

White Supremacist Prison Gangs in the United States

A PRELIMINARY INVENTORY



Introduction

With rising numbers and an increasing geographical spread, for some years white supremacist prison gangs have constituted the fastest-growing segment of the white supremacist movement in the United States. While some other segments, such as neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan, have suffered stagnation or even decline, white supremacist prison gangs have steadily been growing in numbers and reach, accompanied by a related rise in crime and violence.

What is more, though they are called “prison gangs,” gangs like the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, Aryan Circle, European Kindred and others, are just as active on the streets of America as they are behind bars. They plague not simply other inmates, but also local communities across the United States, from California to New Hampshire, Washington to Florida.

For example, between 2000 and 2015, one single white supremacist prison gang, the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, was responsible for at least 33 murders in communities across Texas. Behind these killings were a variety of motivations, including traditional criminal motives, gang-related murders, internal killings of suspected informants or rules-breakers, and hate-related motives directed against minorities.

These murders didn’t take place behind bars—they occurred in the streets, homes and businesses of cities and towns across the Lone Star State. When people hear the term “prison gang,” they often assume that such gang members plague only other prisoners, or perhaps also corrections personnel. They certainly do represent a threat to inmates, many of whom have fallen prey to their violent attacks. And they pose a high risk to corrections officials—in fact, in 2013, a member of the white supremacist 211 Crew actually assassinated Tom Clements, the head of the Colorado Department of Corrections. But the fact is that more and more white supremacist prison gang activity—from drug dealing to home invasions to hate crimes to murders—takes place on the streets of American communities rather than behind bars.

Moreover, there is no shortage of such gangs. In this preliminary inventory of white supremacist prison gangs, the Anti-Defamation League has identified nearly 100 white supremacist gangs operating in one or more states (the exact number is hard to determine, because sometimes separate gangs share the same name). At least 35 states have at least one white supremacist gang operating in their borders and most states have to deal with multiple such gangs.

Taking into account both street and prison activity, some states seem to have a particular problem with white supremacist prison gangs. Texas, with two of the largest such gangs in the country (Aryan Brotherhood of Texas and Aryan Circle), and California, with its endemic white supremacist gang problem overall, are probably the two states with the most serious problems, but other problem states include Oklahoma, Indiana, Missouri, Oregon, and Tennessee.

Not only are these gangs numerous, they tend to be large. While some gangs have no more than a few dozen members, the largest gangs have over 500 members (the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is estimated to have more than 2,000). Even these numbers sometimes underestimate the true scope of such groups because, although the majority of such gangs do not allow women as formal members, women actually play an important role in most of them. Additionally, there are other hangers-on and associates who, while not formal (“fully-patched”) members of such gangs, nevertheless also play a role in their violence and crime.

The growth and spread of these white supremacist gangs has become one of the United States’ most serious—but least talked about—white supremacist problems.

This is a two-part report. The first part of the report consists of the results of ADL’s preliminary survey of white supremacist gangs active in the United States today. Following the survey is an overview of white supremacist prison gangs that gives insight into their rise, nature and activities.

A Preliminary Inventory of White Supremacist Prison Gangs

Using the Preliminary Inventory

ADL's Center on Extremism has compiled a preliminary inventory of white supremacist prison gangs active in the United States today. This is a harder task than one might think. It is complicated by the presence of such gangs both behind bars and in the free world and even more complicated by the fact that there are 50 different state prison systems, the federal prison system, and a great number of large county jails, all with their own regulations and classification systems.

In fact, there is not even agreement among prison officials as to what constitutes a prison gang. Some states only count very large groups as gangs (referring to smaller groups as "cliques" or other terms). Other states only count as prison gangs those gangs that emerged in prison, as opposed to gangs that originated on the streets then later moved into a prison system—even if they are stronger behind bars than on the streets. Moreover, a number of state prison systems have created generic or "catch-all" categories for certain types of white supremacists—or even all white supremacists. So, for example, in one prison system many white supremacists may be lumped together as a security threat group under a category such as "Aryans" or "skinheads" or "supremacists," regardless of whether or not they may be in a prison gang—or even in some other white supremacist group. Sometimes those generic categories are even reported as gangs to nationwide gang surveys, though they do not represent actual gangs. Even more confusingly, sometimes such generic categories are given the names of actual groups, such as "Aryan Nations" or "Aryan Brotherhood."

To create this inventory, the Anti-Defamation League has reached out to many correctional institutions and law enforcement agencies for information, has done extensive research in public sources ranging from newspaper articles to court cases, and has used its own extensive body of information on white supremacist prison gang activities, especially on-line. It has tried, as much as possible, to eliminate generic classifications and retain only actual specific gangs. The inventory includes both gangs that began behind bars as well as gangs that began on the streets, as long as the group in question has a significant organized presence behind bars and operates as other prison gangs do. So, for example, ADL considers the California-based Public Enemy Number One as a prison gang, even though it originally appeared on the streets in California. In function, however, it operates just as do prison-originating gangs such as the Nazi Low Riders; thus, it is included.

