in jail. "The Wild One (1953)," Internet Movie Database, 2014, accessed April 12, 2014, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0047677/?ref_=ttfc_fc_tt.

Outlaws opted to include a set of crossed pistons underneath the skull. With this new insignia emblazoned on their backs, the Outlaws' back patch mirrored the insignia on the jackets of those worn in the film. Adoption of this patch shows that popular culture in the West was influencing their organization through Hollywood culture.⁷⁷



Figure 2.2: The skull and crossed pistons that the Outlaws MC appropriated for their kutties, taken from *The Wild One*, 1953.

The adoption of this insignia from a Hollywood film shows that the Outlaws identified with the notions in the film, particularly when resisting authority. In the film Brando's character Johnny Strabler is asked what he is rebelling against, to which he replies, "Whaddya got?" This famous line and mentality is what the Outlaws and every other OMC organization have based their morals on ever since.⁷⁸

The skull and crossed pistons patch were not the only insignias that began to appear at this time. As noted following the AMA declaration, motorcycle clubs that saw

⁷⁷ See Figure 2.2, "Wild One" (photograph), Outlaws MC World, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.outlawsmcworld.com/bilder/history/wildone.jpg>.

⁷⁸ Marlon Brando. *The Wild One*. DVD. Directed by Stanley Kramer. Los Angeles: Columbia, 1953.

themselves as outside the 99% of law-abiding riders started calling themselves 1%ers. This distinction came to be, so OMCs could separate themselves from standard motorcycle riders, thus claiming their place in motorcycle culture. In order to show that a club was outlaw and part of the 1%, they started wearing a 1% patch with a diamond backdrop on their cut-off denim or leather vests. Ultimately, the appropriation of the skull and crossed pistons and the 1%er patch reflected a culture of dissonance amongst young people following World War II.

Each motorcycle group wears a cut-off vest that commonly referred to as "colors."⁷⁹ The term "colors" refers to the patches on the backs of jackets or vests worn by members.⁸⁰ Three patches, with spaces between each, signify a member of a specific OMC organization.⁸¹ The top patch, also known as a rocker, identifies the organization, for example, Hells Angels.⁸² The center shield, located in the middle of the vest, is the club's unique identifying graphic.⁸³ This center patch is similar to a coat of arms. The bottom patch identifies the member's particular chapter location, be it city or state.⁸⁴ Other patches later added to kutties were worn as badges, much like one would receive for service in the military.⁸⁵ These patches, referred to as "flash" by some, became part of standard practice for clubs like the Outlaws and inspired OMCs in the West. Hells

⁷⁹ Daniel R. Wolf. *The Rebels: a Brotherhood of Outlaw Bikers*. University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 2000, 116.

---- Colors will be referred to as kutties for the remainder of the document as the original colors of most OMCs were originally denim jackets with the sleeves cut off – as noted in the next sentence, "colors" are the patches each OMC wears.

⁸⁰ Wolf, 116

⁸¹ Wolf, 116

⁸² Wolf, 116; In addition, Hells Angels will be referred to in this paper without the apostrophe unless it appears as punctuation in a quote.

⁸³ Wolf, 117

⁸⁴ Wolf, 118

⁸⁵ The patches are similar to the ribbon bars worn by military members who have received multiple medals during their participation in military exercises and combat.

Angels and Boozefighters started attaching patches that showed paramilitary ranking or individual touches to their kutties.⁸⁶



Figure 2.3: Hells Angels and their kutties co-mingling with citizens, 1965.

The kutties served as a uniform for OMC members, and OMCs have a hierarchical structure along with that uniform. Most organizations are structured with a president, who is the highest ranking member of the chapter; a vice-president, who is the second in command; a sergeant-at-arms, who is responsible for carrying out club rules; a secretary and treasurer, who collects and audits all club expenditures; a road captain, who is in charge of the OMC while they are on the road.⁸⁷ The remainder of the organization's body is filled with patched members and prospective members.

As the 1950s came to a close, OMCs began to wear more items on their kutties. In addition to the officers' patches, swastikas or Nazi war medals were worn for shock

⁸⁶ See Figure 2.3, "Appraising Eye" (photograph), *Life Rides with Hells Angels*, 1965, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://time.com/3506839/life-rides-with-hells-angels-1965/>.

⁸⁷ Wolf, 274

value.”⁸⁸ Despite the uneasiness caused by these patches and regalia, the meanings behind these symbols became part of an unspoken commentary during a tumultuous time in America in the early 1960s. The nation had a new president, who, despite his charm and convincing smile, was young, and at his very core, a Cold War warrior.⁸⁹ John F. Kennedy served as the successor to Dwight D. Eisenhower, a President that had used the latter part of his term in office to steer the nation away from violence. Despite Eisenhower's efforts to rally for peace after the Korean War, conflict and political philosophies had already affected our citizens and soldiers so much that violence appeared to be grafted into their DNA following World War II. Historically, we can trace the creation of most outlaw motorcycle groups following servicemen returning home from war. At the same time *The Wild One* was released; troops were returning from the conflict of the Korean War. Many soldiers had difficulty readjusting to civilian life. What they sought was a brotherhood, much like the platoons they served under during conflict. Outlaw motorcycle clubs, like the Outlaws MC, and in Fontana, California, Hells Angels, offered that brotherhood to some. Subsequently, the thirst for violence would lead to further conflict in Asia causing Kennedy and the United States to take up arms in Vietnam. What is interesting is the violence these soldiers participated in and experienced in each war, for most, it was not what they wanted. Instead, it was independence, freedom, and the peace of mind that was what led them to fight - unless, of course, the United States Armed Forces drafted them. Freedom was, at the most fundamental level, the goal for those returning from war. Whether they had volunteered or had their number called, the idea that these young men had survived

⁸⁸ Wethern and Colnett, 56.

⁸⁹ Becky Jager, “1960 Election” (lecture, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID, January 22, 2014).

such horrific scenes led some of them to want to live a freewheelin' lifestyle, and live for themselves. Inevitably, some of the soldiers experienced the "freewheelin'" nature after riding on two wheels during conflict. The freedom of the ride caused some men to fall in love with the iron horse. Along with their brothers in arms, they sought a place where they would be accepted for their passions and not chastised for their experiences.

Women In the 1%er World

Despite the participation and creation of all-women riding clubs by such strong women such as Linda Dugeau and Dot Robinson of the Motor Maids and founder of Iron Horse Motorcycle club, Bessie Stringfield, women involved in the OMC world had been relegated to property of OMC members, instead of equals. According to the by-laws of one of the original OMCs, the Boozefighters, in their 1946 by-laws they state, that "There will never be any women in any way affiliated in any way, shape, or form with the Boozefighters Motorcycle Club or its subsidiaries."⁹⁰ What this led to be a whole different problem for women in the era of the 1960s and 1970s.

As OMCs grew, increasing numbers of women started hanging around OMCs where one on one romances developed causing male members to take steps to identify and claim his woman by means of a "property" patch. The "property" patch is worn on a kutte not unlike the kutte worn by members. The difference is the patch is a set of club colors that shows who the woman belongs to. The "property" patch has two meanings: The first is that the patch is similar to a woman taking her husband's last name, or wearing a wedding ring. Wearing this kutte not only gives her social status in the club,

⁹⁰ Hayes and Quattlebaum, 271.

but also shows that she is an “old lady.”⁹¹ It also tells other members of the OMC that the woman is “off limits.” The second aspect of the patch is its protective feature for the woman wearing it. In some cases, daughters wear a patch listing their father’s name and the patch is viewed as a way of protecting the young girl when she attends OMC events. Arthur Veno, former Director of the Center for Police and Justice Studies at Monash University said it best: “Club members are pretty protective of their women. Look out if another member or an outsider trie[s] to make a pass at her.”⁹²

Ralph “Sonny” Barger, founding member of the Oakland chapter of the Hells Angels refers to women as going hand-in-hand with bikers. He stated, “Wherever there’s Hells Angels, you can be sure that there’s girls, old ladies, and good-time broads.”⁹³ He continued by saying, the higher-quality old lady, the better the Hells Angel.”⁹⁴ Women, therefore, have status within the club, yet they are still not allowed to join the ranks of the brotherhood. OMC’s institutionalized rules require that only men be allowed to become full members, relegating women to a lesser status than men, but have varying degrees of status amongst other women involved in the organization. Like OMCs structure and ranks, women also have a hierarchical structure within the OMC world. The highest “rank” a woman could attain in these societies is that of a wife. This status confers a high degree of respect for legal wives. Wives are typically protected from harassment and violence unless perpetrator of harassment and violence was the woman's legal husband. Such is the case for Mongols member Evel and his

⁹¹ The title of “old lady” refers to a woman who is married to an OMC member.

⁹² Arthur Veno and Edward Gannon, *The Brotherhoods: Inside the Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2012), 155.

⁹³ Ralph “Sonny” Barger, Keith Zimmerman, and Kent Zimmerman, *Hell's Angel: The Life and Times of Sonny Barger and the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club* (Fourth Estate Ltd., 2000), 249.

⁹⁴ Barger, Zimmerman, and Zimmerman, 250

girlfriend. As documented by undercover agent William Queen, Evel struck his old lady after a disagreement. "I don't even know what happened," Evel said, "I didn't hit her that hard."⁹⁵ What Queen witnessed was in more ways worse than any barroom assault that any OMC member had taken part in. "Evel had opened her up completely, from her lip almost all the way to the nostril."⁹⁶ In the OMC world beatings like this were not necessarily regular, yet, despite her status, she was still subject to abuse by her partner like the other two classifications of women.

The next level of status for a woman in the OMC world is that of a "mama." These were women who maintained a relationship with the group as a whole and who are accessible to all members for sexual encounters. "Mamas" were often thought of as property. The only level of respect that they could count on is that outsiders respect the ownership of the woman's club affiliation. The "broads," who achieved casual or temporary affiliation with one or members, hold the lowest status for women in these organizations.⁹⁷ These women typically were strippers, prostitutes, and one-night stands. Most women involved in OMCs, particularly wives, do not engage in this type of behavior and typically look down on the women that do. To them, "easy" women that participate in these sorts of behaviors are transitory and will ultimately be outsiders in the outlaw world.

It is difficult to pinpoint where the woman's vote counts in OMCs. Is there a place for the women to meet, debate and consult with each other? Do they have a political

⁹⁵ William Queen. *Under and Alone: the True Story of the Undercover Agent Who Infiltrated America's Most Violent Outlaw Motorcycle Gang*. Reprint ed. New York: Fawcett, 2006. 197.

⁹⁶ Queen, 197.

⁹⁷ Daniel R. Wolf, *The Rebels: a Brotherhood of Outlaw Bikers*, Reprint ed. (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 2000), 133.

voice and power? To answer these questions, it behooves us to look at women within these organizations to see how they choose to wield their power and what they do with it. One example of the strategy used by women is seen in the case of Linda B. Moncrief. The Hessians MC was a central and vital part of Moncrief's life. At one point, she had dedicated her life to the Hessians, though, as a woman, she was not, and will never be a member. Nevertheless, Moncrief found away into influence club business by getting her husband Mac to allow women to wear kutties stating that they were property. Given the previously discussed hierarchical structure amongst women in relation to OMCs, Moncrief and the other old ladies, with the label of property reinforced that they women had achieved a level of respect, protection and prestige and that they had larger status than those women that were "mamas" and otherwise.

Conversely, Former Hells Angel George Wethern, had hoped that his wife Helen would remain an outsider to the OMC lifestyle and hierarchy. When Wethern first joined the Hells Angels in 1960, he described Helen as "too naïve to take on club outings."⁹⁸ Despite Wethern's hope of protecting his wife from the nefarious behavior that he and the other Hells Angels members were involved in, he being left out caused her to foster resentment toward the organization and the company he kept.⁹⁹ In addition, for Wethern, his lists of priorities were very skewed, much like those of other OMC members. Witnessing these men conversing with other women caused women to suffer from mental abuse. Some women invariably suffered, such as Helen, while others have gained more respect by being recognized as official "old ladies". This respect was

⁹⁸ Wethern and Colnett, 21-22.

⁹⁹ Wethern and Colnett, 11.

earned by women were privy to their biker men's business, but, overall, OMC men still remain dominant.

It is obvious that in the OMC world, the power is in the hands of the men that run the organizations. Their votes are the ones that count in organization decisions, and women must strategize from the outside, especially when it comes to taking care of their men, but also their families. The men in OMCs have a history of violence as a way to “take care of business.” We see this in multiple ways through the stories of Thompson, Veno, Barger, Wethern and a myriad of other OMC member’s memoirs. Male members of OMCs are only one part of the story, as their wives play an equally pivotal role in the OMC lifestyle. Typically, women are the ones in the relationship who are capable of holding down steady jobs. In addition, the wives and girlfriends are relegated to taking care of children while men are required to be available for club business at a moment’s notice.

Ultimately, what come from these views on women are multiple views from a male dominant perspective. Despite the multitude of scholarship dedicated to women and their involvement in OMCs, more evidence is needed to gain a women’s perspective. In a male dominant world such as OMC life, the politics and navigation to gain a woman’s trust proves exceedingly difficult. As stated, the dynamic in which OMCs work, you have to be a man to gain a modicum of respect from an OMC member, which means that there typically is not a way to talk with women in an in-depth, meaningful way. Conversely, the only way that a woman could gain an insider’s perspective is to become involved with an OMC in the most intimate way possible. Despite this fact, women have

pointed roles in OMC organizations and until women are allowed to patch in, those roles will likely continue to be perpetuated.

