LET’S TALK ABOUT “TAGGERS”

In ONE word, taggers can be summed up as “Vandals”

Taggers are considered part of the “Me” generation.
They write graffiti that edifies them personally within their own sub-culture. The more prominent their graffiti the better the location. Their graffiti often consists of:

* Tagger Crew name
* Their nickname(s)

….Period

GANG ROSTERS VERSUS THE TAGGER CREW GRAFFITI

The gang member’s graffiti often include “rosters” identifying as many members of the gang as may be remembered at the time. These rosters might include names of fellow homeboys in custody or deceased. Deceased members’ names will be followed by “R.I.P.” after their names.

The Tagger doesn’t publicly graffiti “rosters” of his/her Crew’s membership. Their “me” ideology will not allow for another member’s name unless that member or members are present at the time the graffiti is written.
In early 1992, a group of taggers called HML for Hemlock boys, tried to establish itself within the Shelltown 38th Street community. Shelltown would not allow HML to set roots. After a series of attempted murders and other assaults, HML went by the wayside.

This is “Chepe.” He was a Logan 30ta boy who associated with HML boys.

Chepe was stabbed by a Shelltown 38th Street gang member.

**Weeks later….**

Chepe was walking through the rival Shelltown 38th Street neighborhood firing a .22 caliber handgun and throwing his Logan gang hand signs.

A Shelltown 38th Street gang member came out of the alley and fired a .45 caliber handgun at Chepe and his associates. Chepe was wounded with shots to the legs. He crawled under a car to hide. The rival walked up to him, put the gun to Chepe’s head and fired. Chepe was again shot in the small of the back…point blank.

Chepe is no longer with us.

**Taggers crossing the line...**

Taggers emerged in Southern California around 1990-91… They had their own unique “characteristics.”

They quickly spread throughout our communities and gangs didn’t bother them. Hardcore gang members considered Taggers “Bubblegum Gangsters.”

Then the line was crossed. Taggers began to clash with Gangs over the Machismo thing… the female… the graffiti disrespect of established gang neighborhoods and more.

**Taggers quickly developed into “Street Gangs”**

* Developed hand signs
* Became violent and confrontational
* Some established “turfs”
* Sought out rivals for violent attack
* Began developing and wearing “tattoos”

Generally speaking… one can not tell the difference between the typically gang member and the tagger. However, law enforcement, looking deep into their culture, can learn the difference and learn how to target them.
Tagger Crews Identify with what our Local Expert calls the “Umbrella Mind Set.”

Depending on where the Crew exists, depends on what you write and identify with.

- West Side
- East Side
- South East
- South Side

South East seems to have the most “clout” and notoriety because it has the largest concentration of aggressive tagger crews.

Officers Need to Ask More Questions During Field Interviews...

When the gang member says he’s from “South East.” Ask what crew he belongs to. It might be...

- South East Locos
- South East 73 Locos
- South East Tokers
- South East Juniors
- Or other tagger crew in the Southeast area

All are different Tagger Crews within the South East “umbrella”