California, with its uniquely large population of white supremacist gangs (from skinhead gangs to street gangs), does pose a particular problem in this regard, especially as members of such gangs end up behind bars for a variety of reasons. However, this does not mean that all of those white supremacist groups act as prisons gangs behind bars. ADL has attempted to retain in its inventory only those gangs that do have an organized presence behind bars; however, it is possible that the inventory leaves off gangs that deserve to be included or included gangs that perhaps did not warrant such a designation. ADL hopes to improve accuracy of this inventory over time, particularly with helpful feedback from corrections and law enforcement officials.

Another difficult aspect in determining the extent of white supremacist gangs involves the presence of such gangs in states outside of the state where they originated. Most prison gangs originated in a particular state prison and spread to other prisons in that state. So, for example, the activities of the Ohio Aryan Brotherhood are strongly concentrated in the state of Ohio. However, for a variety of reasons, inmates can be swapped between different state prison systems. A gang member might also end up in a federal prison in a different state if convicted on federal charges. Moreover, free world gang members can simply move out of a state to another state—perhaps to find a job, for example. The Aryan Circle

even has one member based in France.

The largest white supremacist prison gangs may have members across the country, on the streets or behind bars. If behind bars, members will typically be classified by prison officials as a security threat group member and thus the state may register that gang as a presence in the state. However, the presence of one gang member, or even a few, in a prison or prison system does not mean that the gang has an organized, functioning presence in that prison system.

ADL's inventory tries to document states other than the originating state in which gangs have formed a substantial, organized presence—but not all states in which one or more members may merely reside. This is another area where the preliminary inventory may be inaccurate in analyzing the extent of a group's presence in other states, either by overestimation or underestimation.

White supremacist prison gang nomenclature can also add confusion to the process. For example, multiple gangs have emerged in different places at different times with names such as "Crazy White Boys," "Dirty White Boys," "White Aryan Resistance," "Fourth Reich," and the like. It is not always possible to know if a "Crazy White Boys" gang in one state is related to a gang of the same name in another state.

Perhaps the largest source of confusion over racist prison gangs involves the Aryan Brotherhood, which is often mistaken or confused—especially by the media—with a large number of other gangs that have a similar name. Some clarification is thus required.

The original Aryan Brotherhood began in the California prison system and soon expanded into the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Although Aryan Brotherhood members can be found elsewhere, it is within these two prison systems that the Brotherhood is primarily active. References in the media to the "Aryan Brotherhood" that may occur outside of California or the federal prison system are highly likely actually to refer to some group other than the original Aryan Brotherhood.

Beginning in the 1980s in states such as Ohio and Texas, other white supremacist prison gangs emerged that adopted or appropriated the term "Aryan Brotherhood," typically with a state designation attached, such as the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas. This practice spread as gangs themselves spread, with the result that many state prison systems now contain such a group (the Alabama Aryan Brotherhood, the Mississippi Aryan Brotherhood, the New Mexico Aryan Brotherhood, and so on). These gangs are not part of the original Aryan Brotherhood; they are not chapters or offshoots. They are completely independent groups that happen to have a very similar name.

Complicating things still further is the fact that individual inmates may actually claim an Aryan Brotherhood status unilaterally. It is unwise to make such claims in prison systems with an actual Aryan Brotherhood group, as members of that group are sure to inflict swift and harsh punishment on such "posers," but in states without an organized group of that name, it is somewhat safer to do (as long as the inmate never ends up in some other prison system). On occasion, such self-appointed Aryan Brothers have eventually actually cohered into a functioning group and a new "Aryan Brotherhood" gang is born as a result.

The Anti-Defamation League understands that this preliminary inventory is imperfect and incomplete, but hopes that it provides a suitable starting point for those interested in tracking and understanding the dangerous phenomenon of white supremacist prison gangs. Corrections and additional information will be warmly welcomed.

ALABAMA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Brotherhood of Alabama	Medium	AL		Despite its name, the Aryan Brotherhood of Alabama has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Southern Brotherhood	Large	AL		The Southern Brotherhood was founded in 1995 in the Alabama prison system.

ALASKA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Crew 1488	Small	AK	CO	Crew 1488, also known as Organization 1488, was formed in the Alaska prison system. The group has also established a small presence in Colorado because that state houses a number of Alaska prisoners.

ARKANSAS

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Circle	Small	TX	OK, NM, BOP, MO, TN, IN, LA, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S. The size refers to its Arkansas presence.
New Aryan Empire	Medium	AR		The New Aryan Empire started in the early 1990s in the Arkansas prison system.
White Aryan Resistance	Large	AR		Various white supremacist gangs in multiple states have used the name White Aryan Resistance, which is borrowed from the name of a 1980s California white supremacist group, but the various gangs are not typically linked to each other. This White Aryan Resistance is one of the largest and is the primary white supremacist prison gang in Arkansas.