Sonny Barger, Hells Angels and the End of Innocence

For Barger, being part of an OMC was not just about being part of a brotherhood though, but a way of life.¹⁰⁰ Barger, like many others involved in OMCs in the late 50s and 60s, was a U.S. Army Veteran, however, he did not join the service in the most conventional sense. Barger forged his birth certificate in order to join the Army when he was 16 years old.¹⁰¹ According to Barger, the military discovered his age, and despite his offense, was given an honorable discharge.¹⁰² Barger also echoed the idea that other Hells Angels members longed for the camaraderie and brotherhood found from their military experience. His veteran status led Barger, along with sixteen others, to form a chapter of the Hells Angels in Oakland, California in 1958 taking some members from the original Fontana group.¹⁰³

Famed writer Hunter S. Thompson recalled Barger as authoritative, yet very intelligent. "Barger, the Maximum Leader, a six-foot, 170-pound warehouseman from East Oakland, the coolest head in the lot, and a tough, quick-thinking dealer when any action starts."¹⁰⁴ Barger's reputation drew more and more to the Oakland chapter of the Hells Angels. Initially, the Hells Angels of Oakland was supposed to give an outlet to

¹⁰⁰ William Murray, "Hell's Angels." *Saturday Evening Post* 238, no. 23 (November 20, 1965): 32. *MasterFILE Premier*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 15, 2014). 38.

¹⁰¹ Barger, Zimmerman, and Zimmerman, 25.

¹⁰² Barger, Zimmerman, and Zimmerman, 26.

---- At the time of draft, I have a request placed to the U.S. Government through the Freedom of Information Act to obtain Ralph "Sonny" Hubert Barger, Jr.'s military record.

¹⁰³ Wethern and Colnett, 43-44

¹⁰⁴ Hunter S. Thompson, *Hells Angels* (Ballantine, NY: Ballantine Books, 1967), 10.

those men who sought adventure from regular, everyday life. The outlet began to evolve though as club membership grew. The activities these men participated in began to evolve into something grittier. Former Hells Angels Vice President George Wethern recalled that the club trafficked in stolen motorcycles and parts.¹⁰⁵ Since the club was dealing in stolen parts during the mid-1960s, being a club member also helped riders keep their motorcycles running, since there were always parts around to fix their machines. "There was an unwritten rule that a member with extra parts would lend or sell them to a member in need."¹⁰⁶ Wethern was deep into trafficking parts and even stole full motorcycles just for the engine. "Even I bought an entire garage full of hardware, including four engines stamped with the same serial numbers. This, of course, meant that at least three were hot."¹⁰⁷

Drug use and trafficking became typical for the Hells Angels as well in the 1960s. The club started out selling marijuana and methamphetamines, however, as Wethern recalls; the club started getting wrapped into business with famed chemist and cook of LSD, Owsley Stanley.¹⁰⁸ Stanley, the grandson of a Kentucky governor, and U.S. Senator was a bit of a misfit. Stanley enrolled and dropped out of school at the University of Virginia before making his way to California and Berkeley's campus in 1963.¹⁰⁹ It was here that Stanley discovered the recipe for LSD. Though the initial connection was

¹⁰⁵ Wethern became Vice President in 1960 and retired from the organization in 1969 as seen in Wethern and Colnett, xiii.

¹⁰⁶ Wethern and Colnett, 59

¹⁰⁷ Wethern and Colnett, 59

¹⁰⁸ Wethern and Colnett, 14

¹⁰⁹ Joel Selvin, "For the Unrepentant Patriarch of Lsd, Long, Strange Trip Winds Back to Bay Area," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 12, 2007, accessed April 14, 2014, <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/For-the-unrepentant-patriarch-of-LSD-long-2581601.php>.

unclear, a relationship between Stanley and the Hells Angels evolved. The relationship was lucrative for both parties and also brought the club into a deeper circle of the counterculture. In 1965, the Hells Angels, introduced by Stanley, were invited to visit Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters out at Kesey's ranch in La Honda, California. On the weekend of August 7, 1965, riding Harley-Davidson 74s, the club showed up in "running formation" onto Kesey's property.¹¹⁰ The Hells Angels were met by a 12-foot banner that stated "The Merry Pranksters Welcome The Hell's Angels."¹¹¹ The location was on one of Kesey's two ranches, and for the club, this place seemed impenetrable because it was secluded from prying eyes. There, the members were met by the likes of Allen Ginsberg and LSD Guru Dr. Richard Alpert. During this time, the Hells Angels divulged in a drug buffet including marijuana and psychedelics such as LSD and DMT.¹¹²

Despite the Prankster and Hells Angels view on drugs, the two had a temporary fallout regarding the Vietnam War. Since, as previously stated, most Hells Angels were veterans, they found the Pranksters antiwar sentiment as weakness, cowardice, effeminateness, and Un-Americanism. Barger once stated, "Our oath is allegiance to the United States of America. If there was trouble, we would jump to enlist and fight. More than ninety percent of our members are veterans. We do not want no slackers."¹¹³ In fact, as the anti-war movement spread, Barger wrote President Lyndon Johnson volunteering the club for "guerilla" duty in Vietnam.¹¹⁴ Ultimately, the Hells Angels

¹¹⁰ Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (Bantam, 1969), 171

¹¹¹ Wethern and Colnett, 75

¹¹² Wethern and Colnett, 77

¹¹³ Wethern and Colnett, 79

¹¹⁴ Wethern and Colnett, 79

experience with the Pranksters came down to this: “hipster drugs and women are cool, but hipster politics were not.”¹¹⁵

Aside from illegal drug trafficking, the Hells Angels had other legitimate ways to raise funds for the club. The Hells Angels also staged events, with shows regularly headlined by West Coast rockers like Big Brother and the Holding Company (BBHC) and Grateful Dead. Janis Joplin, the singer for the band, loved motorcycles, especially Harley-Davidson choppers which the Angels rode. Several Hells Angels would often show up whenever BBHC was giving a concert, and then would leave when the next band started. The relationship between Joplin and the club was very close. So close that Joplin insisted that the cover of BBHC’s 1968 album, *Cheap Thrills*, bear the Hells Angels’ emblem and the words “Approved by Hell’s Angels Frisco.”¹¹⁶ The album, designed by Joplin’s favorite artist Robert Crumb contains the emblem that Joplin requested thus further confirming the relationship between the Hells Angels and the band.¹¹⁷ Joplin was also rumored to be intimate with a Hells Angels member as well. “She hooked up with Angels’ infamous Freewheelin’ Frank,” according to Echols.¹¹⁸ Richard Hundgen of BBHC also claimed that the Hells Angels frequented Joplin's place.¹¹⁹ Regardless of the Hells Angels presence around the band, other musicians like Bruce Barthol of Country Joe and the Fish had a different view of the club.

¹¹⁵ Wethern and Colnett, 79

¹¹⁶ Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: the Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000), 171-172.

¹¹⁷ See Figure 2.4, “Cheap Thrills” (album cover), Big Brother and the Holding Company, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://bbhc.com/disco.html>

¹¹⁸ Echols, 157

¹¹⁹ Echols, 157



Figure 2.4: Big Brother and the Holding Company's *Cheap Thrills* with Hells Angels logo in lower right-hand corner, 1969.

Referring to an event in Santa Clara where the Hells Angels handled security in 1968, “their method of clearing the stage was to push people off it. One guy took a bottle and smashed a girl’s head with it.”¹²⁰ Despite their penchant for violence, the Hells Angels would serve as security for multiple concert events.

Following that altercation, it was evident that as the Hells Angels started to become more and more violent. This violence was seen publicly in 1969, when the club was enlisted by The Rolling Stones to serve as security for the band during their free concert at the Altamont Motorspeedway. The Stones, involving themselves in socio-political movements of the time, “thought it would be ‘cool’ to get outlaws such as the Hells Angels involved.”¹²¹ The Rolling Stones had just finished a recording session at

¹²⁰ Echols, 158

¹²¹ Marc Spitz, *Jagger: Rebel, Rock Star, Rambler, Rogue* (New York: Gotham, 2011), 102.

Muscle Shoals, one of the premier recording areas in the South, and chose to put on a free show as a “thank you” to their fans. According to Keith Richards, the band’s guitarist, The Stones wanted to emulate what the Grateful Dead had done multiple times before.¹²² This “thank you” would be turn out to be one of the most negative concert events in America in 1969. The show was initially supposed to be held in Golden Gate Park, but the city of San Francisco wouldn’t allow it to happen citing that as big as The Rolling Stones were, they couldn’t possible put on a free show.¹²³ Logistically, it would turn out to be a nightmare for all involved. After choosing Altamont as an alternate venue, and recruiting Michael Lang, who was known for putting together Woodstock, the Stones started enlisting bands to play. Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead decided to play, and it was Rock Scully, the Grateful Dead’s manager who suggested that The Rolling Stones bring on a local chapter of the Hells Angels to serve as security.¹²⁴ Hiring the Hells Angels was not a difficult decision though as The Rolling Stones has already used them as security before – or so they thought. During The Rolling Stones performance in Hyde Park in London, “the British ‘Hells Angels’ were more noble than savage, sweet guys who dug American biker gear.”¹²⁵ It was obvious that the Hells Angels imposters had caused The Stones to be complacent as they chose to hire the real Hells Angels, not knowing the difference between the fake and real

¹²² Keith Richards with James Fox, *Life* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2011), 279.

¹²³ Spitz, 150-151.

¹²⁴ Robert Duncan, *The Noise: Notes from a Rock ‘n’ Roll Era* (New York: Tickner & Fields, 1984), 37.

¹²⁵ James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin: the Rise of Rock and Roll, 1947-1977* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 276.

---- These “imposters” had zero link to the Hells Angels in the United States.

members. The only payment that the real, American Hells Angels were rumored to expect was “five hundred dollars worth of beer.”¹²⁶

As the day started, The Stones arrived early, waiting for their turn to play. As Mick Jagger, lead singer of the band disembarked from the helicopter, he was struck by a concertgoer who shouted, “I hate you.”¹²⁷ The violence would escalate from there, starting during Sawyer Brown’s performance earlier in the day, and causing Marty Balin of Jefferson Airplane to be knocked out by Hells Angels. Balin, one of Jefferson Airplane’s vocalists, recalls the club using violence on the crowd, even early in the day. Balin recalls the experience rather vividly in an interview he did in 1993:

“We went on the stage in late afternoon and were doing the first number. I had my eyes closed and I looked up and saw these guys beating this guy with their pool cues. The whole crowd kind of stepped back and that really cheesed me off. Nobody was listening to me sing so I thought, well, this guy needs some help. So I jumped off to help him out. I was helping him out and the Hell’s Angels were going, ‘Hey, Marty, you better get out of here, you’re gonna get hurt. What are you doing?’ So I said, ‘Hey, I’m trying to sing a song, you know?’ Anyway, I got back up and started singing again and the naked guy went back behind the stage. Then they were fighting behind me and I was really pissed so I went back and started punching out this one guy. He had this wolf’s head on his head and we were pretty evenly matched. I was getting in some good ones. And that’s the last

¹²⁶ Spitz, 151.

¹²⁷ Spitz, 152.

thing I remember before I got knocked out. I woke up with all these boot marks all over my body.”¹²⁸

Later in the day, the club’s wrath was not to be avoided. During The Rolling Stones performance, the Hells Angels were seen to be drinking, but ultimately doing what they were asked to do: protect the band. Fights broke out amongst the fans, and Jagger, instead of assertively asking the fans and Hells Angels to be civil, he opted to treat them they were his friends. “Oh, people, why are we fighting? Oh. Brothers and sisters.”¹²⁹ Keith Richards, The Rolling Stones’ guitarist took a different approach saying, “Listen you bastards, if it doesn’t stop, we’re out of here.”¹³⁰ Perhaps, had Jagger taken the more fervent stance like his cohort, maybe the violence would not have escalated. Ultimately, the viciousness would cause a concertgoer to pay the ultimate price during The Rolling Stones’ set at the hands of a Hells Angel member. Barger argues that the Hells Angels were “set up” by the band. Barger believed that it was The Rolling Stones, who had stalled on coming out to play long after dark, is what caused the crowd to become “agitated and frenzied.”¹³¹ During The Rolling Stones performance of “Under My Thumb”, an altercation broke out in the crowd where a black man, Meredith Hunter, brandishing a revolver and high on West Coast Speed began pushing toward the stage.¹³² When Hells Angel member Allen Passaro saw Hunter, Passaro drew a knife and

¹²⁸ Jeff Tamarkin, “The Jefferson Airplane Chronicles: Part Six, Marty Balin,” Jefferson Airplane, 2014, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.jeffersonairplane.com/the-jefferson-airplane-chronicles-part-six-marty-balin/>.

¹²⁹ Spitz, 13.

---- Also seen in *Gimme Shelter*, directed by Albert Maysales, David Maysales, and Charlotte Zwerin (Maysales, 1970), DVD (20th Century Fox, 2007).

¹³⁰ Spitz, 13.

¹³¹ Barger, Zimmerman and Zimmerman, 163.

¹³² Spitz, 152.

stabbed him several times.¹³³ Despite the stabbing, Jagger continued through the song, as chaos erupted all around.¹³⁴ People running to and fro as blue and red lights circulated across their faces. The tortured pleas of the victim's girlfriend shrieked in the warm California air.

