

01.01-AV20-5454

OUTLAW BIKERS, METHAMPHETAMINE AND CULTURAL CHANGE

CARL BRADLEY¹

ABSTRACT

Outlaw Bikers are involved in the illicit global economy. With a reputation for violence, they are well-placed to control aspects of the shadow economies in which they operate. New Zealand is one of the largest users of methamphetamine per capita in the OECD, with increased links between the drug trade and Outlaw Bikers. Outlaw Biker groups have moved in on this trade with a shift in how the character of the clubs look and behave. There is a potential for tensions to rise as some clubs become more organised in their criminal activity, while others resist. International Outlaw Biker groups are increasing their presence in New Zealand, patching over older, traditional clubs. Some older clubs are also expanding their physical presence to control markets across the country. This paper will analyse the changes in the Biker culture through measuring some of these groups against the conservative/radical scale/continuum.

Key Words: Outlaw Bikers, Gang Culture, Methamphetamine.

INTRODUCTION

Methamphetamine is having a disproportionate impact on New Zealand society, prompting the government and law enforcement to introduce measures to prevent its importation, manufacture and distribution in New Zealand.² Part of governmental and law enforcement attention falls on organised crime groups, of which Outlaw Bikers constitutes such a clique.³ Outlaw Bikers are becoming increasingly linked to organised crime and the trade in methamphetamine. While this poses a threat to society in particular and national security in general (Bradley, 2017), is the increasing participation in the methamphetamine trade creating challenges to maintaining the tenets of the “biker” ideology? Research conducted in the United States and Australia certainly highlights such a problem, as prospective members can often circumvent traditionally long and robust trial periods if they bring potential business opportunities to the club or have currency in violent behaviour that strengthens the club’s hold over illicit markets (Barker, 2014, p. 13).

This article will consider such questions of cultural change through the optic of the Outlaw Biker continuum. This continuum measures Outlaw Biker groups along the conceptual conservative/radical range set out by Thomas Barker, a researcher in the area of Outlaw Biker clubs. From this scale we can determine which Outlaw Biker clubs focus more on the tenets of the outlaw ideology that underpin their reasons for membership, and which clubs constitute organised crime groups (Barker, 2014, p. 13). Organised criminality is not the main emphasis of the former conservative group. However, for those at the radical end of the continuum, crime is the main driver and can threaten aspects of the Outlaw Biker culture that have existed for decades. Can this continuum be applied to New Zealand Outlaw Bikers? I believe so, and set out to apply this approach to the New Zealand outlaw gangs. However, to apply the continuum to New Zealand Outlaw Biker groups, we need to first discuss what

¹Lectures for the Centre for Defence and Security Studies at Massey. PhD from the School of Humanities and Social Science (Classic), The University of Newcastle, Australia. BA (History) and MA (Defence and Strategic Studies) at Massey University. Email: c.m.bradley@massey.ac.nz.

²Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (October 2015). *Tackling Methamphetamine: progress report*.

³Whole-of-Government Action Plan to Reduce the Harms Caused by New Zealand Adult Gangs and Transnational Crime Groups, New Zealand Government (2010).

the tenets of the Outlaw Biker ideology are and how they have shaped the culture of such groups. Such a discussion will be followed by an examination of Barker's conservative/radical continuum. Following this, we will look at the impact the methamphetamine trade is having on both the Outlaw Biker ideology and the impact on clubs through the allure of this powerful and profitable motivator. This article is new research into the changing face of the outlaw culture in New Zealand; while referring to international literature, it will use local examples to assess changes taking place in the gang scene and to provide tentative predictions for the future of the Outlaw Biker scene in New Zealand regarding potential gang-on-gang conflict.

THE OUTLAW BIKER STRUCTURE

Jared Gilbert, one of New Zealand's leading researchers into gangs provides a definition for them. Gilbert defines a criminal gang as a structured group (five or more members), with exclusive membership marked by common identifiers (a patch), and formal rules that supersede those of the state. There is an organisational focus on profit through crime (Gilbert, 2013, p. ix). The New Zealand Outlaw Bikers fall within Gilbert's definition of criminal gangs. We will be focusing on those outlaw bikers who have a shared outlaw structure.