ARIZONA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Arizona Aryan Brotherhood	Medium	AZ	OK, NM, BOP, MO, TN, IN, LA, AR	Despite its name, the Arizona Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system. The Arizona Aryan Brotherhood dates back to the 1980s and is one of the "senior" white supremacist gangs in the U.S.
Nazi Low Riders	Small	CA	AZ, BOP, NV	The Nazi Low Riders started in the California prison system in the 1980s and have since spread to some other western states. It used to be larger and more influential than it is today. The size here refers to the group's Arizona presence.
White Knights of America	Small	TX	AZ	The White Knights originated in the Texas prison system and later expanded to Arizona.

(FEDERAL) BUREAU OF PRISONS (BOP)

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Brotherhood	Large	CA, BOP		This is the original Aryan Brotherhood that formed in the 1960s in the California prison system and subsequently spread to the federal prison system as well. It is the most notorious white supremacist prison gang in the U.S., with a history of extreme violence. It has a negligible street presence compared to other major white supremacist prison gangs.
Aryan Brotherhood of Texas	Medium	TX	NM, OK, BOP	Started in 1984, the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is the largest white supremacist prison gang in Texas and one of the largest in the country, with over 2,000 members. Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is very active both behind bars and on the streets of Texas and nearby states. The size here refers to its organized BOP presence.
Aryan Circle	Medium	TX	OK, NM, BOP, MO, TN, IN, LA, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S. The size here refers to its organized BOP presence.
Aryan Resistance Movement	Small	BOP	PA	The Aryan Resistance Movement was founded in the 1990s by inmates Tony Adams and Michael Holdridge.
Dirty White Boys	Large	BOP	See Notes	There are several prison gangs in the U.S. with the name "Dirty White Boys." Some are related to each other but others are not. The most well-known of these is the BOP-based Dirty White Boys gang. It is large but loosely organized and dates back to the 1980s. Not all members of it are necessarily white supremacist.
Nazi Low Riders	Small	CA	BOP, AZ, NV	Nazi Low Riders started in the California prison system in the 1980s and have since spread to some other western states. Size here refers to its BOP presence.
Soldiers of Aryan Culture	Small	UT	BOP	Founded in the 1990s, Soldiers of Aryan Culture is a Utah-based white supremacist prison gang. Size here refers to its BOP presence.

CALIFORNIA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Brotherhood	Large	CA, BOP		This is the original Aryan Brotherhood that formed in the 1960s in the California prison system and subsequently spread to the federal prison system as well. It is the most notorious white supremacist prison gang in the U.S., with a history of extreme violence. It has a negligible street presence compared to other major white supremacist prison gangs.
Butte County Gangsters	Small	CA		
Comrades Of Our Racial Struggle	Small	CA		This gang also uses the name COORS Family Skins. Its street presence is in southern California.
Co Co Boys	Small	CA	PA	The Co Co Boys get their name from Contra Costa County in northern California, where they have a street presence.
Family Affiliated Irish Mafia	Small	CA		
Humboldt County Gangsters	Small	CA		
Nazi Low Riders	Large	CA	BOP, AZ, NV	Nazi Low Riders started in the California prison system in the 1980s and have since spread to some other western states. In the 1990s and early 2000s, they were larger than they are today.
Sacramaniacs	Small	CA		A street and prison gang originating in Sacramento.
Public Enemy Number One	Medium	CA		Started in 1990, Public Enemy Number One is based on the streets and in California prisons. It is also known as PEN1.
United Society of Aryan Skinheads	Small	CA		The United Society of Aryan Skinheads originated in Oregon but is now based in California.
White Aryan Resistance	Small	CA		Various white supremacist gangs in multiple states have used the name White Aryan Resistance, but are not necessarily linked to each other.

COLORADO

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
211 Crew/ Aryan Empire	Large	CO		211 Crew was founded in 1995 and is based in the Colorado prison system, They are also known as Aryan Empire, Aryan Alliance, or Brotherhood of Aryan Alliance.
Crew 1488	Small	AK	CO	Crew 1488, also known as Organization 1488, was formed in the Alaska prison system. The group has spread to Colorado because that state houses a number of Alaska prisoners.

CONNECTICUT

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Branded Peckerwood Family	Small	CT		

FLORIDA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Dirty White Boys	Small	See Notes	See Notes	There are several prison gangs throughout the United States called "Dirty White Boys." Some of these are related to each other, and others are not.
Florida Aryan Brotherhood	Small	FL		Despite its name, the Florida Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Unforgiven	Medium	FL		Unforgiven was founded in 1986 in the Florida prison system. It is the largest white supremacist prison gang in Florida.
White Aryan Resistance	Small	FL		Various white supremacist gangs in multiple states have used the name White Aryan Resistance, but are not necessarily linked to each other.