As the scene unfolded, and the paramedics loaded the body of Hunter into the rear of the ambulance, it was apparent that the innocence of the sixties had waned. The final deathblow allegedly came from the blade of an outlaw motorcycle club member from the West's most notorious club; Hells Angels has caused a shift in perception. Ultimately, when Altamont is conjured in history, the word that comes to mind is tragic, yet, it is really sadder than anything. Not only have large venue concerts increased in security, but also the view of the Hells Angels as a violent organization began here, and not necessarily from the war zones which many members came from.

---- According to Spitz, an autopsy of Hunter found methamphetamine in his bloodstream.

¹³³ Thomas Reynolds. *Wild Ride: How Outlaw Motorcycle Myth Conquered America* (New York: T.V. Books, LLC, 2000).203.

---- Passaro would be acquitted of murder in 1971 because Hunter was brandishing a gun as seen in Stuart Rosenberg, *Rock and Roll and the American Landscape: the Birth of an Industry and the Expansion of the Popular Culture, 1955-1969* (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2008), 194.

¹³⁴ Spitz, 3.

---- Also seen in *Gimme Shelter*.

Chapter Three: Exclusion In the 1%er World

Race and Exclusion In OMCs:

The death of Meredith Hunter at Altamont Raceway was not a random act of violence perpetrated by the Hells Angels, but part of a deeper-seated issue. Race and ethnicity within outlaw motorcycle groups has been a topic worthy of discussion ever since the inception of the first outlaw club's. Some of the most visible forms of racism in outlaw clubs has to do with the patches and symbols some outlaw clubs choose to wear on their kutties. However, there is also a rejection of members who are of different ethnicities such as African Americans, Latino, Native Americans as well as Asian Americans.

As discussed previously, outlaw motorcycle clubs kutties contain patches or medals to show a member's status within the club. In the mid-1950s, following the Korean War, some Hells Angels members started wearing racist symbols such as the Iron Cross, swastikas or the emblem of the German Reich.¹³⁵ According to Canadian investigatory journalist and true crime author Julian Sher, "If a Hells Angels guy is wearing Nazi paraphernalia, it is their equivalent to sticking up a finger to some middle class family they see in a Volvo."¹³⁶ The use of these symbols might be used as a scare tactic, as claimed by OMCs, yet they also contain an inherent offense beyond this use.

¹³⁵ See Figure 3.1, "Hells Angels" (photograph) One Hell of an Eye, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.onehellofaneye.com/2011/06/03/secrets-of-dreams-part-i>.

---- While the inversed Los Angeles County Sheriff's patch is interesting, there is no documentation as to why the "Berdo" member had it sewn to his kutte.

¹³⁶ Julian Sher and William Marsden, *Angels of Death: Inside the Biker Gangs' Crime Empire* (Da Capo Press, 2007).

---- The use of the swastika also points back to the appropriation of symbols seen in Chapter Two.

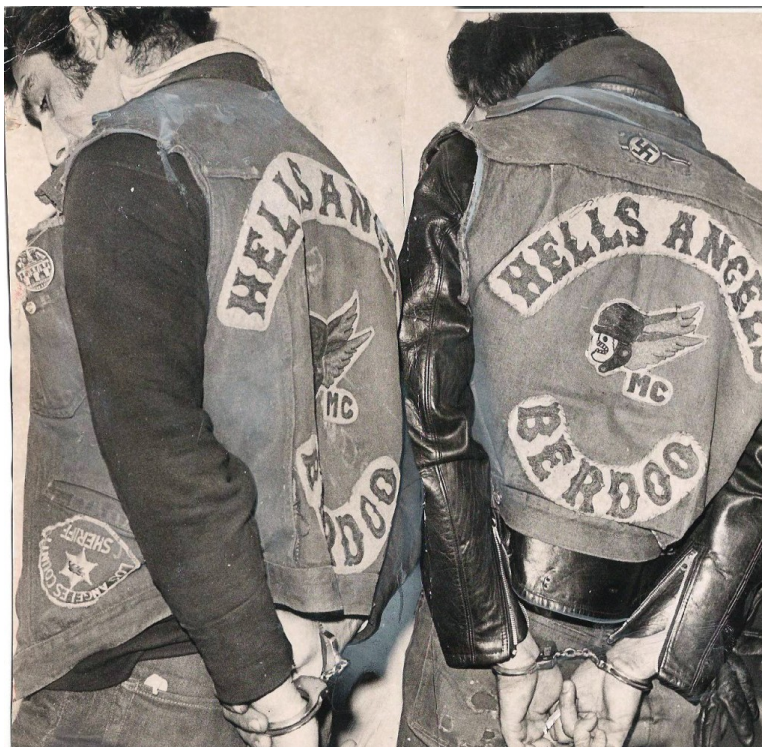


Figure 3.1: Note the swastika symbol sewn to the top of the Hells Angels member's kutte on the left from 1958.

Tom Barker, a professor of Criminal Justice at Eastern Kentucky University claimed that the usage of these symbols is "... very unusual" for two reasons: first, most OMC members likely are not participants in the Nazi Party, and second is that older OMCs such as the Hells Angels had creation roots followed WWII where veterans of the war were part of the membership.¹³⁷

It appears that the use of Nazi memorabilia maybe waning as Barker notes, "Biker gangs used to roam American highways with all kinds of Nazi insignias—swastikas, iron crosses, SS-style lightning bolts, steel helmets, peaked caps, but that stuff has gone out of fashion in the last decade or two."¹³⁸ Barker also said that the reason that the Hells Angels moved away from wearing this sort of regalia in modern

¹³⁷ Thomas Barker, *Biker Gangs and Organized Crime* (Newark, NJ: Routledge, 2014), 37.

¹³⁸ Barker, 38

times is because OMCs were shifting from a persona marked by public statements of outcast status.¹³⁹ As OMCs evolved, they became more private; therefore removing the symbols that caused them to be noticed was a step further into anonymity.

Furthermore, as OMCs grew, they expanded to become worldwide organizations. Ultimately, this does not discount the idea that these some OMCs are racist groups, some OMCs, like the Hells Angels and Outlaws MC recognized that using symbols like swastikas and iron crosses drew unwanted attention to them and their business.

The usage of these symbols does not stop one outlaw motorcycle club from including it in their club's main logo. The Hessians Motorcycle Club, founded in 1968 in Southern California, has for its logo a skull with a blade piercing it, on top of an iron cross.¹⁴⁰ The Hessians MC do not claim to be a racist organization, yet, they choose to use the iron cross which was appropriated from the Prussian army and used as a Nazi symbol prior to WWII. Nonetheless, they distract this discussion of the cross by focusing on their name, Hessians, claiming that they take the name from the mercenaries formed “by citizen farmers conscripted from a region of Germany known as Hesse.”¹⁴¹ The citizen farmers then became a troop of mercenaries hired by England in the 1700s. The Hessians “fought to fight,” so the Hessians MC appropriated the name because they too liked to be rowdy, especially when they were first founded.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Barker, 38

---- Despite the exclusion of these symbols from their kutties, later we'll discuss how southern chapters of the Hells Angels recruit and have members who claim to be white supremacists.

¹⁴⁰ *Hessians Mc*, (Guerilla Docs, 2011), DVD

---- See Figure 3.2, “Hessians Back Patch” (photograph) Hessians MC, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.hessiansmc.com/>

¹⁴¹ “Hessian History,” Hessians MC, 2015, accessed March 16, 2015, <http://www.hessiansmc.com/hessian-history.html>.

¹⁴² “Hessian History”

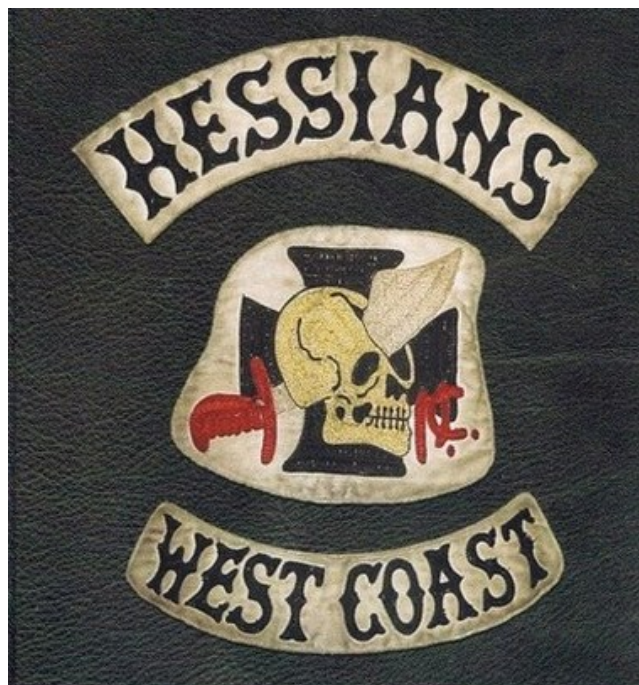


Figure 3.2: The Hessians Motorcycle Club full back patch, 1968.

Ultimately, despite their seemingly genuine foundation roots, the use of the iron cross still perpetuates the aforementioned fear that the Hessians MC wanted to instill in regular citizens – even if that was purposeful or not.

Although most outlaw clubs have started to move away from the anti-Semitic symbols on their regalia, there are still some OMCs that choose to exclude members based on racial background. As the early clubs were founded in the 1950s and 60s they were reflecting the racism that was rampant in the United States, particularly throughout the South, but spreading westward with the movement of the population. As OMCs began to develop in the West, ideology like racial exclusion from the South influenced their creation. As discussed in chapter two, OMC members migrated to the West after serving in the military. Some of these men carried racist ideologies; therefore influencing the outlaw organizations they would later join.

Despite the roots of outlaw motorcycle clubs being found following tours of service in the military, it is well known that men of color served alongside their white brethren in combat following World War II. Under the presidency of Harry Truman, he issued Executive Order 9811 that abolished racial discrimination in the armed forces. Following desegregation black men fought with white men during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, where a majority of OMCs found their club membership expanded. It is possible that there is still a racial divide that exists due to the idea of segregation during the 1960s era, therefore causing white men to employ exclusionary principles for their brotherhood of bikers. According to Hunter S. Thompson, "The Angels' relationship with Oakland Negroes is just as ambivalent as it is with the cops. Their color line is strangely gerrymandered."¹⁴³ One Angel had an African American roommate in Oakland who was an artist. Though this man was not a part of the Hells Angels organization, he was not entirely shunned from hanging around the organization. In addition, there was another African American male who would also hang around named Charley. Charley rode with the Hells Angels for a long time, "For so long" Thompson said, "that some of them (Hells Angels) are embarrassed to explain why he's not a member. 'Hell, I admire the little bastard,' said one, 'but he'll never get in. All it takes is two blackballs.'"¹⁴⁴ What is seen from these early interactions is that the Hells Angels were accepting of hanging out with African American men, but they had no interest in bringing them into their OMC ranks based on the color of their skin.

According to Barger, the Hells Angels claim that they are not racially segregated and do not judge prospective members by the color of their skin. Despite Barger's claim,

¹⁴³ Thompson, 229

¹⁴⁴ Thompson, 229

at least one chapter of the Hells Angels allegedly requires that a prospective candidate be a white male.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Barger stated in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation in 2000, “The club, as a whole is not racist, but we probably have enough racist members that no black guy is going to get in.”¹⁴⁶ As of 2000, the club had no African American members; but there have been members of associate MCs called puppet clubs that allow African American. Most notably was Gregory Wooley, who was an associate of the, Montreal, Quebec, Canada chapter of the Hells Angels in 2002.¹⁴⁷ Despite this one member associating with the club, OMCs are choosing to determine “whiteness,” when it comes to allowing certain members join their ranks. Pat Matter, former President of the Hells Angels in Minnesota stated that he had met “an ex-Hells Angels prospect named Romel Ferguson, a black guy, a real rarity for the Hells Angels.”¹⁴⁸ Later, Matter would recall that no cops or African Americans would be allowed in the Minnesota chapter of the Hells Angels stating that “on August 3, 1986, the ‘official’ Hells Angels rules were amended to include these: ‘No cops or ex-cops in

¹⁴⁵ Tobie Levingston, Keith Zimmerman, and Kent Zimmerman, *Soul On Bikes* (Motorbooks, 2004), 5.

¹⁴⁶ Chris Summers, “Born to Raise Hell,” BBC News, August 14, 2000, accessed December 18, 2013, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/873831.stm.

¹⁴⁷ Eric Thibault, “Dead Gang Leader Rebuffed Top Biker Prior to Assassination,” *Sun News // Canada*, August 16, 2012, accessed December 18, 2013, <http://www.sunnewsnetwork.ca/sunnews/canada/archives/2012/08/20120816-121421.html>.

---- While Gregory Wooley is Canadian, the Hells Angels membership has expanded worldwide, and he along with Romel Ferguson are some of the only African Americans that have associated with the group in such a intimate manner.

¹⁴⁸ Pat Matter & Chris Omodt, *Breaking the Code: a True Story by a Hells Angel President and the Cop Who Pursued Him* (United States: Real Deal, LLC, 2014), 36.

---- Note how Matter states that Ferguson was an ex-prospect. This meant that Ferguson never earned a full patch.