Before we look at the tenets of the biker ideology, it is practical to briefly discuss the political structure of these groups so that we can place the New Zealand examples into the Outlaw Biker context. New Zealand Outlaw Bikers are highly hierarchical and have established paramilitary characteristics. There are variations across the numerous biker clubs, but there exist some common roles developed in the 1960s and 1970s that drew on American examples, mainly the Hell's Angels (Gilbert, pp. 20-21, 32, 55). The biker leadership hierarchy has varying roles, including executive officers: a president, a vice-president, a treasurer/secretary, a sergeant at arms and a road captain (Gilbert, 2013, p. 13; Andrae, 2004, p. 44). The sergeant at arms maintains strict discipline among the patched members and associates. Their rules are firmly enforced, with any breaches prompting swift judgement and a penalty (sometimes violent); a patch can be removed quickly (Veno, 2002, p. 270). Gilbert states how remarkably quickly and viciously gangs turn on their members if protocols are breached, with a high value placed on trust (Gilbert, 2013, p. 199).

Adherence to rules and protocols ensures tight cohesion and the following of group norms that help establish the culture of the biker clubs at the local and broader levels. Selection and socialisation processes will enforce a particular ideology; for bikers, the ideals of the "righteous" biker who lives 24/7 for the club epitomises this process that spreads across the group (Barker, 2014, p. 14). There is little research on specific group processes in New Zealand, but work on international youth gangs suggest that gangs offer its successful members status, identity, companionship and respect (Wood, 2014, p. 710). In discussing the formation and conflict between rival Outlaw Bikers, the Epitaph Riders and the Devil's Henchmen in Christchurch in the mid-1970s, Gilbert recounts that a member of the latter group felt that the media coverage they received during the "war" gave their group a name, and so members felt they had moved from a marginalised existence in mainstream society to being "somebody" (Gilbert, 2013, p. 77). A desire for acceptance into the gang will encourage prospective members to develop a new identity that reflects the group – an identity reinforced by patched members (Wood, 2014, p. 712). Within the New Zealand Outlaw Biker scene, the domination of the individual by the group is also a rediscovery of self (Andrae, 2004, pp. 76, 71) or symbolic "rebirth" (Gilbert, 2013, p. 75), and these factors (as well as a sense of being somebody and belonging to a larger entity) help maintain a certain ideological nature within an organisation.

OUTLAW BIKER IDEOLOGY

Outlaw Bikers have a long history internationally and in New Zealand. Formed in the United States by returned servicemen after World War Two, groups coalesced around shared interests in riding American- or European-made motorbikes and socialising (Lauchs et al., 2015, p. 12; Barker, 2014, p. 3; Veno, 2002, p. 22; Wolf, 1991, p. 4). New Zealand saw the rise of Outlaw Bikers, identifiable by the wearing of back patches that separate them from other groups of youths, in the 1960s (Gilbert, 2013, p. 5). The Hell's Angels, an American-based club, provided the political structure and cultural characteristics that would be copied the world over. Auckland boasts the first Hell's Angel chapter outside of the US (Gilbert, 2013, p. 17). The Hell's Angels set the tone of behaviour and the structure of Outlaw Bikers in New Zealand. The ideological tenets of this culture also originate in the US. The "righteous biker" encapsulates the ideology that sets out the characteristics of the outlaw motorcycle scene, and both international and New Zealand studies have illuminated the cultural tenets of "biker" society (Lauchs et al., 2015; Barker, 2014; Veno, 2002; Wolf; Gilbert, 2013; Dennehy and Newbold). Such ideological markers include masculinity, a sense of brotherhood, territorial defence and combat cohesion, and counter-cultural ideals. It is prudent at this point to expand on these Outlaw Biker ideological markers, as such an exercise will allow for a robust assessment of the impact the methamphetamine trade is having on the culture of Outlaw Biker clubs.

MASCULINITY

A main and controversial feature of the Outlaw Biker ideology is the male-dominant nature of this society, which subordinates the role of women and non-patched bikers. Issues arise when looking at gangs within the crime statistics for domestic violence. New Zealand unfortunately has a serious issue with domestic violence (topping the ratings for the OECD countries), and gangs are responsible for almost half reported serious offences.⁴ The culture has been described across the international literature as a male-dominated saloon culture (Veno, 2002, p. 129; Quinn and Forsyth, 2009, p. 248; Quinn and Koch, 2003, p. 281; Andrae, 2004, p. 82; Wolf, pp. 9, 66). The strong bonds of brotherhood make these groups tight, paramilitary in nature and hard to infiltrate (Bradley, 2017, p. 275). As biker culture changes and expands, some of this tight cohesion underscored by paramilitary small group cohesion can be eroded as potential members are patched in quickly. Periods of rapid growth, for example, like that of the Head Hunters and Hell's Angels in New Zealand, open these closed groups to infiltration. Such male dominance can be seen in more detail when we look at the ideals of brotherhood that underpin much of the tenets of Outlaw Biker culture.