GEORGIA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Georgia Aryan Brotherhood	Large	GA		Despite its name, the Georgia Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Ghost Face Gangsters	Large	GA		This group originated in California in the 1970s with the Georgia offshoot formed in 1998 by an original California founding member. Only some members of the group are white supremacists.
Aryan Raw Boss	Small	GA		The Raw Boss was founded in 2012 in Georgia's Jenkins Correctional Center.

IDAHO

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Knights	Medium	ID	WA, OR	Idaho's largest white supremacist prison gang, the Aryan Knights have more than 200 members.
European Kindred	Small	OR	WA, ID	European Kindred was founded in 1998 in the Oregon prison system. It has since expanded to a few other western states. Size refers to group's Idaho presence; in Oregon it is much larger.
Psychotic Soldiers	Small	ID		Said to be allied with the much larger Aryan Knights. Formed in 2008.

INDIANA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Circle	Large	TX	OK, NM, BOP, MO, TN, IN, LA, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S.
Indiana Aryan Brotherhood	Large	IN		The Indiana Aryan Brotherhood is a large white supremacist prison gang based in Indiana. It is active both in the prisons and on the streets. Despite its name, the Indiana Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system
Rebel Cause	Large	IN	IN	Formed in 1988 in the Indiana prison system, they are also known as Rebel Cause Brotherhood.
Saxon Knights	Large	IN	TN, MI	The Saxon Knights were formed in 1995 and are based primarily in the Indiana prison system.
United Aryan Brotherhood	Medium	OK		Despite its name, the United Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.

IOWA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
FRYS	Medium	IA		Formed in the 1980s in the Iowa prison system.

KANSAS

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Dirty White Boys	Small	See Notes	See Notes	There are several prison gangs throughout the United States called "Dirty White Boys." Some of these are related to each other, and others are not.

KENTUCKY

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood	Small	MN	KY, OH	The Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood originated in the Minnesota prison system in 2013. Members do not have to serve time to get membership status. There is also a small Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood street presence in Ohio and Kentucky.
Aryans of Kentucky	Small	KY		
Kentucky Aryan Brotherhood	Small	KY		Despite its name, the Kentucky Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.

MASSACHUSETTS

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Massachusetts Aryan Brotherhood	Small	MA		Despite its name, the Massachusetts Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.

MICHIGAN

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Saxon Knights	Small	IN	MI, TN	The Saxon Knights were formed in 1995 and are based primarily in the Indiana prison system.

MINNESOTA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood	Small	MN	KY, OH	The Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood originated in the Minnesota prison system in 2013. Members do not have to serve time to get membership status. There is also a small Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood street presence in Ohio and Kentucky.
Inland Empire Peckerwoods	Small	MN	MN	Formed in 1995, the Inland Empire Peckerwoods was started by a California inmate who actively recruited in the Minnesota prison system.
Minnesota Aryan Brotherhood	Small	MN		Despite its name, the Minnesota Aryan Brotherhood, formed in 1991, has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Prison Motorcycle Brotherhood	Medium	MN		The Prison Motorcycle Brotherhood was formed in the Minnesota prison system in 1986.
Solid Brothers	Small	MN		The Solid Brothers was formed in the Minnesota prison system in 1999.
Supreme White Power	Small	MN		Supreme White Power was formed in the Minnesota prison system in 2003.

MISSOURI

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Circle	Small	TX	MO, BOP, NM, OK, TN, LA, IN	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S.
Family Values	Small	MO		
Joplin Honkys	Medium	MO		The Joplin Honkys are a racist prison/street gang located primarily in southwest Missouri. There is an offshoot known as the Southwest Honkys.
Missouri Aryan Brotherhood	Small	MO		Despite its name, the Missouri Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Peckerwood Midwest	Small	MO		Peckerwood Midwest is a Missouri-based white supremacist prison gang with a presence both in the state's prison system and on the streets.
Sacred Separatist Group	Small	MO		Sacred Separatist Group is a white supremacist prison gang founded in the Missouri prison system. There has been an increased street presence of this group in Missouri.

MISSISSIPPI

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Mississippi Aryan Brotherhood	Large	MS		Formed in 1984, the Mississippi Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.

NEBRASKA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Caucasian Crazy Crew	Small	NE		
Hammerwoods	Small	NE		
Nebraska Aryan Brotherhood	Small	NE		Despite its name, the Nebraska Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Peckerwoods	Small	NE		Various white supremacist gangs call themselves Peckerwoods in different states. In addition, some prison systems use Peckerwoods as a generic category for a white supremacist security threat group.
Soldiers of Skin	Small	NE		
South Omaha Boys	Small	NE		

NEW HAMPSHIRE

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Brothers of White Warriors	Large	NH		The Brothers of White Warriors started in the New Hampshire prison system in 2005 eventually growing to be a large gang for such a small state. Members are incarcerated in other eastern states but have not yet established an organized Brothers of White Warriors presence in those states.