---- Matter was Hells Angels President of the Minneapolis, Minnesota Chapter from 1984-2004 when he was arrested and gave state’s evidence against the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club.

the club. No niggers in the club. No snitches in the club.”¹⁴⁹ Up until the publication of Matter’s book, the exclusionary principle as a rule had not been documented.

Emergence of African American and Multi-Racial OMCs

Around the same time as white groups started their engines in California; African American motorcycle clubs began to emerge as well. Throughout California, these African American motorcycle organizations not only rode for the camaraderie as their white counterparts but they also rode to fight the racism and stereotypes rampant in the United States. In northern California these groups had names like: East Bay Dragons, Frisco Rattlers, Outlaw Vagabonds, Defiant Ones, and Wheels Of Soul. In southern California, specifically, Los Angeles was the Choppers, Soul Brothers, and the Chosen Few.¹⁵⁰

When Sonny Barger formed the Oakland Hells Angels in 1957, a young African American rider from Louisiana named Tobie Gene Levingston followed in Barger’s footsteps and created his own motorcycle organization. According to Levingston, “The two knew and respected each other, and had ridden their Harleys together in the same East Bay neighborhood.”¹⁵¹ Despite this close relationship, Levingston was never asked to join the Hells Angels regardless of the friendliness and camaraderie he shared with Barger.

¹⁴⁹ Matter & Omodt, 55.

¹⁵⁰ *Ebony*, Rebels On Wheels, 1966, 64-71, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&sid=2ae5ed1a-1751-4377-8615-541ad1f6ba06%40sessionmgr4003&hid=4109&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=f5h&AN=48995519>.

¹⁵¹ Levington, Zimmerman, and Zimmerman, 5



Figure 3.3: Members of the East Bay Dragons ca. 1966.

In 1959, Levingston organized the East Bay Dragons.¹⁵² Levingston's club started out as an African American-only car club. Like OMCs, The East Bay Dragons were formed as a brotherhood. Levingston served as the President, but also as a father figure to most of the members - particularly because four of the members were his siblings.

Following a few tumultuous years of street violence Levingston and The East Bay Dragons switched to motorcycles.¹⁵³ Following the switch to motorcycles, The Dragons grew to ten members including Levingston's relatives.¹⁵⁴ What was unique about The East Bay Dragons though was that membership was not as open as other OMCs,

¹⁵² See Figure 3.3, "East Bay Dragons" (photograph), Selvedge Yard, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://selvedgeyard.com/2009/11/04/chosen-few-east-bay-dragons-americas-black-biker-set-revisited>.

¹⁵³ Levingston, Zimmerman, and Zimmerman, 8

¹⁵⁴ Levingston, Zimmerman, and Zimmerman, 47

meaning they only allow African American members in their ranks.¹⁵⁵ Despite Barger and Livingston's friendship, The East Bay Dragons reversed the exclusionary principle by not allowing white men to join them. Like The East Bay Dragons, the Chosen Few was founded in 1959 but had a different view of who could be a member of their organization.¹⁵⁶ As the Chosen Few tell it, "The 60s was a hell of a time. With the Civil Rights Movement, the Viet Nam War, flower power & free love. Sex, Drugs, and Rock & Roll there was also the crazy world of the outlaw biker."¹⁵⁷ Despite the craziness of the 1960s, the Chosen Few were one of the only outlaw clubs not swayed by the color of a person's skin. According to the Chosen Few's own history, they claim to be the first racially integrated 1%er motorcycle club.¹⁵⁸ The first white member to come to the Chosen Few was "White Boy Art." Around 1960, followed by "White Boy Tom." Despite the fact that white members started to join the Chosen Few, it is noticeable that they were still identified by the color of their skin. The distinction is puzzling due to the fact that they created their own group to overcome exclusion and persecution, yet despite this they still gave white members the tag of "white boy" reflecting the inherent racism of the era; they noted difference but did not exclude. Regardless of this distinction, the Chosen Few started to attract even more white, outlaw riders.

¹⁵⁵ Instead, The Dragons were an all black organization that allowed members to join from the club's neighborhood.

¹⁵⁶ See Figure 3.4, "Chosen Few MC" (photograph) Selvedge Yard, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://selvedgeyard.com/2009/11/04/chosen-few-east-bay-dragons-americas-black-biker-set-revisited>.

¹⁵⁷ Wizard

¹⁵⁸ Wizard



Figure 3.4: Members of the Chose Few Motorcycle Club in Los Angeles ca. 1965.

Ultimately, the Chosen Few became the first documented multi-racial MC. Of the multiple chapters that existed, membership spanned from being all African American, all white, mixed race, all Latino and various other ethnicities.¹⁵⁹

Although the Chosen Few may have started out as an all African American OMC brotherhood, the inclusion of white members is what took the organization into the outlaw biker world. Once white members joined the Chosen Few's ranks, the Hells Angels and Mongols started to take notice. Most OMCs knew it was an African American club initially, but when all-white OMCs saw white members flying the same patch as African Americans, they started attaching Nazi symbols to their kutties.¹⁶⁰ Regardless of

¹⁵⁹ Wizard

¹⁶⁰ Not all-white OMCs have claimed that they started wearing Nazi symbols on their kutties for this reason specifically, yet the inclusion of white members in the Chosen Few and the use of Nazi symbols on kutties in all-white OMCs happened around the same time. This all might be coincidence, but the correlation could use further investigation.

what other OMCs were doing, the white men who joined the Chosen Few rode with their African American brethren because they felt like they belonged. Like many other OMCs, all the members of the Chosen Few had fought to fly the club's colors, and did so proudly.¹⁶¹ "It soon became well known all around by the other clubs that — 'In Black & White, We Really Had Might.'"¹⁶² The Chosen Few also had another slogan they used that states, "Take None, Give None." This patch, much like the diamond-shaped 1%er patch was embroidered with those words. According to Wizard, the Chosen Few MC's historian, the club's "Our 'Take None, Give None' 1%er diamond was given to us by '69 Jim' who was a 5 foot 6 inch radical Mexican."¹⁶³ This patch has stood the test of time and has ended up as the title of a forthcoming documentary made by the Chosen Few.



Figure 3.5: Photograph by Gusmano Cesaretti of a Chosen Few member wearing the "Take None, Give None" patch, 2013.

¹⁶¹"Take None, Give None: Chosen Few Mc Documentary" (video), February 28, 2013, accessed April 15, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tE7QJ-RcW8o>.

¹⁶² Wizard

¹⁶³ Wizard

---- See Figure 3.5, "Chosen Few" (photograph), Shot Gallery – Gusmano Cesaretti, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://shotgallery.livejournal.com/84868.html>

Although The Chosen Few had groundbreaking ideas about OMCs and brotherhood, they were not the only club to be an integrated. Wheels of Soul, started out in 1967 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.¹⁶⁴ Unlike The Chosen Few, Wheels of Soul started as a multi-ethnic club. According to Jerry Robinson, mother chapter president, when the club originated, they were "different" because they allowed white guys in the club.¹⁶⁵ Today, there are multiple OMC organizations that consist of only African American members. In fact, there are currently 331 African American biker clubs that exist in America.¹⁶⁶ Not all of these clubs are one-percenter clubs.¹⁶⁷



Figure 3.6: Members of the Wheels of Soul Motorcycle Club c. 1968

¹⁶⁴ "About Us - Wheels of Soul," Wheels Of Soul, 2015, accessed March 17, 2015, http://www.wheelsofsoulct.com/about_us.

---- See Figure 3.6, "Wheels of Soul Members" (photograph), Wheels of Soul MC – Rip City, accessed April 10, 2015, <https://wheelsofsoul.wordpress.com/page/2/>

¹⁶⁵ *Wheels of Soul*, (Guerilla Docs, 2011), DVD

¹⁶⁶ Derrick B. "Black Motorcycle Clubs." Black Motorcycle Clubs. October 21, 2013. Accessed October 21, 2013. <http://www.blackmotorcycleclubs.net>.

¹⁶⁷ Derrick B.

Determining Whiteness

African American males were not the only ethnicity to be rejected by mainstream outlaw motorcycle clubs such as the Hells Angels. Latino and Native American men were not allowed to join the Hells Angels at the club's creation as well.¹⁶⁸ In an effort to start their own organization, those who were not allowed to join the Hells Angels created the Mongols Motorcycle Club in 1969.¹⁶⁹ Ruben "Doc" Cavazos recalled that the Mongols was founded "by a couple of Harley riders who liked to ride, party and fight."¹⁷⁰ Despite the Mongols penchant for those things, they were excluded from the Hells Angels, The Boozefighters, Outlaws and a cavalcade of various other white OMCs typically founded upon these same activities.

After moving to Los Angeles from Texas in 1961, Cavazos grew up in a rough neighborhood and began seeing gang violence. Eventually, after witnessing beatings to his friends from gangs, Cavazos made the decision also to join a street gang, the Avenues, around the age of 14 before graduating to OMCs in 2000, when he joined the Mongols.¹⁷¹ Ten years after the club's inception. During that time, the Mongols were still exclusively a Latino and Native American-only outlaw club. The Mongols were also perceived to have strong ties to La EMe, the Mexican mafia, due to their outlaw status and Hispanic heritage.¹⁷² Unlike their seemingly white racist OMC counterparts, the

¹⁶⁸ This exclusion shows that the Hells Angels were using their own methods for determining whiteness. Despite the fact that white OMCs included those of European bloodlines, it can be argued that each of those members came from a mixed ethnicity.

¹⁶⁹ "Mongols Nation Motorcycle Club," Mongols MC, 2009, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://mongolsmc.com/sub/history>.

¹⁷⁰ Ruben Cavazos, *Honor Few, Fear None: the Life and Times of a Mongol* (New York, NY.: It Books, 2009), 74.

¹⁷¹ Cavazos, 23

¹⁷² Cavazos, 58

Mongols did not remain a Latino-only club for long. As the Mongols' organization sought to grow, the Mongols began to recruit the toughest guys around. According to Cavazos, "The Mongols attracted an interesting bunch of tough guys, including one Navy veteran, an ex-SEAL who would one day go on to become the governor of Minnesota."¹⁷³ Cavazos was referring to Jesse Ventura, former governor of Minnesota and outspoken politician. Despite the Mongols inclusion of white members they still have their own exclusionary principles. Like the Hells Angels, the Mongols exclude African American members from joining their organization. According to federal documents about the Mongols they, "very frequently [participate in] hate crimes directed against African American persons who might come in contact with Mongols."¹⁷⁴ In fact, the Mongols have been documented as being highly racist towards African American people even if they are not associated with the outlaw lifestyle. On many occasions, the Mongols have threatened African American people simply for being in the same vicinity as the OMC.¹⁷⁵

It has become obvious that the color of a person's skin has started to matter less and less, as long as the person's skin was not black.¹⁷⁶ The Mongols, initially a Latino and Native American-only organization began to recruit members that were the toughest guys around. This meant that as long as the recruit was not black, they would

¹⁷³ Cavazos, 75

¹⁷⁴ United States Of America, Plaintiff v. Ruben Cavazos; Ruben Cavazos, Jr.; Hector Gonzalez, Jr., et. al, Defendants., Grand Jury., 9.

¹⁷⁵ United States Of America, Plaintiff v. Ruben Cavazos; Ruben Cavazos, Jr.; Hector Gonzalez, Jr., et. al, Defendants., Grand Jury., 38, 47 & 70.

¹⁷⁶ This notion denotes the determination of whiteness for the Hells Angels, and the capability for the Mongols to over look the fact that their organization started out as a Latino and Native American-only organization.

recruit them.¹⁷⁷ The Hells Angels also began to recognize this and they have started to overlook the color barrier in an effort to bolster their numbers. Like the Mongols MC, as long as the prospective member was not black, they had the opportunity to join the Hells Angels. This tactic was a move to hinder the possibility that the Mongols membership would surpass the Hells Angels. The Hells Angels did this in order to keep the Mongols relegated to a lesser position of power than the Hells Angels.

Exclusions of Latino and Native Americans in white clubs were not the only racial segregations in outlaw clubs. Following the creation of organizations like the Hells Angels and Mongols, there does not seem to be any documentation of Japanese or Korean members joining OMCs.¹⁷⁸ In the 1960s, the Oakland Hells Angels had a member named Chinese Mel. According to Hunter S. Thompson, Chinese Mel was, “a mechanic for Harley-Davidson.”¹⁷⁹ It is likely that though he was Chinese, Mel was accepted into the brotherhood because he had connections at Harley-Davidson, but also shared mannerisms seen from Linkhorns.¹⁸⁰ There is no documentation of what happened to Chinese Mel, but he was not the only Chinese member to be involved with the Hells Angels. In the 1980s, in Cleveland, Ohio Steven Yee was patched into the Hells Angels.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ While The Mongols under Cavazos’s leadership recruited a lot East Los Angeles Latinos, white members also began to join ranks.

¹⁷⁸ If I were to postulate on this idea, I would suggest that there are no Japanese or Korean members seen in the ranks of OMCs because most members of clubs were veterans who did not like the idea of having to ride with members who had the same features of those that they had been fighting in wars for the past 20 years.

¹⁷⁹ Thompson, 44

¹⁸⁰ ---- Linkhorns were bonded servants from the British Isles as seen in Thompson, 148

¹⁸¹ See Figure 3.6, “Steven Yee” (photograph), DeadlySynz, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.deadlysynz.com/bio.html>.



Figure 3.6: Steven Yee, a Chinese-American Hells Angels member c. 1985.