BROTHERHOOD

One of the strongest tenets of the biker culture is the sense of brotherhood that members gain in joining an Outlaw Biker club (W. Thompson, 2008, p. 95; Quinn and Koch, 2003, p. 282; Veno, 2002, p. 93, 153, 163; Payne and P. Quinn, 1997, p. 60). Kira Harris, in discussing commitment to the Outlaw Biker lifestyle, states that the sense of brotherhood found in such groups is like an ideology (2016, p. 74). Some Australian Biker clubs are characterised by family ties, while a number of groups in New Zealand have strong family and *whanau* links that create a familial connection (Veno, 2002, p. 94-95; Gilbert, 2013, p. 143). Brotherhood cohesion in New Zealand has traditionally been formed out of turf wars, but, more importantly, regular meetings and formal voting processes allow (as Gilbert asserts) for gang member compliance to certain rules that act as a socialising process, where adherence to club regulations is strictly enforced (Gilbert, 2013, p. 159).

⁴Whole-of-Government Action Plan to Reduce the Harms Caused by New Zealand Adult Gangs and Transnational Crime Groups, New Zealand Government (2010), pp. 2-3.

Particular club activities also work in cementing some of the ideological tenants of the righteous biker and brotherhood. Group activities like riding and partying form bonds of shared experience and cohesion that are reinforced by physical confrontations with other gangs or non-member groups. Wolf, when discussing the Rebels MC of Canada, sees the club run (a series of bike rides over a riding season) as “rich in symbolism and charged with excitement and emotion” while having the “greatest psychological impact on the members” (Wolf, 1991, p. 225). Territorial defence will be discussed below but the defence of the patch, a major symbolic marker of the group and a gang identifier located on the back of a vest or jacket, reinforces group culture and cohesion. The patch is a part of the biker’s threat display that says “fuck off cunt” (Wolf, 1991, p. 18). Such clear symbolic statements and activities reinforce the ideals of brotherhood and the kin-like culture. Symbolism is important in creating and maintaining a tight-knit group that is hard to infiltrate. In the case of criminal activity, such a culture, while not unique to gangs, is nevertheless important. The internationalisation of New Zealand gangs means that this idea of brotherhood extends beyond national borders, creating the sense of an international brotherhood (Lauchs et al., 2015, p. 16).

The process of prospecting or trying out for the gang is part of moulding new and potential members into the Outlaw Biker culture. Prospecting also works to introduce and familiarise potential members to the norms of the wider biker culture and the unique tenants of that particular chapter and gang. Some aspects of initiation, such as “walking the line” or “gauntlet”, work to reinforce the gangs control over its members and to reinforce bonds “among the bros” (Andrae, 2004, p. 66; Wolf, 1991, p. 114). The first aspect places the initiate under the clear and physical control of the group; any weak link is removed, and the attainment of the patch reinforces the symbolic transition from citizen to Outlaw Biker (Andrae, 2004, p. 64; Wolf, 1991, p. 112). Such a conversion from citizen to biker can be seen as an act of counter-culture rebellion, but the rules within this ideal are not necessary anti-authority in the true sense. If the prospecting process is shortened or diluted in any way, such as for reasons of bring someone into the gang quickly for expedience, this can erode the quality of the patch and scrutiny during the process or vetting may be inadequate. It could also cause resentment and tension within the group. Swift expansion and the loss of robust rules of joining create an easy path for infiltration and a continued dilution of the ideological character of Outlaw Biker. Loss of small group cohesion can be lost as clubs are motivated by profit rather than a brotherhood ideology.