NEW JERSEY

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
East Coast Aryan Brotherhood	Small	NJ		The East Coast Aryan Brotherhood was started in the New Jersey prison system in 1997. It has declined considerably in size since the late 1990s/early 2000s. Despite its name, it has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
State Prison Skins	Small	NJ		The State Prison Skins started in the New Jersey prison system in 2005.

NEW MEXICO

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Circle	Small	TX	OK, BOP, NM, MO, TN, LA, IN, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S. Size refers to its Oklahoma presence.
New Mexico Aryan Brotherhood	Small	NM		Despite its name, the New Mexico Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system. The New Mexico Aryan Brotherhood was started as an offshoot of the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas.
Peckerwoods	Small	NM		Various white supremacist gangs call themselves Peckerwoods in different states. In addition, some prison systems use Peckerwoods as a generic category for a white supremacist security threat group.

NEVADA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Warriors	Medium	NV		The Aryan Warriors are one of the oldest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S., dating back to the 1980s.
Nazi Low Riders	Small	CA	BOP, AZ, NV	Nazi Low Riders started in the California prison system in the 1980s and have since spread to some other western states. Size refers to the gang's Nevada presence.
Nevada Aryan Brotherhood	Small	NV		Despite its name, the Nevada Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Outlaw Nazi Skinheads	Small	NV		
Peckerwoods	Medium	NV		Various white supremacist gangs call themselves Peckerwoods in different states. In addition, some prison systems use Peckerwoods as a generic category for a white supremacist security threat group.

NORTH CAROLINA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Nations	Small	TN	NC	Aryan Nations is the largest white supremacist prison gang in Tennessee, borrowing its name from the older neo-Nazi group of the same name. Size refers to the gang's North Carolina presence.
Aryan Brotherhood of North Carolina	Medium	NC		Despite its name, the Aryan Brotherhood of North Carolina has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Aryan Royals	Small	NC		Founded in 2012, Aryan Royals is an off-shoot of the Bound For Glory white supremacist gang.
Bound for Glory	Small	NC		Bound For Glory was founded in 2011 in the North Carolina prison system.

OHIO

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Ohio Aryan Brotherhood	Large	OH		Despite its name, the Ohio Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system. Dating back to the 1980s, it is one of the oldest white supremacist prison gangs.
Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood	Small	MN	KY, OH	The Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood originated in the Minnesota prison system in 2013. Members do not have to serve time to get membership status. There is also an Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood street presence in Ohio and Kentucky.

OKLAHOMA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Brotherhood of Oklahoma	Large	OK		Despite its name, the Aryan Brotherhood of Oklahoma has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
Aryan Brotherhood of Texas	Small	TX	NM, OK, BOP	Started in 1984, the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is the largest white supremacist prison gangs in Texas and one of the largest in the country. Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is active both behind bars and on the streets of Texas and nearby states.
Aryan Circle	Small	TX	OK, NM, BOP, MO, TN, LA, IN, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S. Size refers to its Oklahoma presence.
Aryan Nations	Small	OK		Aryan Nations is a small white supremacist prison gang in Oklahoma, borrowing its title from the older neo-Nazi group of the same name.
Dirty White Boys	Small	See Notes	See Notes	There are several prison gangs throughout the United States called "Dirty White Boys." Some of these are related to each other, and others are not.
Universal Aryan Brotherhood	Large	OK		Formed in 1993, the Universal Aryan Brotherhood is based in the Oklahoma prison system. Despite its name, the Universal Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.
United Aryan Brotherhood	Medium	OK		Despite its name, the United Aryan Brotherhood has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system.

OREGON

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Knights	Small	ID	WA, ID	The Aryan Knights are an Idaho-based prison gang.
Aryan Soldiers	Small	OR	WY	
European Kindred	Large	OR	WA, ID	European Kindred was founded in 1998 in the Oregon prison system. It is the largest white supremacist prison gang in the Pacific Northwest, with over 500 members.
International Peckerwood Syndicate	Medium	OR	WA	Formed in 2005 in the Oregon prison system, International Peckerwood Syndicate is also known as Insane Peckerwood Syndicate
Oreganized (sic) Aryan Crime Syndicate	Small	OR		
Supreme White Aryan Knights	Small	OR		

PENNSYLVANIA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Resistance Movement	Small	PA	BOP	The Aryan Resistance Movement was founded in the late 1990s by Tony Adams and Michael Holdridge.