Yee is a member of the Cleveland, Ohio member of the Hells Angels. Yee's involvement with the Hells Angels is documented through court documents. Yee is currently serving time in prison on charges of federal firearm offenses and conspiracy to commit murder.¹⁸² Despite the text from the transcripts of Yee's trial, there is no current documentation stating how Yee joined the organization.¹⁸³ Despite the developments in racial tolerance there has been a significant rise in racist groups getting involved with outlaw motorcycle clubs despite the shedding of the racist iconography as discussed previously. A possible explanation for the exclusion of African Americans from OMCs is that some one-percenters joining ranks are white

¹⁸² United States of America, Plaintiff-Appellee, v. John Ray Bonds (91-3610); Mark Verdi (91-3609); and Steven Wayne Yee (91-3608), Defendants-Appellants., 12 F.3d 540 (6th Cir. 1994)

¹⁸³ Yee is currently serving a life sentence in Grafton Correctional facility. To keep himself busy, Yee has been working on a music project named DeadlySynz, which will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

supremacists. According Yves Lavigne, the members of the OMCs in the southern United States are allied with the Ku Klux Klan.¹⁸⁴ Lavigne also cites evidence that the North Carolina Hells Angels chapters have ties to the KKK.¹⁸⁵ According to a report from the Anti-Defamation League, further documentation has found that OMC members provide security detail at KKK rallies.¹⁸⁶ More recently, white supremacist leagues in the United States have been seeking business relationships with outlaw motorcycle clubs, especially outlaw clubs who participate in criminal activity. Although as seen, there has always been some links between white supremacist subcultures and the biker subculture, until now, documentation of these relationships, other than the use of racist symbols has been scant.¹⁸⁷

Outlaw bikers and white supremacists have started to create more connections by coexisting and intermingling at an increasing rate. According to the Anti-Defamation League, “All five of the major white supremacist movements in the United States – neo-Nazis, racist skinheads, Ku Klux Klan groups, racist prison gangs, and Christian Identity groups – have developed noteworthy ties to the biker subculture.”¹⁸⁸ It appears that the business that all groups participate in overlap, particularly with shared symbols, language and in some cases, dress. It is apparent that these connections via culture make the encounters between the different social movements easier.

¹⁸⁴ Yves Lavigne, *Hell's Angels: Taking Care of Business* (New York: Ballantine Books. 1st Printing, 1989), 65.

---- Referred to as KKK for the rest of the document.

¹⁸⁵ Lavigne, 65

¹⁸⁶ “Bigots On Bikes,” Anti-Defamation League, 2011, accessed April 10, 2014, http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/combatting-hate/ADL_CR_Bigots_on_Bikes_online.pdf.

¹⁸⁷ “Bigots On Bikes”

¹⁸⁸ “Bigots On Bikes”

These relationships have resulted in a number of individuals who hold dual membership in outlaw motorcycle clubs and white supremacist groups to increase in numbers.¹⁸⁹ Institutional connections, such as those cultivated in prisons have also increased, therefore adding strength to both groups, thus increasing the possibility of a rise in organized crime due to the sheer number of individuals involved increasing exponentially.

Exclusion of Women

Exclusionary principles in the OMC world are not strictly aimed toward people of different races and ethnicities. Women have also been shunned from the core of 1%er life, having been assigned a peripheral role. Typically, the people that are writing about OMC are all males and most have used peripheral observation about women from their own experience or from male 1%ers perspectives therefore causing a skewed viewpoint from non-scholarly literature and a male dominated justice system. What comes from this is largely an underdeveloped look into the lives of women and how they actually fit into the OMC subculture, however, despite previous researcher's potential shortcomings there is some semblance of validity that comes from their scholarship.

With some justification, the outlaw biker subculture has typically been viewed as a man's world. However, this has not always been the case. In 1947, during the Hollister riots, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported, "perhaps one and ten was a girl."¹⁹⁰ In addition, during the 1940s and early 1950s, some chapters of OMCs including the Hells

¹⁸⁹ "Bigots on Bikes"

¹⁹⁰ Doughtry, Jr., C.I. "More On Hollister's Bad Time," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1947.

Angels had members who were women.¹⁹¹ Though the OMC world is exclusively male dominated and previous research shows that the reason for women's involvement with OMCs, has been for the OMC's gain, whether through prostitution, drug trafficking, or other degenerate activity. Non-1%er women bikers start riding motorcycles because of the sisterhood they experience while riding. As has already been discussed, men typically enter the OMC world because of the camaraderie and brotherhood they were lacking from the civilian world thus showing a connection between men on a basic level. According to existing scholarship, some women are typically drawn to the OMC lifestyle because they are attracted to the macho image, they, like the men, are rebelling against societal norms. Despite their rebellion, women are not 1%ers by classification because they are not allowed in 1%er ranks.

Ultimately, what we have seen in outlaw motorcycle club culture is the waxing and waning of racism and the exclusion of people, both male and female from OMCs. What spawned from some OMCs exclusionary principle was the creation of non-white racially distinct organizations and multi-racial organizations that have thrived and remain as part of the cultural landscape within the OMC world today. Despite the expansion of multi-ethnic OMCs, the ties between white supremacists and outlaw motorcycle clubs has risen as well, showing that though many years have passed since segregation was abolished, racism and sexism is still rampant in these organizations.

¹⁹¹ Bill Ogersby, *Biker* (Guilford: Lyons Press, 2005), 110.

Chapter Four: OMCs and Mass Media

OMCs In the Headlines, Books and Novels

The end of World War II would cause the United States to work towards lifestyle rebuilding the economy as well as the boom of population, particularly amongst teenagers. The intensification of youth culture, would lead to an explosion of media aimed at young people who were ample targets for popular culture.¹⁹² Through these forms of media the outlaw biker image would be seen in many forms, though some forms would stem from derivations of the outlaw image seen in early American history, especially in literature.

OMCs in literature have appeared in many forms, from short stories and magazines to novels both long and short. Though their appearance in these forms of media have only been around since the 1950s, the idea of the outlaw in print has existed long before the conversion from the outlaw on a horse, to an outlaw on a machine. Richard Slotkin, a cultural critic and historian from Wesleyan University has spend 30 years discussing the idea of the West and the literature accompanying Wild West myths. What Slotkin discusses in Part III of his book *Gunfighter Nation*, is the rise of the dime novel, short stories romanticizing the idea of the west and the old outlaws in the early American West. Slotkin, along with Henry Nash Smith, author of *Virgin Land*, posit that through American Literature, we have been perpetuating our own myths of the outlaw and their effects on the west. What is seen through this is the development of American culture through exaggerations of true accounts that were

¹⁹² Popular culture, within this context, is defined as literature publications, music, television and film.

then sensationalized in order to gain more credence. Like these dime novels, American culture was affected by this form of literature much later with the rise of OMCs.

Initially, paperback publishers exploited the marketability of outlaw bikers. Like dime novels from the Wild West myths, writers ripped their plots from the headlines of newspapers, mesmerizing their readers with over exaggerated stories of the outlaw biker and their life in the fast lane. One of the first of these was *Road Kids* by Bud Clifton. Published in 1958, the book stemmed many other publishers to follow suit, but the revolution of outlaw biker novels would not explode into mainstream media after the publication of *The Sex and Savagery of Hell's Angels* penned by Jan Hudson. In the book, the sensationalized views of Hudson perpetuated the ideas that he knew the Hells Angels and had conversations with them regarding their views of life, sex and violence.¹⁹³ What came from Hudson's book was a myriad of other biker novelists in the 1960s producing books like *The Pack*, *The Blood Circus* and *The Sweet Ride*. These books, like Hudson's would sensationalize the stereotypes around the OMC world in the 1960s portraying them as sex-crazed violent maniacs on two wheels. Throughout the next three decades, the outlaw biker stereotype would perpetuate itself in fiction following the production of a detective novel *Death Ride*, where police officer infiltrate an OMC to bust them for illegal trafficking of narcotics and weapons. Authored by D.A. Hodgman, this book, which would eventually become a series was a fictional retelling of events where the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) infiltrated

¹⁹³ Jan Hudson, *Hell's Angels the Sex and Savagery of Hells Angels* (San Diego: Greenleaf Classics, Inc, 1966).

---- In reality, Hudson was the pen name for George H. Smith who was said to have pulled all of his notions about the Hells Angels from newspaper headlines.

the Hells Angels in an effort to gain information about illegal operations happening within the organization.¹⁹⁴

Aside from the myriad of stories printed in news media OMCs had other places in literature. Just like filmmakers, publishers of pulp fiction were also drawn to the outlaw motorcycle rider. Much like in film, press accounts had established in the public's mind that America was infested with biker trash that participated in acts of sex and violence. Just like the mainstream media of the 1960s, images of lawlessness and random violence appeared in the pages featuring outlaw bikers. Titles like *Banned*, *Barred*, and *Shocker* served as a parade of biker transgressions, which the image of the nasty biker fit in. During the late 1960s, the publishing company Seven Seventy put out a myriad of magazines with outlaw bikers as the central theme.

Men's adventure magazines also took an interest in outlaw bikers. Though the origins of the adventure genre have roots in early American history, the 1940s and 1950s saw the publication of men's magazines like *True*, *Stag* and *Real* that proved to be champions of the tough guy image – a visage that outlaw bikers truly had a grip on. *True* was one of the first magazines to place a spotlight on the outlaw biker's lifestyle. Published in August 1965, *True's* report did not spare the group saying, "They call themselves Hell's Angels. They ride, rape and raid like marauding cavalry – and they boast that no police can break up their criminal motorcycle fraternity." Following their publication, *True* faced competition from their print rivals *Real* magazine who published a 10-page feature article on the Hells Angels produced by Bob Grant.

¹⁹⁴ Ann Richardson. (California Department of Justice). *Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs: USA Overview*. California: Government Printing Office, 1991. (147691).

At this point, outlaw bikers were America's most feared villains. Paperback publishers began exploiting the image of the biker. Most were pulling their book's plots straight from the newspaper headlines mesmerizing their readers with tales of high-speed life in the fast lane. Books like *Hell's Angels*, *The Hell Cats*, and *Road Kids* were the most prevalent, but it was not until the creation of *Easyriders* magazine that outlaw biker was able to speak for themselves. David Mann, an artist from Kansas City, was recruited by the magazine to portray bikers, outlaw and otherwise, through a real scope with the help of his artistic skills.¹⁹⁵ Mann, an avid motorcycle enthusiast was an artist, was also the founding member of the Kansas City chapter of the El Forestero Motorcycle Club, and OMC that would be later linked with the Hells Angels in Minnesota.¹⁹⁶ Mann's art and *Easyriders* magazine gave a voice for the outlaw biker by depicting them as what they claim to be: motorcycle enthusiasts. David Nichols, editor-in-chief of *Easyriders*, and author of a myriad of books including *One Percenter: The Legend of the Outlaw Biker* discusses Nichols view of the outlaw biker as being derived from the origins of outlaw mentality from the Huns to the Vikings, to pirates and outlaw gunslingers in the Old West.¹⁹⁷ In this piece of literature, Nichols attacks U.S. popular media by stating that their view and image of the outlaw biker has been misrepresented.¹⁹⁸ While not completely defending outlaw bikers, Nichols states that, if one member of a club is arrested for a crime, the whole organization is implicit due to the member's

¹⁹⁵ Ogersby, 81.

¹⁹⁶ Tom Fugle. (December 12, 2004). *Eulogy for David Mann* (PDF). Seaside Park, Ventura California. 3-4.

¹⁹⁷ Dave Nichols, *One Percenter: the Legend of the Outlaw Biker* (Minneapolis: Motorbooks, 2010), 8.

¹⁹⁸ Nichols, 154

affiliation.¹⁹⁹ This book, published in 2010, serves as a counterpoint to a myriad of books published depicting all those involved in an outlaw biker organization as criminals.²⁰⁰ Ultimately, Nichols and *Easyriders Magazine* would start to use literature to push their own views of OMCs. These views, held by Nichols have also been written about in a myriad of books produced by Sonny Barger, but more recently, Barger wrote a book unlike any other that he had written before. Instead, Barger opted to write and publish a novel much like those produced in the 1960s titled *Dead In 5 Heartbeats*.²⁰¹ This book follows the life of an outlaw biker looking to keep the peace amongst warring OMCs, and seemingly discusses the mantle of leadership that the protagonist must carry when being the head of an OMC.²⁰² Barger's novel serves as a bookend to OMCs working to use literature in popular culture to influence the opinions of the masses, instead of letting popular culture influence OMCs.

OMCs In Music

Like literature, music is another facet of popular culture that has influenced OMCs whether the music was written about them, or OMCs were merely peripheral actors in a musician's life. As discussed in chapter three, OMCs, music and musicians

¹⁹⁹ Nichols, 154

²⁰⁰ See Queen, Jay Dobyns and Nils Johnson-Shelton, *No Angel: My Harrowing Undercover Journey to the Inner Circle of the Hells Angels* (New York: Broadway Books, 2010) as well as Charles Falco and Kerrie Droban, *Vagos, Mongols, and Outlaws: My Infiltration of America's Deadliest Biker Gangs*, Reprint ed. (publication place: St. Martin's Griffin, 2014). All of these books discuss infiltration of clubs where all members are implicit to crimes committed the acts of a few of their organization under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.

²⁰¹ Ralph Barger, *Dead in 5 Heartbeats: a Novel* (New York: William Morrow, 2003).