COUNTER-CULTURE IDEALS

There is a contradiction between the strict rules that Outlaw Bikers live by and the ideal of counter-culture that is often associated with such groups. This discipline is almost a paradox, given the view that many gang members are non-conformist rebels. Veno states that joining an OMC “clearly communicates dissatisfaction with the system” (2002, p. 270, 271), but tension exists between individual biker freedom versus group conformity and survival (Andrae, 2004, 2004, p. 45; Wolf, 1991, p. 271). What can be identified is the difference in activities, with general anti-authoritarian law-breaking in the shape of violence and minor offences and other nuisance behaviour at one end of the scale. Such conduct is seen as barbarian culture offences that can evolve into more serious organised criminal offences (Lauchs et al., 2015, p. 27; Quinn and Koch, 2003, p. 296). Counter-culture gang members move from such nuisance behaviour to sophisticated subcultural entrepreneurs as a group realigns its focus on what Gilbert defines as criminal gangs behaviour (Gilbert, 2013, p. xi; Quinn and Koch, 2003, p. 288). Existing on the fringes of society and partaking in the shadow world of the illegal economy places gangs in a good position to control areas of that market (while not counter-culture, this space is certainly an alternative system). The difficulty

within the Outlaw Biker landscape is to identify at what point each group sits along the conservative/radical continuums. The issue for law enforcement will always be how to identify illegal activities as the actions of individual members, and what is seen as club business and more organised in nature and structure (Bradley, 2017, p. 276; Gilbert, 2013, p. 186). While criminal behaviour changes with a more organised operation, the need to divert law enforcement attention away from the club becomes a norm with the lessening of self-destructive or spontaneous crimes (Harris, 2016, p. 74). Such a distinction between spontaneous and organised crime fits within the conservative/radical continuum and the criminal continuum discussed below (Harris, 2016, p. 74). As Outlaw Biker clubs shift into more organised criminal activities, they move along the continuum from conservative to radical clubs.

TERRITORIAL DEFENCE AND COMBAT COHESION

Combat cohesion and military-styled organisations should not be confused with unrestricted and random acts of violence. Each member of the group explicitly understands the responsibilities they have to protect the club and its boundaries (Quinn and Forsyth, 2009, p. 250; Wolf, 1991, p. 66). While the violent potential of the Outlaw Biker is clear and, when challenged, can manifest in swift acts of violence, such violent behaviour is controlled. The “all-for-one and one-for-all” attitude makes the Outlaw Biker a formidable force in the saloon milieu, or a major determinant to conflict, but membership is no licence to acts of random violence (Harris, 2016, p. 77). Breaches in behaviour that bring the group under the spotlight of law enforcement can result in punishment for the offender (usually always within the closed environment of the club house). Biker behaviour is therefore moderated and (as already discussed) not random or unrestricted. Citizens not involved in the biker world generally need not worry about such behaviour, although there are well-publicised instances where gang violence has threatened the public. These instances should be seen as an exception rather than the norm in Outlaw Biker interactions with the public for a good reason.

There is however some discussion in the literature about the relationship that gangs have with their wider community. The selling of drugs in general and methamphetamine in particular is so destructive in nature and predatory in character. In such an environment of profit-based criminality, Outlaw Bikers are criminal corporations in the shadow economy, where profits are placed before the goodwill of the community. While some gangs are addressing this irony in real terms, the more radical gangs show no inclination to give up an income stream based on methamphetamine and a country’s addiction to this destructive drug. The implication of territorial defence, shifting alliances and gang boundaries and conflict cannot, however, be ignored, particularly when the risk to drug markets are threatened.

THE CONSERVATIVE/RADICAL CONTINUUM

Barker, who has researched widely on Outlaw Biker groups, states that it is too simplistic to call all Outlaw Bikers organised crime groups because each chapter is different and the outlaw landscape is dynamic (Barker, 2014, p. 13).⁵ To address this situation, he offers up the concept of a criminal organisation continuum that allows for a more nuanced assessment and interpretation at the individual member and groups within the club and the levels of criminality (Barker, 2014, p. 13). It is prudent to now look at what the criminal organisation and conservative/radical continuums means for New Zealand Outlaw Bikers and organised crime. The criminal organisation continuum can be reflected in the attitude of clubs and their members to the ideological tenets of the “biker”. The tenets of Outlaw Biker culture vary across gangs and indeed chapters, but from these characteristics we can look at where a group

⁵ The chapter or charter in the OMC context is the local club based on a club house. A chapter’s geographical location may sometimes be stated on their back patch.