TENNESSEE

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Brotherhood of Tennessee/ Brotherhood Forever	Large	TN	VA	Despite its name, the Aryan Brotherhood of Tennessee has no connection to the "original" Aryan Brotherhood based in California and the federal prison system. They are also known as Brotherhood Forever
Aryan Circle	Small	TX	TN, OK, NM, BOP, MO, LA, IN, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S. Size refers to its Tennessee presence.
Aryan Nations	Large	TN	NC	Aryan Nations is the largest white supremacist prison gang in Tennessee with over 700 members. It borrows its name from the older neo-Nazi group of the same name but is a completely separate group.
Crazy White Boys	Small	See Notes	See Notes	There have been a number of Crazy White Boys gangs in different places around the United States, in prisons and on the streets.
Dirty White Boys	Small	See Notes	See Notes	There are several prison gangs throughout the United States called "Dirty White Boys." Some of these are related to each other, and others are not.
Saxon Knights	Small	IN	MI, TN	The Saxon Knights were formed in 1995 and are based primarily in the Indiana prison system. Size refers to their Tennessee presence.
White Aryan Resistance	Small	See Notes	See Notes	Various white supremacist gangs in multiple states have used the name White Aryan Resistance, but are not necessarily linked to each other.

TEXAS

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Brotherhood of Texas	Large	TX	NM, OK, BOP	Started in 1984, the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is the largest white supremacist prison gangs in Texas and one of the largest in the country. Aryan Brotherhood of Texas is active both behind bars and on the streets of Texas and nearby states.
Aryan Circle	Large	TX	MO, OK, BOP, NM, TN, IN, LA, AR	Aryan Circle was created in 1985 in the Texas prison system. They have over 1,500 members and associates both inside and outside the prison system, making them one of the largest white supremacist prison gangs in the U.S.
Dirty White Boys	Small	See Notes	See Notes	There are several prison gangs throughout the United States called "Dirty White Boys." Some of these are related to each other, and others are not.
Solid Wood Soldiers	Small	TX		This group started out as the Stupid Woods, also known as the Separate White State. Gang members also refer to the Solid Wood Soldiers as the "wolf pack," "pack," and "family."
White Knights of America	Small	TX	AZ	The White Knights originated in the Texas prison system and later expanded to Arizona.

UTAH

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Krieger Verwandt	Small	UT		Loosely translated, Krieger Verwandt stands for "Warrior Kindred."
Silent Aryan Warriors (SAW)	Large	UT		Based primarily in the Utah prison system, Silent Aryan Warriors also have a known street presence in the state.
Soldiers of Aryan Culture (SAC)	Large	UT	BOP	Founded in the 1990s, Soldiers of Aryan Culture is a Utah-based white supremacist prison gang.

VERMONT

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Hitler's Henchmen	Small	VT		

VIRGINIA

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Brotherhood Forever	Medium	TN	VA	Originally started in Tennessee, the Brotherhood Forever Virginia chapter was created in 2012 by one the Tennessee founders.
Aryan Brotherhood Texas	Medium	VA		This group does not appear to be linked to the original Aryan Brotherhood of Texas.

WASHINGTON

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Family	Medium	WA		The Aryan Family prison gang was founded in 1993 in the Washington prison system.
Aryan Knights	Small	ID	OR, ID	The Aryan Knights are an Idaho-based prison gang.
Aryan Skinhead Kindred	Small	WA		
European Kindred	Small	OR	ID, WA	European Kindred was founded in 1998 in the Oregon prison system. Size refers to the gang's presence in Washington.
Hakenkreuz Skinheads	Small	WA		
International Peckerwood Syndicate	Medium	OR	WA	Formed in 2005 in the Oregon prison system, International Peckerwood Syndicate is also known as Insane Peckerwood Syndicate.
White Alliance	Small	WA		

WYOMING

GANG NAME	OVERALL SIZE	PRIMARY STATE LOCATION	OTHER STATES WITH CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY	NOTES
Aryan Soldiers	Small	OR	WY	

White Supremacist Prison Gangs Overview

Origins

The first known prison gangs emerged in the United States in the 1950s in states such as Washington and California, followed by gangs in other states. From the beginning, a number of these prison gangs were race-based, such as the Mexican Mafia. However, it was the formation of the Aryan Brotherhood in California in the 1960s that introduced a new type of prison gang, one that combined traditional gang activities with an ideological infusion of white supremacy.

The Aryan Brotherhood formed in the wake of the desegregation of California's prison system. In the 1960s and 1970s, the prison systems of many states were racially segregated, sometimes for racist reasons and sometimes because prison administrators found there was less violence when prisoners were housed with inmates of their own background. Various court decisions led to the dismantling of race-based state prison systems between the 1960s and the 1980s. Typically, such desegregation efforts were followed by increased violence and periods of race-based gang formation within prison walls.

From the beginning, many—though not all—of the white prison gangs that formed during this period adopted elements of white supremacy, often influenced by the earlier example of the Aryan Brotherhood. The 1980s were the first major period of white supremacist gang formation, with many of the largest and oldest such gangs forming during this period, including the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, the Aryan Circle, the Aryan Warriors, the Ohio Aryan Brotherhood, and others. The influence of the original Aryan Brotherhood can be seen clearly in the names of many such early gangs.

