**The Code and Conduct of Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs**

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

This paper will provide a historical background regarding the general origins of Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs), their involvement in criminal activity as legitimate criminal gangs, their respective culture and organizational structures, and finally their rules, code, and conduct. Then, the four largest OMGs (The Hells Angels, The Outlaws, The Bandidos, and The Pagans) will be explored and compared more deeply. One reason for examining more than one OMG is the secretive nature of the clubs and the subsequent lack of an abundance of information regarding how these clubs operate. For instance, some of the sources I have found speaking of OMGs directly contradict each other. This includes information I have received from law enforcement training and personnel who serve as expert witnesses in OMG related criminal cases, books discussing OMGs, and other resources. Another reason is that examining the similarities and differences between the major OMGs (primarily their rules) can be interesting.

**II. Background Information ON OMGs**

The following sections will discuss general information pertaining to OMGs and that will provide context for, and help the reader better understand, the rules and culture that define OMGs. This information includes the origins and evolution of OMGs, their criminal purpose, the various categories of OMGs, and OMG “club colors.”

1. **The Origins and History of OMGs.**

The vast majority of motorcycle riders are law-abiding, motorcycle enthusiast who enjoy motorcycles as a hobby or form of transportation (many belong to legitimate social groups or clubs devoted to sharing their passion for motorcycles and riding). However, a small portion of motorcycle clubs function as and have been recognized by various levels of government as criminal gangs that tout anti-social attitudes and engage in an array of deviant behavior and criminal activities. Individual members of such clubs proudly call themselves “One Percenters,” a nickname that originated from a comment made by the American Motorcycle Association (AMA) that stated that 99% of bikers adhere to the law.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Department of Justice (DOJ) has defined Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs) as “organizations whose members use their motorcycle clubs as conduits for criminal enterprises.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

As of 2011, the FBI determined that just over 500 OMGs exited in the United States, with a total of roughly 44,000 confirmed members.[[3]](#footnote-3) These gangs varied in degree of criminal sophistication (simple street criminals to well organized, international criminal networks).[[4]](#footnote-4) As of 2011, there are approximately 60 active OMGs in California (combined membership of approximately 2500 members).[[5]](#footnote-5) Obtaining these figures is a challenge that requires well-informed law enforcement personnel adept at investigating gangs, validating members, and linking members to crimes (the figures are still fairly reliable but can never be completely accurate). Although law enforcement might gain more convictions and tougher sentences by manipulating these figures and classifications, they have no on-going, long-term incentive since doing so would erode their credibility and taint future investigations (at a time where law enforcement is under increasing scrutiny).

The start of OMGs started with the situation World War II veterans faced when they returned home after the war. Many of these veterans had been trained to ride motorcycles in the military and struggled to re-integrate into society (for a variety of social and economic reasons). Although a general rebellious attitude and a love for riding motorcycles played a somewhat substantial role in the initial formation of motorcycle clubs from the 1940s to 1950s, some of these riding clubs soon transformed into criminal gangs. The Hells Angels are considered to be the first recognized OMG, and was formed by California based WWII veterans (to be discussed later), who named themselves the Pissed Off Bastards of Bloomington (POBOB).[[6]](#footnote-6) The term “outlaw” was first used by California law enforcement officers to distinguish criminal such as the POBOB from law-abiding motorcyclists.[[7]](#footnote-7) The outlaw biker image was solidified at the biker rally that took place in Hollister, California (in 1947), where approximately 1000 motorcyclists (including motorcycle clubs formed by WWII veterans such as the Market Street Commandos, the Pissed Off Bastards of Bloomington, and the Boozefighters) wreaked havoc.[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. **Criminal Purpose of OMGs.**

Because this paper’s focus is on the structure, rules, and conduct of OMGs, I will not go into great depth regarding the criminal objectives of OMGs or any of the many local, state, and federal law enforcement investigations (targeting OMGs) that have taken place. Nevertheless, having a basic knowledge of the legal and illegal activities OMGs participate in will help you better understand the culture and standards of OMGs.