²⁰² This novel will be revisited in the later section regarding films and television as Barger has adapted this piece of literature into a film.

have been involved with one another since the early 1960s.²⁰³ The long documented history amongst the hippies, beatniks and bikers was seen most prevalently in San Francisco with the Hells Angels and their involvement with the Grateful Dead, BBHC, Jefferson Airplane and others. Though widely accepted as being associated with the counterculture of the 1960s, OMCs and rock and roll music had a much larger role in mainstream media than their involvement with the Hippie movement.

OMCs and rock and roll music for made for one another. Elvis Presley was infatuated by motorcycles and in 1964; he starred in *Roustabout*, bridging the gap between the outlaw biker in film to music. Despite Presley's reputation, it was Gene Vincent, a rock 'n' roll artist from Newhall, California, who was the real motorcycle rocker of the mid-1960s. Vincent was one of rock's first mythic icons. Vincent served in the US Navy, but his time was cut short following a motorcycle accident at the age of 20.²⁰⁴ Vincent began writing songs during his recovery in the hospital and when he eventually recovered; he focused on building a career in music with his band, Gene Vincent, and the Blue Caps. The group was signed to Capital Records, and following a hit with the song "Be-Bop-A-Lula," in 1955, the group decided to relocate to England after only achieving a modicum of success in the states.²⁰⁵ Taken in by the British rock 'n' roll culture, Vincent transformed his outward appearance. Instead of wearing rockabilly shirts, he adopted the black leather look for which he would become famous. In

²⁰³ It is likely that the two have a longer relationship than the 1960s, however the two being so intertwined did not seem to be historically relevant until the 1960s and eruption of bikers and musicians within the counterculture.

²⁰⁴ Susan VanHecke, *Race with the Devil: Gene Vincent's Life in the Fast Lane* (New York: Minotaur Books, 2000), 5-6.

²⁰⁵ Capital refers to Capital Records. The record label had hoped they had found a rival to Sun Records and Elvis, but were less than successful.

addition to this change in look, Vincent's stage presence changed as well. He took on the stage persona of a demonic biker, mimicking the images he had seen in early outlaw biker films like *The Wild One*. Ultimately this change in image would be short lived after Vincent and friend Eddie Cochran, who shared the bill on Vincent's shows, were involved in a car accident. Cochran perished in the wreck, and Vincent left the scene traumatized.²⁰⁶ In the subsequent years, Vincent's career dwindled as he began drinking heavily. He would die from alcoholism in 1971.²⁰⁷

The 1950s and 1960s, however, had lighter takes on the motorcycle myth. A song penned by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, "Black Denim Trousers," was a song that would be performed by the vocal trio The Cheers. The Diamonds, which were a clean-cut group, gave a saccharine spin on the outlaw biker image, then covering the song in 1955. Girl groups, too, started singing songs about the mythical motorcycle rider as well. In 1962, Phil Spector's group The Crystals topped the rock 'n' roll charts with "He's A Rebel." Despite the success of the Crystals, it would be the Shangri-Las who would encapsulate the outlaw biker façade best in 1964 with the song "Leader of the Pack." The track would prove to be much darker than the earlier songs the group proved to exude teenage anguish over their parent's denial of their daughter dating a dirty biker. The early 1960s were the heyday of "motorcycle pop," but these tunes were aimed at those riding easy-to-ride Japanese machines and not the heavy, American made motorcycles preferred by outlaw groups. Songs and groups started to wane after biker films started to become a faux pas following the tragedy at Altamont.

²⁰⁶ VanHecke, 144.

---- Vincent would talk to Cochran like he was in the dressing room before a show, even though Cochran had perished earlier in 1960.

²⁰⁷ VanHecke, 236.

The outlaw biker image in music would show up in the 1970s as appropriated by Ian “Lemmy” Kilmister, renowned bassist and vocalist for Hawkwind, and most famously, Motörhead. Kilmister was known for his music, but it was his image that would make him stand apart, particularly amongst his Hawkwind band mates who clad themselves with psychedelic explorer image rather than biker outlaw Kilmister chose to wear. Following Kilmister’s departure from Hawkwind, a 1975 profile presented in *New Musical Express*, regarded Kilmister as individual who personified the rock-and-roll outlaw.²⁰⁸ Journalist Tony Tyler said “Lemmy regarded the street outlaw as a ‘Romantic figure – and you can tell RRs by the way they dress most of all. Hence the leathers and the Iron Cross and the long lank hair and the prized relationship with the Hell’s Angels.’”²⁰⁹ What Kilmister was doing was paying homage to the outlaw by dressing like one, but also catering to them by wearing attire that the outlaw biker understood. The use of the outlaw biker image would continue through 1980s. Music groups like Judas Priest, KISS, Mötley Crüe, Bon Jovi and a myriad of others started bringing back the outlaw biker image to the forefront of music. For most, it was only the dress of the outlaw biker they would appropriate. Each group would dawn leather on stage, but it was the latter two that would bring the motorcycle into their music. For Bon Jovi, their only foray into the outlaw imagery was through their song “Wanted Dead Or Alive,” which appeared on their 1986 album *Slippery When Wet*.²¹⁰ Lyrically, the song is supposed to pay homage to Jon Bon Jovi's admiration for Old West heroes. Despite

²⁰⁸ Steve Waksman, *This Ain't the Summer of Love: Conflict and Crossover in Heavy Metal and Punk* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 151.

²⁰⁹ Tony Tyler, “‘Knock Knock!’ ‘Who’s There?’ ‘Lemmy’ ...,” *New Musical Express*, February 8, 1975. 42. As seen in Waksman, 152.

²¹⁰ Ironically, the title of the song is the same as a television series starring Steve McQueen, who rode a motorcycle in *The Great Escape*.

this, the lyrics focus more on the outlaw biker image. The outlaw image is heard the most with the line, "I'm a cowboy, on a steel horse I ride..." referring to the motorcycle as being an iron horse. This image relates back to Corman's idea that the Hells Angels were just cowboys in a new era. Unlike Bon Jovi, Mötley Crüe would also toy with the outlaw biker image during their early career, riding motorcycles in their music video "Girls, Girls, Girls." The group also donned denim vests in the video borrowing the outlaw image as being "bad boys" looking for "new toys." Despite these lyrics, the group did not associate with OMCs, but the group's image was tied up in the outlaw biker visage.²¹¹ Furthermore, Mötley Crüe, during recent tours, has used the Harley-Davidson shield logo for their merchandise and has rode motorcycles out on stage.



Figure 5.1: The album cover for Mötley Crüe's *Girls, Girls, Girls*, 1987.

²¹¹ Members of the group did ride motorcycles, and even had custom choppers made for them, but they never participated in any OMC groups.

---- See Figure 5.1, "Girls, Girls, Girls" (album cover), Mötley Crüe, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.motley.com/music/girls-girls-girls/>

More recently, the biker image has appeared once again with the group Black Label Society (BLS). The band's creator Zakk Wylde and the rest of his group wear a kutte that is eerily similar to the kutties seen on outlaw bikers.²¹² Wylde says that the reason his group wears a kutte is because BLS is like a brotherhood – akin to the Hells Angels. Wearing this kutte is not flattering to some OMC members though. In a brief interview with a Hells Angels member who asked to remain anonymous, he stated that he “did not have a problem with the band wearing a three-piece patch until he saw someone ride up on a motorcycle wearing the colors.”²¹³ Ultimately, for him and other OMC groups, their kutties are sacred, much like a military officer's uniform. It is disrespectful for an outsider to wear a uniform when they have not earned it. The anonymous member went on to say that he “saw the guy get ‘scalped’ by one of this other brothers.”²¹⁴



Figure 5.2: Zakk Wylde and Black Label Society posing with their three piece patch used by the band.

²¹² See Figure 5.2, “Black Label Society” (photograph), Prick Magazine, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.prickmag.net/blacklabelsocietyfeature.html>.

²¹³ Anonymous Member of the Hells Angels motorcycle club, interviewed by author, Moscow, ID, February 3, 2015.

²¹⁴ Anonymous member of the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club.

---- The term “scalped” refers to a person having their kutte removed from their body, particularly having the vest cut off of the wearer.

Despite the danger of wearing kutties, this does not stop other bands from wearing them. Another heavy metal group of recent activity, Texas Hippie Coalition also wears kutties when they are on stage, but at this time, no members have been "scalped." Like the Black Label Society or the other musical acts listed, the Texas Hippie Coalition do not have any affiliation with an OMC and simply wear kutties as a symbol of their brotherhood.

More recently outlaw bikers and OMC members have started making music on their own. As discussed in chapter three, Steven Yee, an incarcerated Hells Angel has began making music during his prison stay. His band DeadlySynz, uses lyrics to express Yee's thoughts about the outlaw biker lifestyle while behind bars. The album he and other inmates produced is titled "Last Ride Home" and Yee states that his music is about "prison life and memories of life on the streets. Some of the music, you can hear the pain, but there's so much feeling, of what was before, and what could be tomorrow."²¹⁵

²¹⁵ Steven Yee, "Deadlysynz - Bio," DeadlySynz, 2006, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://www.deadlysynz.com/bio.html>.

---- See Figure 5.3, "Last Ride Home" (album cover) Deadly Synz, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://www.deadlysynz.com/bio.html>.

---- Note that Yee is wearing his Hells Angels kutte and the road sign states "B.H.C" which stands for "Big House Crew" and is a section on the Hells Angels webpage paying homage to those members who are currently serving a prison sentence. Furthermore, the number "81" refers to the eighth and the first letter of the alphabet: H & A, therefore representing Hells Angels.



Figure 5.3: The album cover for DeadlySynz, Steven Yee's band, 1996.

Yee, however, is not the only Hells Angels member to start making music directly influenced by the outlaw biker image. Rusty Coones, founded his band Attika 7 while he was serving time in prison.²¹⁶ Attika 7, like BLS also wears kuttes representing the band while promoting the image of the outlaw biker when performing their music on stage.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Adam Parsons, "Attika 7 - About," Attika 7, 2015, accessed April 14 2015, <http://www.attika7.com/pages/about>.

²¹⁷ See Figure 5.4, "Attika 7" (photograph), Attika 7, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://www.attika7.com/pages/about>.



Figure 5.4: The band, without Coones pictured, wearing kuttes on stage during a performance in 2012.

Coones and Attika 7 have had their music on *Sons of Anarchy*, a television show depicting an OMC in central California.²¹⁸ Like Yee, Coones had played guitar long before he had joined the Hells Angels, and found music again after being incarcerated.²¹⁹ Though his status with the Hells Angels is unknown, the fact that the band uses kuttes as part of their on stage image shows that they are appropriating the imagery to promote the outlaw image.

²¹⁸ Coones also appears on the television show in the latter seasons of the series as seen in Leonard Ortiz, "Biker's 'Sons of Anarchy' Appearance Isn't An Act," *Orange County Register*, December 7, 2012, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/coones-379851-illusion-sons.html>. This will be discussed further in the next section.

²¹⁹ Parsons

OMCs On the Screen, Big and Small

From their inception, development, exclusionary lifestyle and perceived sexism, OMCs evolution has been documented and influenced by the society and culture that surrounded them. From there, culture continued to perpetuate the outlaw myth by writing stories and making films about these people. Instead of denying these stereotypes, OMCs chose to emulate them to an extreme. As these stereotypes were perpetuated, OMCs began to start influencing media they had modeled themselves. From films to music and songs to literature, the OMC image has a strong grasp on American culture – for better or worse.

As we already discussed, *The Wild One* is the film that started it all. The film took the Hollister legend to the big screen by mimicking the stories printed in the Hollister press stories. Following the club's removal from a motorcycle meet, the Black Rebels Motorcycle Club "invade" a small town, get intoxicated and create their event. The club leader, Johnny Strabler, falls for a local cop's daughter, but things take a negative turn when a rival gang, the Beetles, led by "Chino" played by Lee Marvin, roll into town. Directed by Stanley Kramer, one of Hollywood's first independent film producers, initially intended to give *The Wild One* a social message. In the original ending of the film, Kramer proposed that the town merchants refused to levy charges against the BRMC because of the dollars the bikers had brought into the town.²²⁰ Instead, since the film was produced in the Cold War era, film censors found this critique of capitalism too contentious.

²²⁰ Maz Harris, *Bikers: Birth of a Modern-Day Outlaw* (London: Faber & Faber, 1985), 6-7.

Consequently, the film's liberalism was downplayed to focus on the romance between Strabler and the cop's daughter Kathie Bleeker played by Mary Murphy.

Following the release of the film, Harry Cohn, the film producer, and production director of Columbia Pictures Corporation hated the picture. Amid a climate of unease about juvenile crimes, newspapers and magazines also wrote disparaging remarks about the film, and its celebration of delinquency. Despite these negative reviews, the film was a hit with the younger generation of rebellious moviegoers. Young viewers were enamored by the coolness conveyed by Brando and his motorcycle cohorts. Ultimately, the film's acceptance by the original Boozefighters was lukewarm at best; the film was revered by subsequent generations of bikers, including the Chicago Outlaws Motorcycle Club who, as mentioned before, appropriated the Black Rebel Motorcycle Club's logo for their own.