White supremacist prison gangs continued to form in the 1990s, a period that also saw significant street activity by such gangs, especially in states such as Texas and California. In California, which has the most white supremacist gangs in the United States, cross-fertilization between white supremacist prison gangs and other white supremacist groups—noticeably racist skinhead gangs—really took root, with a number of gangs essentially becoming hybrids: part white street gang, part racist skinhead gang, and part white supremacist prison gang. This phenomenon eventually helped create an entire “white power”/“peckerwood” subculture in California, especially southern California, emerging primarily from poorer white or mixed white/Latino communities.

However, it was in the 21st century that white supremacist prison gangs were really able to expand, both in numbers and geographically. A primary reason was the growth of methamphetamines (meth) as an illegal drug of choice. In 1996, the Drug Enforcement Agency seized, in its various enforcement actions, a total of 751 kilograms of meth. By 2000, the amount had more than doubled. Unlike cocaine or heroin, drugs based on substances (poppies, coca leaves) grown abroad, so-called “meth labs” can make meth practically anywhere, from abandoned houses to motel rooms. Another method of meth manufacture, the so-called “shake and bake” method, is even simpler, though it produces smaller quantities.

Once a substance abused primarily in western states and dealt by outlaw motorcycle gangs, meth moved east, becoming particularly popular in the Midwest and the South, with white supremacist prison gangs increasingly involved in its manufacture or distribution. This helped fuel the creation or growth of a number of white supremacist prison gangs in the Midwest and South, with states such as Indiana, Missouri, and Tennessee developing significant racist prison gang problems. Many such gangs were also subsequently able to capitalize on the later boom in prescription painkiller abuse.

Today, white supremacist gangs are active in the Federal Bureau of Prisons as well as in most state prison systems. Large county jails also often have to contend with such gangs in the regions where they are active. Moreover, such gangs are increasingly active on the streets. Though many people might think of white supremacist prison gangs in terms of griz-

zled Aryan Brotherhood members serving life terms, the average felony prison sentence in most states is only 2-3 years, so gang members are often back on the streets relatively quickly. Moreover, many white supremacist gangs now recruit on the streets as well as behind bars. Another source of recruits is gang members' own children: some gang members actually groom their own teenaged children as future potential members or "prospects" for their gangs. One can find such children identifying with their parents' gangs on social media.

Ideology and Subculture

White supremacist prison gangs are significantly different from other types of white supremacist groups. The most important difference is that prison gangs are a form of organized crime. Almost all white supremacist prison gangs give a higher priority—often a much higher priority—to criminal motives such as profit than to the ideological motives most important to more "traditional" white supremacist groups. Some prison gangs even formally enshrine this priority in their constitutions or by-laws.

The nature and purpose of their white supremacist ideology is also different from many other white supremacist groups. First, their version of white supremacist ideology is often cruder than that of neo-Nazis or other white supremacists. The earliest prison gangs often cobbled together their own "homebrewed" versions of white supremacy, occasionally influenced by literature from outside extremist groups or from Ku Klux Klan members or by other extremists placed behind bars. Other, more ideological types of white supremacists often shunned members of white supremacist prison gangs, both behind bars and on the streets, frequently claiming that the gangs "poisoned" the white race by selling drugs to whites.

This is still true today, to some degree, but to a lesser extent. In recent years, the expansion of white supremacist gangs into the streets, coupled with their strong Internet presence, has both allowed white supremacist prison gang members more access to broader white supremacist propaganda and ideology, while also creating increased connections between white supremacist prison gang members and other white supremacists.

Beginning around 2006, the growth of social media websites increasingly fueled these connections. The Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism has examined thousands of social media profiles of white supremacist gang members. Although one might think that members of organized crime groups might be reluctant to use social media websites, nothing could be further from the truth; such sites have become an important way for members of such groups to keep in touch with each other, bond with each other, reinforce group values and ties, and even occasionally issue instructions. Social media has also allowed gang members to make contact with a variety of other white supremacists and one can often see the Facebook profiles of white supremacist prison gang members containing "friends" who are fellow gang members and associates but also "friends" who belong to a plethora of a number of other white supremacist groups or causes.

The growing popularity of Odinism—a white supremacist version of the modern revival of ancient Norse religions—among both white supremacist prison gang members and other white supremacists has also led to increased connections. A number of white supremacist gang members now consider themselves Odinists. They may belong to Odinist groups with "prison ministries" or join free-world Odinist groups when out of prison.

These various connections have resulted in some white supremacist gang members—and even some gangs as a whole—becoming more ideological. The White Knights of America, for example, a Texas- and Arizona-based gang, have not only built connections with a number of other white supremacist groups but have even created their own group website, one that looks little different from the websites of many neo-Nazi, Klan, or other white supremacist websites.