may sit within Barkers conservative/radical continuum. The conservative/radical continuum recognises that each club and chapter is distinct, with some clubs moving from conservative (or righteous biker) ideals to criminal-based entrepreneurs who focus on money and underworld power rather than gang loyalty (Bradley, 2017, pp. 276-7; Barker, 2014, p. 13; Quinn and Koch, 2003, p. 283; Quinn and Forsyth, 2009, pp. 237, 249). Outlaw Bikers are far from an homogenous subset of bikers, as there cliques within gangs and an array of shifting alliances with various types of criminal groups or non-criminal groups (Quinn and Koch, 2003, pp. 283, 286, 291), while some clubs exist with virtually no links to organised crime (Quinn and Koch, 2003, p. 299). Government legislation applied to combat gangs and organised crime does not necessarily work as heavy handed policies can have the opposite effect of galvanising a group, and such heavy-handed government legislation aimed at gangs pushes out the non-criminal elements and strengthens the criminal ones (Lauchs et al., 2015, p. 17).

Purely criminal groups are flexible and agile in the face of risk to their business. However, rapid growth in business presents a major risk to group cohesion and brotherhood, which brings us back to the initial statements that Outlaw Bikers are losing aspects of their culture that have kept them strong in the past. Swift growth is a risk to any business and perhaps, with the blurring of boundaries and relationships being formed beyond the biker clique for financial expediency, the security of the small group (say 10-20 members) is no longer easy to maintain. There is also the risk that shared expertise, such as methamphetamine cooks, may have limited loyalty to a group they are only working for temporarily. While the punishment for informing or supplying information to law enforcement on Outlaw Bikers is swift and violent, blurred boundaries of loyalty may be another risk factor, given methamphetamine-related convictions involve lengthy prison terms. It is now appropriate to explore the issues of meth and the move by Outlaw Bikers to recalibrate their focus to make serious profits from this drug.

METHAMPHETAMINE AND THE CRIME CONTINUUM

New Zealanders constitutes some of the most active methamphetamine users in the western world,⁶ and the market in this drug is estimated to be worth NZ \$1.2 billion per year (Cabinet Social Policy Committee, 2010, p. 7; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; 2015, p. 2). Outlaw Bikers are closely linked to the production of methamphetamine, with 78% (104/133) of clandestine labs discovered by police in 2010 being controlled by gangs Cabinet Social Policy Committee, 2010, p. 7). Such clandestine labs display organised criminal activity, and international bikers appear to be driving this trade. Local club criminality increased when linked politically to international groups in Canada (Wolf, 1991, p. 321), while in New Zealand the Head Hunters, who moved LSD for the Hell's Angels in the 90s, possibly manufacture and distribute methamphetamine for this international organisation in New Zealand (Bradley, 2017, p. 278).

Given the large number of methamphetamine users per capita in New Zealand, this factor may help explain why overseas Bikers such as the Bandidos and Outlaws are increasing their presence and control of the methamphetamine markets. Their presence is also changing the character of the New Zealand Outlaw Biker landscape. What can be seen is the move of such groups from social organisations to criminal organisations (Lauchs et al., 2015, p. 29). This shift impacts on the tenets of the Outlaw Biker ideology.

⁶ The UN World Drug Report 2014 lists New Zealand citizens among the highest users of Methamphetamine after Thailand and Australia: UNODC (2014).

IMPACT ON CULTURE

In Australia and the US, some individual Outlaw Bikers are allowed to join without owning or riding a bike, their membership being based on criminal abilities or from a propensity for violence, and these are seen as business-based radical gangs who compromise ideology for profit (Barker, 2014, p. 13). Gilbert states that drug use threatens the sense of brotherhood, but there is a hypocrisy when we consider Outlaw Biker attitudes toward selling drugs. Defining Australian Outlaw Bikers as organised criminal groups is a recent phenomenon, and the same could be said for the outlaw culture in New Zealand if we look at the scale of involvement in the organised production and distribution of methamphetamine. We will now look at the rise of the Head Hunters as an example of Outlaw Biker changing its culture to move into the methamphetamine trade.

Developing from an ethnic street gang in the late 60s into an outlaw motorcycle club, the Head Hunters have grown in both size and reach with possibly 240 patched members with links to other outlaw clubs across the North Island (and strong moves into the South Island). While the Head Hunters have had a historical link to the Hell's Angels, they are an example of a New Zealand gang becoming a strong force in the shadow economy. Links to the Hell's Angels highlight movement along the continuum by groups such as the Head Hunters, who work closely with such international Outlaw Biker groups. Gilbert, in discussing overseas gangs, states that highly-structured gangs are more likely to become involved in organised criminal activity (Gilbert, 2013, p. 21), and this is a trend seen with the Head Hunters. Internationalisation and links to the broader global criminal world is driving gangs into the radical spectrum of the continuum as they move to control the methamphetamine market. What is important to note here is that international organisations like the Hell's Angels (and their international criminal networks), while small in number, have disproportionate power and control of the methamphetamine trade. The relationship in the contacts between the Head Hunters and Hell's Angels is based on reciprocation in access to methamphetamine products (Hell's Angels) and market distribution and muscle (Head Hunters).