Following this initial foray onto the silver screen, popular culture continued its affair with the mystique of the rebel motorcyclist. The image of the wild outlaw barreling down the highway atop their iron horse is one of reckless freedom that the media found irresistible. Despite this, media representations have always carried duality by depicting and perpetuating the tradition of Western outlaws as noble savages. On one side, the outlaw biker has been demonized as the antithesis of civilized society. They are portrayed as the marauder; hell bent on raping and pillaging. On the other side, the "bad boy" biker has also been typecast as the embodiment of individualism and adventure. At the movies, especially, the outlaw biker was seen as the enigmatic rebel and outsider. This edge is what made *The Wild One* a two-wheeled perpetuation of outlaw culture. It was also the quality that Hollywood would repeatedly

recreate in the latter 1960 "chopper operas," however, the late 1950s and early 1960s would see the "motorcycle menace" as less threatening, to quell some of the outlaw biker mentality that had been rampant following *The Wild One*.

In 1955, for example, Warner Brothers Studios followed with four-wheeled dramas with the same premise with *Rebel Without A Cause* and MGM with their film *The Blackboard Jungle*. These films portrayed adolescents as dysfunctional and in need of guidance. Instead of perpetuating the outlaw ideas, these films attempt to preach that these outlaws were "evil." In addition to turning youth from crime, the studios, seeing a decline in adult attendance, turned its attention to the youth market, capitalizing on the rock 'n' roll boom. This field of film was perpetuated by the American-International Pictures (AIP) whose films were made specifically with teenagers in mind. AIP's films were always chock-full of thrills and sensation that young audiences were clamoring. Their first foray into the outlaw biker genre was *Motorcycle Gang*, which aimed to mimic the tension created in *The Wild One*. Though there was action here, what the film lacked was the intensity and noir quality that existed in *The Wild One*. In addition, the film read as wholesome give the wisecracks that exist in the film. AIP made a second attempt a year later with the more convincing *Dragstrip Riot* that places the outlaw biker on the negative end of hot rodding enthusiasts. Although the film was more in line as a gritty motorcycle film, it would be the last take done by AIP who would steer the outlaw biker from the streets to the beach. Films such as *Beach Party*, *Pajama Party*, and *Beach Blanket Bingo* would give a different, less harmless image to the outlaw biker, depicted them as a group of bumbling bike enthusiasts, thus providing a parody of the 1950s wild ones. Ultimately, it seemed that by the early 1960s, the outlaw biker was old

news. Things seemed great in America. John F. Kennedy was President; the economy was the strongest it had ever been, and teenage fun was paramount. Despite this, the surly biker remained out on the streets and the outlaws were mustering for action. With the outbreak of Vietnam War, the outlaw biker would be reinvigorated, as well as the films that featured them.

As we have discussed previously, the Hells Angels became notorious in 1964 following the events at Monterey. Despite their exoneration, the public press caused the lens to turn back to OMCs. In 1966, a mammoth funeral took place following the death of Jim “Mother” Miles, President of the original Sacramento chapter of the Hells Angels. Mother Miles, one of the most illustrious figures in Hells Angels history to that point was honored by a motorcycle convoy that numbered hundreds of riders. Given the spectacle of the event, the media also turned up, the occasion gaining nationwide television coverage as well as a spread in *Life* magazine.²²¹ Following the *Life* feature, the AIP studios realized that their beach biker films were not reflecting the national mood, especially with the escalation of the Vietnam War. The original film poster tagged the film, “Their credo is violence... Their God is hate... and they call themselves the Wild Angels,” and served as AIP’s first chopper opera.²²² The film would feature Nancy Sinatra and Peter Fonda, who would play the role of Heavenly Blues.²²³ As Blues, Fonda is the leader of a tough biker club called the Angels. The club is in search of a stolen

²²¹ This is one of the first events where OMCs started influencing western culture as seen in Barger, Zimmerman and Zimmerman, 79-80. Further expansion of this idea will be discussed later in this chapter.

²²² See Figure 5.5, “The Wild Angels” (film poster), Examiner, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.examiner.com/article/the-greatest-biker-movies-ever-made>.

²²³ This film would be the first motorcycle film Fonda would be involved in and would lead to another role a few years later in the movie *Easy Rider*.

motorcycle. After a confrontation in Mexico, one of the club members “Loser” is wounded and dies. Following his passing, the Angels, like the real Hells Angels resolve to return Loser’s body to his hometown for burial. Ultimately, the film’s plot point peaks when violence breaks out who are then quelled by the townsfolk.

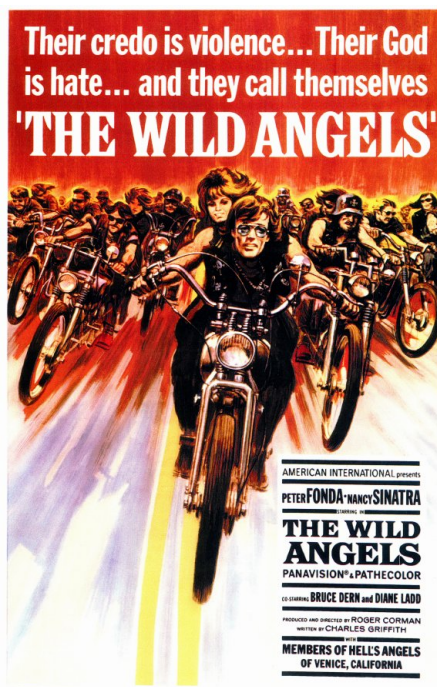


Figure 5.5: The film poster from AIP’s film “The Wild Angels” that mimics a large OMC funeral following a *Life* magazine article published in 1966.

Ultimately, what comes from this film is the exploitation of the shock value associated with outlaw biker, particularly in 1966. As Fonda’s character stands in front of the congregation questioning the validity of the sermon while the coffin of “Loser” is draped with a Nazi flag.²²⁴

²²⁴ Peter Fonda's character Heavenly Blues stands in front of the congregation of "Angels" members arguing the validity of claims that the "Lord" gives and takes away. The Angels member, "Loser" wore a skullcap during the film that had the symbol for the Nazi Party's Third Reich, and the Angels chose to bury him with a Nazi flag.

---- See Figure 5.6, *The Wild Angels*, directed by Roger Corman, (American International Pictures, 1966), DVD (MGM, 2001).



Figure 5.6: From the film *The Wild Angels*, 1966

The use of this symbol was purposeful in that the AIP were aiming to perpetuate the outlaw notion of this group of individuals. However, the symbol also serves another purpose. Historically, as discussed previously, the Hells Angels used Nazi symbols in an effort to cause fear and discomfort for those around them. As Barger suggested, the Hells Angels were not a racist organization. The use of the swastika, though derived from an adverse movement in history, is the one of many turning points where the American West and culture in media started being influenced by OMCs.²²⁵ In the background, the church crucifix is juxtaposed against the swastika flag. As the film continues, the dirty, unshaven bikers rough up the priest and embark on what the American media at this time portrayed bikers as being: drunk drug users who participated in sordid sexual acts. From there, scenes of primal savagery commence, showing bikers engaging in group sex with a woman on the altar. Off screen, perpetuation of the rape allegations of the Hells Angels in 1964, are brought back into the public sphere. Loser's girlfriend is assaulted, drugged and raped by two of the dead

²²⁵ Had this film been released closer to the time of WWII, this symbol would likely not appear in an American film.

man's comrades. Despite the graphic elements and lack of truth in these images, the AIP are, again, being influenced by OMCs to show these perverse images. Initial responses to *The Wild Angels* were not altogether negative, however, when it was entered into the 1966 Venice Film Festival, the film received a mixed response.²²⁶ Regardless of that response, after reflecting on the film and the OMC that inspired it, director Roger Corman said, "I saw the Hell's Angel riding free as a modern-day cowboy. The chopper was his horse."²²⁷ Corman also stated that everything in the film was based on stories articulated to him by the Hells Angels. By putting them on the screen, Corman has achieved what he thought being a Hells Angel meant. Corman transformed OMCs into mythical figures and "modern-day cowboys," using their stories to overhaul national opinion – especially to the youth of the time. From here, we see the cinematic gunfighter being replaced by the unwashed biker who roared onto the screen and assumed his place as the American West's mythical outlaw successor.

Following *The Wild Angels* a slew of AIP produced films started appearing on the silver screen. However, it would be their rival production company US Films that would launch the most successful outlaw biker film of 1967: *Hell's Angels on Wheels*. Starring Jack Nicholson as a loner with a penchant for the road, the film shows how Nicholson's character, Poet, becomes disenfranchised with the group as he witnesses a violent confrontation with the OMC president over the latter's neglected "old lady." Like *The Wild Angels*, the film portrayed the usual exaggerated feral outlaw biker lifestyle though seemed more legitimate in that the Hell's Angels had endorsed the film. In fact, the

²²⁶ Mike Seate, *Two Wheels On Two Reels: a History of Biker Movies* (North Conway, NH: Whitehorse Press, 2001), 25.

²²⁷ Roger Corman with Jim Jerome. *How I Made a Hundred Movies in Hollywood and Never Lost a Dime*. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 133.

entire Oakland chapter of the Hell's Angels appears in the film's opening sequence.²²⁸

The film was ultimately a success leading to two subsequent films *Angels From Hell* and *Run Angel, Run* released in 1968 and 1969, respectively. From here, launched the idea of biker exploitation films. AIP and US Films used the model of created small budget films containing sex, violence, and other lurid elements to capitalize on audiences through negative advertising. What had started out as the OMC lifestyle influencing American media and culture evolved into those groups depicted as barbarians on wheels instead of the brotherhood founded on camaraderie and the freedom to ride on the open road.

More recently the image of the biker has started to infiltrate into more popular culture, especially following the creation of Barger's fictional OMC film *Dead In 5 Heartbeats* as well as the FX Studios television program *Sons of Anarchy*. The former of the two, *Dead In 5 Heartbeats*, harkens back to early outlaw biker films such as *The Wild Angels*, uses members from OMCs to make up for the bulk of the cast. Based off of the novel discussed in the earlier section on literature, the film aims at depicting outlaw bikers the way that Barger sees them as. There is drama within the program, but there is a strong sense of how Barger wants OMCs to be portrayed. While it has not been circulated worldwide, the film depicts a direction that OMCs might turn toward – getting back to the riding and brotherhood aspect instead of the penchant for crimes and violence that OMCs are historically notorious for.

The latter was a television show based in a fictional town in California shows a group of outlaw bikers and how they survive during their daily lives – but through a

²²⁸ Sonny Barger, Chapter President of the Oakland Hells Angels, was also credited as technical advisor for the film.

smaller screen.²²⁹ While the show worked to portray bikers through an accurate lens, there is an overwhelming sense of drama to the program that would likely be unnecessary. Kurt Sutter, the program's executive producer, did copious amounts of research before taking on the project.²³⁰ While doing so, Sutter and FX Networks used promotional images based from historical photographs in an effort to provide historical context for the show.²³¹



Figure 5.7: Sons of Anarchy Season Five promotion image, 2012.

²²⁹ The film, though produced and disseminated after the release of multiple seasons of *Sons of Anarchy*, was based off the novel published in 2004.

²³⁰ Eric Salas, "Rusty Coones Interview" (video), January 14, 2013, accessed April 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLRdl-rHAHM>.

²³¹ See Figure 5.7, "Sons of Anarchy – Season 5" (promotional image) Internet Movie Database, accessed April 10, 2015, http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc4NTEzZmjk2MF5BMl5BanBnXkFtZTcwNjAwMjIxOA@@_V1_SX640_SY720_.jpg.

---- This image was modeled behind an image of the Canadian Army dispatch riders taken in 1943, See Figure 5.8 "Canadian Army Dispatch Riders" (photograph), Motographite, accessed April 10, 2015, http://www.motographite.com/2012_05_01_archive.html.



Figure 5.8: Taken in 1943, this image is almost exactly like the Sons of Anarchy Season 5 promotion image.

The use of this imagery confers that not only are OMCs are being influenced by the culture around them, but that media is being influenced by history. Though the image of the Canadian Army dispatch riders are not an OMC, the imagery being appropriate shows that biker culture is influencing media, and thus perpetuating its image throughout history.

Aside from the promotional photographs that perpetuate the biker image further historical context was provided by those involved with the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club. As the show commences a large amount of background information as required to set up the show. Sutter, working with outlaw biker experts such as David Labrava, a current Hells Angels member, aimed to work at being as close to the outlaw biker lifestyle as he could. The show discusses depictions of the OMC world from multiple

angles with multiple characters, showing that the members of the OMC are individuals and could be real people in the OMC world. As the show progresses, there are stereotypes portrayed involving prospective members and their treatment within the OMC. Furthermore, the show works to discuss how women are involved while discussing their role in the 1%er world using the same hierarchical structure discussed in chapter two. As the series progressed, Sutter and the writers provided further commentary on racial exclusion in OMC life by placing a character in the situation where the organization may have voted him out if they had found out if he was half African-American. Though the story arc was entirely fictional, the way in which Sutter and the show's writers chose to bring forth the story showed that racism is a very clear stereotype that does actually exist in OMC culture. As the show comes to a close, this idea is brought back into discussion as the President of the club, along with others of different chapters of the organization move to strike down the preexisting racism clause and invite an African American member into the organization for the first time. What this may cause in the future is a discussion to happen within real OMCs to start allowing African American members into their own organizations.