Despite these increasing ties, white supremacist gang members as a whole are definitely less ideological than their counterparts in other racist movements. Whereas the majority of members of a group like the National Socialist Movement

are likely to be highly ideological, the typical large white supremacist prison gang will have a relatively small number of members with significant knowledge of white supremacist ideology, a larger number of members with slight knowledge, and an equal or even larger still pool of members whose beliefs may be little more than crude racism.

Another difference between white supremacist prison gangs and other white supremacist groups is the use to which such ideology is put. Prison gangs are a form of organized crime and groups that engage in organized crime must find a way, if they wish to thrive, to convince members to put the welfare of the group over that of the individual. Familial ties, ethnicity, group bonding, religion, and subcultural affiliations are all methods that various organized crime groups may use to try to instill that group loyalty.

White supremacist prison gangs use race and white supremacist ideology as ways to bond members together. To this, such gangs will often add the notion of a racial “family” of sorts, with references to “our white family” or “our Aryan family,” and encouraging members to call each other brothers (and, where applicable, sisters).

Gangs also take advantage of the “peckerwood” subculture that has arisen in many prison systems among white prison gangs and their associates and hangers-on. The term “peckerwood” was originally a racial epithet used by African-Americans against whites. In prisons in the South, some whites embraced the epithet and began using it to refer to themselves (or sometimes the shorter term “wood”). The term became associated with members and associates of white supremacist prison gangs (and, in California, certain white street gangs). Women who consider themselves part of the subculture refer to themselves as “featherwoods” or “feathers.” Often white gang members in a particular prison are collectively referred to as the “Woodpile.” The subculture is also used as a bonding mechanism by white supremacist prison gangs.

White supremacist prison gang activities

Behind bars, white supremacist prison gangs and their membership engage in a wide variety of criminal activities, often violent. Profit-oriented crimes include smuggling illegal drugs and other contraband substances and items into prisons, protection rackets, scams and frauds (sometimes even perpetrated by prisoners on victims in the free world), among others.

Gang-oriented crimes include acts of violence against rival gang members or other targeted inmates. They also include violence against members of their own gang, often because a member may be suspected as an informer or because the member has broken gang rules. Large white supremacist prison gangs such as the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas and the Aryan Circle have killed a large number of their own members and associates. The use of force also helps keep other gang members in line.

Lastly, gang members may engage in hate-related violence stemming directly from their white supremacist ideology. Timothy Lee York received a five-year sentence in 2012 after being convicted of such a crime. York, a member of the United Aryan Brotherhood and an inmate in a federal prison in Texas, tried to kill his cellmate, strangling him to the point of unconsciousness, then beating and kicking him. York later admitted that the only reason for the attack was because his cellmate was Jewish. Sometimes the violence is also designed to keep other white inmates “in line” as well. For example, in 2014, two inmates in a federal prison in Georgia, one a member of the Aryan Resistance Militia and the other a member of Soldiers of Aryan Culture, were convicted of second-degree murder for beating to death a fellow white inmate who had refused to protest against having an African-American cellmate.

On the streets, white supremacist prison gang members also engage in a wide array of criminal activities, some of it organized and some committed by members on their own initiative. The manufacture, import or sale of illegal drugs is the most important such activity, but burglary rings, identity theft, and other schemes are also common. Gang-oriented violence also takes place in the free world as well as behind bars, as does hate-related violence. Aryan Brotherhood of

Texas member Steven Scott Cantrell, for example, received a 37-year prison sentence in 2011 for a string of hate-related arsons directed largely against African-Americans, Hispanics, and Jews.

There is no doubt that white supremacist prison gangs commit more murders than any other type of white supremacist in the United States. Some of these murders are directed against their own membership, while others are directed at rival gangs or for traditional criminal reasons, and a minority consist of hate-related incidents. The gangs combine the criminal intent and knowhow of organized crime with the racism and hate of white supremacy, making them doubly dangerous.

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

Marvin D. Nathan
National Chair

Jonathan A. Greenblatt
CEO & National Director

Kenneth Jacobson
Deputy National Director

Deborah M. Lauter
Senior Vice President, Policy and Programs

Steven M. Freeman
Deputy Director, Policy and Programs

Glen S. Lewy
President, Anti-Defamation League Foundation

CENTER ON EXTREMISM

David Friedman
*Vice President, Law Enforcement,
Extremism and Community Security*

Oren Segal
Director, Center on Extremism

Mark Pitcavage
Senior Research Fellow

Christopher Magyarics
Investigative Researcher

This work is made possible in part by the generous support of:
William and Naomi Gorowitz Institute on Extremism and Terrorism
Marlene Nathan Meyerson Family Foundation
Charles and Mildred Schnurmacher Foundation, Inc.

For additional and updated resources please see: www.adl.org
Copies of this publication are available in the Rita and Leo Greenland Library and Research Center.

©2016 Anti-Defamation League | Printed in the United States of America | All Rights Reserved



Anti-Defamation League
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158-3560
www.adl.org



605 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10158-3560
www.adl.org