The sharing of goods and services blurs the gang boundaries, and there has been a greater emphasis on dynamic networks of individual criminals which can work at replacing traditional gang hierarchies that can be changed quickly. Harris discusses members with differing priorities coexisting until these priorities conflict; such internal tensions can lead to disillusionment and conflict that threatens the cohesion of these groups (Harris, 2016, p. 75). As priorities change focus and new alliances are formed, there can also be a shift in the specific characteristics required to join these groups that have protected and strictly controlled entry into the brotherhood of the Outlaw Biker. The Bandidos in Australia are under pressure to its culture, as more traditional biker ideologies (such as having, maintaining and riding a bike) are being diluted by members who are recruited for their criminal links (and drive cars). This comes from the need to form strategic alliances to capitalise on wealth opportunities. Such moves to create new, often regional, alliances have seen a major shift in the Outlaw Biker landscape in New Zealand. Well-established OMCs that share the conservative characteristics have been patching over to the larger international gangs or their allies.

Some of the first New Zealand Outlaw Bikers to patch over to international gangs were the Outlaws MC in Hastings, who aligned with the US-based group of the same name. The Nelson-based Lost Breed patched over to the Hell's Angels after resisting moves by the Red Devils (a feeder for the Hell's Angels who were infiltrated by NZ law enforcement) to set up in their town; the Lone Legion of Blenheim (in close proximity geographically to Nelson) patched over to the Outlaws (Bradley, 2017, p. 282-3). Well-established Outlaw Biker clubs in New Zealand's capital city Wellington – Satan's Slaves and Sein Fein, and the Christchurch-based Epitaph Riders – have also been taken over by the Head Hunters, who are closely tied

to the Hell's Angels. Another lower North Island city has also seen its long-established club the Mother MC on the verge of folding with the setting up of a Hell's Angel chapter.

Another aspect of the changing OMC landscape in New Zealand is the move by an Australian-based OMC, the Rebels, to set up chapters across New Zealand. Unlike the Bandidos OMC that originated in the US but moved to New Zealand from across the Tasman, the Rebels are indigenous to Australia. The Rebels have added another level of tension to the OMC environment with New Zealand-based OMCs and street gangs openly opposing moves by the Rebel. The impact of this situation is seen in the patching over of traditional New Zealand OMCs, such as the Northland chapter of the Tribesmen. The decision to align with the Rebels was made along kinship lines where Australian-based family members paved the way for their family to take up the Rebel patch. While this activity has been conflict free on the surface, such shifting of the gang landscape could lead into conflict.

POTENTIAL CONFLICT

Territorial disputes during the formative stages of gang development often galvanises a group and stands as an important tenet of the outlaw philosophy. For New Zealand, the gang geography was well divided up after a series of gang wars by the 1990s, and these conflicts resulted in a tightening of the idea and culture of brotherhood and club survival (Gilbert, 2013, pp. 84, 244; Wolf, 1991, p. 25). Territorial defence and the application of violence is a carefully managed currency for gangs and position them nicely to control aspects of the shadow economy (Wood, 2014, p. 719). Researchers have likened Outlaw Bikers to paramilitary organisations with a clear hierarchy that has set rules under-pinned by the use of violence to enforce such rules (Lauchs et al., 2015 p. 28). Combat cohesion and a military styled organisation is conducive to organised violence in an atmosphere of inter-gang warfare; this can also be applied to, and have utility in the shadow economy and organised crime. The application of organised violence in an organised criminal context appears to be a step that has moved Outlaw Biker groups along the conservative/radical continuum (Bradley, 2017, p. 276-7).