The ideas discussed are mainly those that have been perpetuated throughout the history surrounding OMC organizations. Sutter and the show's writers depict some of the grittier sides to OMCs, but also worked to keep the series as true to the outlaw biker lifestyle as possible. The show was a massive success for the FX Networks and even featured current and former Hells Angels members Chuck Zito, the aforementioned Labrava and Coones, as well as Sonny Barger on multiple episodes of the show. Their involvement with the program confers an amount of credence to the show, essentially

saying that they are okay with the message being conveyed on the screen. Though entirely fictional, the show has rekindled the notion of the outlaw biker as a real image of American culture in the recent era of culture and entertainment, much like it has been perpetuated within music and literature.

Conclusion

What drives these organizations to form and perpetuate themselves has many ideas behind it. As discussed, OMCs claim to be about brotherhood. While this notion is true, without the evolution of the motorcycle, OMCs would not exist, at least in their current form. The creation of these groups is much deeper than the drive to ride together. There is a form of social rebellion that is perpetuated by the use of the machine and the desire to feel freedom and the bonds of brotherhood that are experienced in an OMC. Nonetheless, forms of exclusion are paramount for some of these organizations, particularly regarding race, ethnicity and sex. While of those ideas are perpetuated stereotypes through popular culture and media, there is a large amount of knowledge that can be taken from some modern depictions of the OMC lifestyle.

Having focused on these different scopes within this historical investigation, there are some interesting notes regarding the creation of clubs through the evolution of the motorcycle, how outlaw motorcycle clubs came to exist in America, and the driving factors behind why some of these organizations practiced exclusionary means to keep people of color and women out of their organizations, as well as how these organizations have perpetuated themselves by providing influence and relevancy within modern American culture.

It will be important in further investigations of OMCs in a historical context to discuss other factors that have perpetuated OMC culture as well. There are multiple views in media, OMCs and law enforcement that have many conflicting ideas of what OMCs truly mean to the American West. Further exploration into the constructs of

gender are necessary, as well as a study of economic factors that drive individuals to join OMCs, as well as a deeper discussion as to the outlaw biker's image in other forms of media, particularly social media.

References

- "13 Rebels Motorcycle Club," 13 Rebels, 2014, accessed April 28, 2014, <http://www.13rebelsmc.org/>.
- "Harley-Davidson Timeline." 2015. Accessed January 30, 2015. http://www.harley-davidson.com/content/h-d/en_US/home/museum/explore/hd-history/1910.html.
- "Rebels on Wheels." *Ebony* 22, no. 2 (December 1966): 64. *MasterFILE Premier*, EBSCOhost, accessed April 25, 2014.
- "Take None, Give None: Chosen Few MC Documentary" (video), February 28, 2013, accessed April 15, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tE7QJ-RcW8o>.
- Anti-Defamation League. "Bigots On Bikes." 2011. Accessed April 10, 2014. http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/combating-hate/ADL_CR_Bigots_on_Bikes_online.pdf.
- B., Derrick. "Black Motorcycle Clubs." Black Motorcycle Clubs. October 21, 2013. Accessed October 21, 2013. <http://www.blackmotorcycleclubs.net>.
- Barger, Ralph "Sonny", Keith Zimmerman, and Kent Zimmerman. In *Hell's Angel: The Life and Times of Sonny Barger and the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club*. Fourth Estate Ltd., 2000.
- Bolfert, Thomas C. *The Big Book of Harley-Davidson: Official Publication by Harley-Davidson, Inc.*, Milwaukee: Motorbooks Intl, 1991).
- Brando, Marlon. *The Wild One*. DVD. Directed by Stanley Kramer. Los Angeles: Columbia, 1953.
- Brokaw, Paul. Letter. *Life*. August 11, 1947.
- Brown, Roland. *History of the Motorcycle*. Bath, England: Parragon Publishing, 2005.
- Cavazos, Ruben. *Honor Few, Fear None: the Life and Times of a Mongol*. It Books, 2009.
- Corman, Roger with Jim Jerome. *How I Made a Hundred Movies in Hollywood and Never Lost a Dime*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1998.
- Davidson, Willie G. *100 Years of Harley-Davidson*. Boston: Bulfinch, 2002.
- Dobyns, Jay, and Nils Johnson-Shelton. *No Angel: My Harrowing Undercover Journey to the Inner Circle of the Hells Angels*. New York: Broadway Books, 2010.

- Dulaney, William L. "A Brief History of 'Outlaw' Motorcycle Clubs", *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies* 1, no. 3 (November 2005): 1, accessed April 12, 2014, http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_Artcl.Dulaney.html.
- Duncan, Robert. *The Noise: Notes from a Rock 'n' Roll Era*. New York: Tickner & Fields, 1984.
- Echols, Alice. *Scars of Sweet Paradise: the Life and Times of Janis Joplin*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000.
- Falco, Charles, and Kerrie Droban. *Vagos, Mongols, and Outlaws: My Infiltration of America's Deadliest Biker Gangs*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin, 2014.
- Ferrar, Ann. *Hear Me Roar: Women, Motorcycles, and the Rapture of the Road*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1996.
- Fugle, Tom. (December 12, 2004). *Eulogy for David Mann* (PDF). Seaside Park, Ventura California. 3-4.
- Gimme Shelter*. Directed by Albert Maysales, David Maysales, and Charlotte Zwerin. Maysales, 1970. DVD. 20th Century Fox, 2007.
- Girdler, Allan. *The Harley-Davidson and Indian Wars*, Reprint ed. (Crestline Books, 2013).
- Graves, Robert. *Greek Mythology*. London: Book Club Associates, 1985.
- Harris, Maz. *Bikers: Birth of a Modern-Day Outlaw*. London, England: Faber & Faber, 1985.
- Menginie, Anthony and Kerrie Droban. *Prodigal Father, Pagan Son: Growing up Inside the Dangerous World of the Pagans Motorcycle Club*, Reprint ed. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2012.
- Nichols, Dave. *One Percenter: The Legend of the Outlaw Biker*. Minneapolis: Motorbooks, 2010.
- Harley-Davidson USA. "Harley-Davidson History." Accessed April 28, 2014. http://www.harley-davidson.com/en_US/Content/Pages/HD_Museum/explore/hd-history.html.
- Hayes, Bill, and Jim Quattlebaum. *The Original Wild Ones: Tales of the Boozefighters Motorcycle Club*. St. Paul, MN: Motorbooks, 2009.

"Hells Angels Toronto Downtown: Faq," Hells Angels Toronto Downtown, 2014, accessed April 14, 2014, <http://www.hellsangelstorontodowntown.com/faq.html>.

Herlihy, David V. *Bicycle: the History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Hessians MC. "Hessian History." 2015. Accessed March 16, 2015. <http://www.hessiansmc.com/hessian-history.html>.

Hessians MC. Guerilla Docs, 2011.

Hudson, Jan. *Hell's Angels the Sex and Savagery of Hells Angels*. San Diego: Greenleaf Classics, Inc, 1966.

Japenga, Ann. "Motor Maids: More Like the Mild Ones Than the Wild Ones," *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 1986.

Jones, Ernest. *Hamlet and Oedipus*. New York: The Norton Library, 1976.

Langton, Jerry. *Fallen Angel: the Unlikely Rise of Walter Stadnick in the Canadian Hells Angels*. Mississauga, Ontario: Wiley, 2006.

Lavigne, Yves. *Hell's Angels: Taking Care of Business*. New York: Ballantine Books. 1st Printing, 1989.

Levingston, Tobie, Keith Zimmerman, and Kent Zimmerman. *Soul On Bikes: the East Bay Dragons Mc and the Black Biker Set*. Motorbooks, 2013.

Matter, Pat & Chris Omodt. *Breaking the Code: a True Story by a Hells Angel President and the Cop Who Pursued Him*. United States: Real Deal, LLC, 2014.

Miller, James. *Flowers in the Dustbin: the Rise of Rock and Roll, 1947-1977*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

Mongols MC. "Mongols Nation Motorcycle Club." 2009. Accessed April 15, 2014. <http://mongolsmc.com/sub/history>.

Motorcycle Illustrated. What Motorcycle Clubs and Riders Are Doing. October 5, 1922. Accessed April 28, 2014. https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=ndI_AQAAMAAJ&rdid=book-ndI_AQAAMAAJ&rdot=1.

Motorcycle Museum. "Ama Motorcycle Hall of Fame | Ray Weishaar." 2014. Accessed April 28, 2014. <http://www.motorcyclemuseum.org/halloffame/detail.aspx?RacerID=59>.

- Murray, William. "Hell's Angels." *Saturday Evening Post* 238, no. 23 (November 20, 1965): 32. *MasterFILE Premier*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 15, 2014).
- Nye, Peter. *Hearts of Lions: the History of American Bicycle Racing*. New York: W W Norton & Co Inc., 1988.
- Ogersby, Bill. *Biker*. Guilford: Lyons Press, 2005.
- Parsons, Adam. "Attika 7 - About" Attika 7. 2015. Accessed April 14 2015. <http://www.attika7.com/pages/about>.
- Life* Editorial Board. "Cyclist's Holiday," *Life*, July 21, 1947.
- Popular Mechanics* Editorial Board. "Why the 1915 Harley-Davidson Won the National Championship," *Popular Mechanics*, May 1915.
- Queen, William. *Under and Alone: the True Story of the Undercover Agent Who Infiltrated America's Most Violent Outlaw Motorcycle Gang*. New York: Fawcett, 2006.
- Rafferty, Tod. *The Indian: the History of a Classic American Motorcycle*. Philadelphia: Courage Books, 2001.
- Reynolds, Thomas. *Wild Ride: How Outlaw Motorcycle Myth Conquered America*. New York: T.V. Books, LLC, 2000.
- Richardson, Ann. (California Department of Justice). *Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs: USA Overview*. California: Government Printing Office, 1991. (147691).
- Rosenberg, Stuart. *Rock and Roll and the American Landscape: the Birth of an Industry and the Expansion of the Popular Culture, 1955-1969*. Bloomington: iUniverse, 2008.
- Seate, Mike. *Two Wheels On Two Reels: a History of Biker Movies*. North Conway: Whitehorse Press, 2001.
- Sher, Julian, and William Marsden. *Angels of Death: Inside the Biker Gangs' Crime Empire*. New York: Da Capo Press, 2007.
- Spitz, Marc. *Jagger: Rebel, Rock Star, Rambler, Rogue*. New York: Gotham, 2011.
- Supple, Jack. *100 Years of Harley-Davidson Advertising*. Boston: Bulfinch, 2003.
- Tamarkin, Jeff. "The Jefferson Airplane Chronicles: Part Six, Marty Balin," Jefferson Airplane, 2014, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.jeffersonairplane.com/the-jefferson-airplane-chronicles-part-six-marty-balin/>.

- The American Motorcycle Association. *The History of The AMA*.
<http://www.americanmotorcyclist.com/about/history> (accessed September 29, 2013).
- Thompson, Christopher S. *The Tour de France: a Cultural History*. Updated ed. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008.
- Thompson, Hunter S. *Hell's Angels: the Strange and Terrible Saga*. New York: Ballantine, 1972.
- Tyler, Tony. "Knock Knock! 'Who's There?' 'Lemmy' ...," *New Musical Express*, February 8, 1975.
- United States of America, Plaintiff-Appellee, v. John Ray Bonds (91-3610); Mark Verdi (91-3609); and Steven Wayne Yee (91-3608), Defendants-Appellants., 12 F.3d 540 (6th Cir. 1994)
- United States Of America, Plaintiff v. Ruben Cavazos; Ruben Cavazos, Jr.; Hector Gonzalez, Jr., et. al, Defendants., Grand Jury., (2008)
- VanHecke, Susan. *Race with the Devil: Gene Vincent's Life in the Fast Lane*. New York: Minotaur Books, 2000.
- Veno, Arthur and Edward Gannon. *The Brotherhoods: Inside the Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2012.
- Wagner, Herbert. *Classic Harley-Davidson, 1903-1941*. Osceola, WI: Motorbooks International, 1999.
- , "The World's First Motorcycle, On Steam Velocipedes, Motocycles, and the Motor Cycle." *The Antique Motorcycle*, Summer 2011.
- Waksman, Steve. *This Ain't the Summer of Love: Conflict and Crossover in Heavy Metal and Punk*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- Ward, Ian, ed. *The World of Motorcycles*. Vol. 3, *Carb/cycle*. London, England: Orbis, 1977.
- Wethern, George, and Vincent Colnett. "Preface." In *A Wayward Angel*. New York, NY: R. Marek Publishers, 1978.
- Wheels Of Soul. "About Us - Wheels of Soul." 2015. Accessed March 17, 2015.
http://www.wheelsofsoulct.com/about_us.
- Wheels of Soul*. Guerilla Docs, 2011. DVD.

Winterhalder, Edward and Wil De Clerq, *Biker Chic: The Attraction of Motorcycles and Outlaw Bikers*. Jenison, MI: Blockhead City Inc., 2014.

Wizard. "Chosen Few Motorcycle Club." Chosen Few Motorcycle Club. 2014. Accessed April 15, 2014. http://www.chosenfewmc.org/history/cf_history.html.

Wolf, Daniel R. *The Rebels: a Brotherhood of Outlaw Bikers*. Reprint ed. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 2000.

Wolfe, Tom. *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. Bantam, 1969.

Yates, Brock. *Outlaw Machine: Harley-Davidson and the Search for the American Soul*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1999.

Yee, Steven. "DeadlySynz - Bio" DeadlySynz. 2006. Accessed April 14, 2015. <http://www.deadlysynz.com/bio.html>.