The relationship between the Outlaw Biker and the host community is important and, according to Gilbert, carefully managed (Gilbert, 2013, p. 292-4). Outlaw Bikers have a degree of social segregation, but this really translates into economic segregation (Andrae, 2004, p. 82). Social connections are important touch points with the host community. Like any organisation, Outlaw Bikers need to be of relevance to the community they come from. Issues of recruitment and maintaining numbers and combat cohesion and efficiency require community engagement regardless of how restrictive entry into the club may be. The loosening of entry criteria and the upholding of the Outlaw Biker tenets may come under threat as the need for profit through criminality over-take the older conservative biker behaviour and philosophy. As Outlaw Biker clubs move along the continuum from conservative to radical behaviours having increased contacts with non-club associates of an organised criminal nature, and ill-planned expansion, there are greater risk to club cohesion and strict observance of the tenets of the Outlaw Biker.

CONCLUSION

The tenets of Outlaw Biker culture are shifting and changing as some groups move to realign to take advantage of the methamphetamine trade. The threat of violence and force espoused in the male-dominant brotherhood of this counter-culture group places Outlaw Bikers well to take a strong position in the shadow economy. A realignment of focus has seen a shift in their nature and ideology, measured on Barker's conservative/radical continuum, as Outlaw Bikers' nuisance criminal behaviour becomes more organised. The impact on the Outlaw Biker scene is still to be clearly understood, but it is likely that, as some groups grow, they

will lose the tight group cohesion seen in the more conservative clubs. Swift expansion and shortened prospecting times dilute the traditional tenets of the Outlaw Biker culture. Loyalty to the club can be eroded as crime-driven profit becomes the priority. Rapid growth in power and location, as experienced by radical clubs who align with international outlaw clubs, is changing the Outlaw Biker landscape. The Head Hunters are examples of local clubs who are arguably moving along the radical line, with a number of traditional conservative outlaw clubs patching over to those more radical on the continuum. While there is little evidence in New Zealand of gang-on-gang violence among the Outlaw Bikers, time will be the judge of whether the control of the methamphetamine markets will make gang conflict more of a reality.

REFERENCES

- Andrae, D. (2004) *Flying the Colours*. MA Thesis. Auckland: Auckland University.
- Barker, T. (2014) *Outlaw Motorcycle gangs as Organized Crime Groups*. Richmond: Eastern Kentucky University.
- Bradley, C. (2017) *Outlaw Motorcycle Club, Organised Crime and National Security, New Zealand National Security: Challenges, Trends and Issues*. Palmerston North: Massey University Press.
- Cabinet Social Policy Committee (2010) *Whole-of-Government Action Plan to Reduce the Harms Caused by New Zealand Adult Gangs and Transnational Crime Groups*. New Zealand Government: Organised Crime in New Zealand.
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2015) *Tackling Methamphetamine: progress Report*. [Online]. New Zealand Government. Available from: <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2017-03/indicators-and-progress-report-oct2015.pdf> [Accessed 01 October 2017].
- Dennehy, G. and Newbold, G. (2001) *The Girls in Gangs*. Indiana: Reed Publishing.
- Gilbert, J. (2013) *Patched: The History of Gangs in New Zealand*. Auckland: Auckland University press.
- Harris, K. (2016) The fierce commitment to 1% motorcycle clubs. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 11(1), 73-83.
- Launch, M., Bain, A. and Bell, P. (2015) *Outlaw motorcycle Gangs: A Theoretical Perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Newbold, G. (2000) *Crime in New Zealand*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Payne, B. and Quinn, P. (1997) *Staunch: Inside New Zealand's Gangs*. Auckland: Reed.
- Quinn, J. and Forsyth, C. (2009) Leathers and Rolexes: The Symbolism and values of the Motorcycle Club. *Deviant Behaviour: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 30 (3), 235-265.
- Quinn, J. and Koch, D. (2003) The nature of criminality within one-percent motorcycle clubs. *Deviant Behaviour: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 24(3), 281-305.
- Thompson, W. (2008) Pseudo-Deviance and the "New Biker" Subculture: Hogs, Blogs, leathers and Lattes. *Deviant Behaviour: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 30(1), 81-114.
- UNODC (2014) *World Drug Report 2014*. [Online]. Vienna: UNODC. Available from: https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr2014/World_Drug_Report_2014_web.pdf [Accessed 1 October 2017].
- Wolf, D. (1991) *The Rebels: A Brotherhood of Outlaw Bikers*. Toronto: University of Toronto press.
- Wood, J. (2014) Understanding gang membership: The Significance of Group processes. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 17(6), 710-729.
- Veno, A. with Gannon, E. (2002) *The Brotherhoods: Inside the Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.