Outlaw motorcycle clubs “provide a context for individuals with a high propensity for illegal activity to unite long enough to operate enterprises of varying degrees of sophistication.”[[9]](#footnote-9) They are involved in distributing firearms, explosives, stolen motorcycles, and motorcycle parts; providing exotic dancers and prostitutes for various sex-oriented establishments; and trafficking in lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD, a hallucinogen), phencyclidine (PCP, a hallucinogen), cocaine, and methamphetamine, which they have been especially successful in distributing.[[10]](#footnote-10) Their reputation for violence and anti-establishment attitudes make OMG members ideal middlemen for drug wholesalers, who sell to the OMG members, who in turn serve as distributors for street-level operators.[[11]](#footnote-11) Any number of members may also manufacture methamphetamine. Using violence, they are able to restrict market entry and monopolize the trade in various parts of the United States and the entire nation of Canada.[[12]](#footnote-12)

OMGs are also involved in a variety of legitimate endeavors for the purposes of money laundering and to distract the public from their more felonious actions. These legal activities include: *Amusement arcades, auto salvage & wrecking, Bars, Massage parlors, Motorcycle shops, Real estate, Restaurants, Independent trucking, Tattoo parlors, Billiard halls, and more.[[13]](#footnote-13)*

1. **Categories of OMGs.**

Quinn and Forsyth divide one-percenter clubs into 4 categories[[14]](#footnote-14):

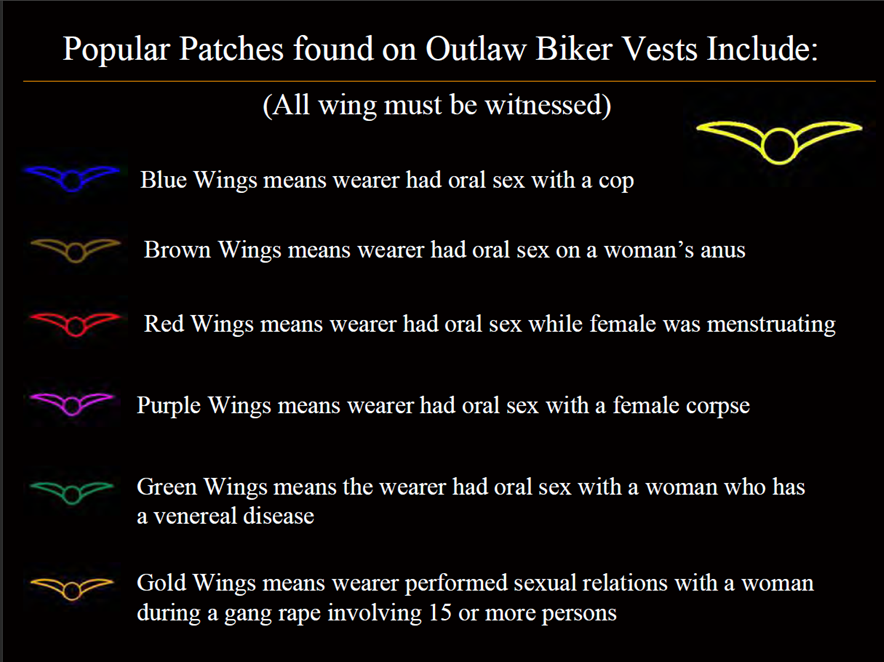
* 1. Support clubs, which have minor to moderate involvement with criminal activity and maintain a relationship with a larger one-percenter club for protection and to bolster their reputations (e.g., Gray Ghosts MC)
  2. Satellite clubs, which are created and controlled by members of the larger one-percenter clubs and serve as sources of recruits to the larger clubs; members of a satellite club perform tasks related to the criminal activity of the larger club (e.g., Red Rockers MC).
  3. Regional clubs, which have limited membership and territory (e.g., Devils Disciples MC); these groups usually have some links to larger one-percenter clubs and may or may not claim one-percenter status
  4. Larger one-percenter clubs (e.g., Hells Angels MC, Outlaws MC, etc.) are at the top of the criminal hierarchy in the world of the outlaw biker and determine much of its dynamics

Interclub relations are complex. Interclub affiliations may reflect a temporary alliance (primarily among large clubs) or a partial surrender of a small local club to a larger international club. While many regional clubs have surrendered their “1%” logos, these clubs still display the aggressiveness, propensity for criminal violence, and intense personal loyalties embodied by the culture of outlaw bikers. Satellite clubs provide an expendable criminal labor force for the larger clubs and serve as proving grounds for men who want to join larger, international clubs.[[15]](#footnote-15)

1. **OMG “Club Colors.”**

A club’s “colors,” (referring to the patches worn by full members) are the official club insignia. A member typically wears colors on the back of a denim or leather jacket or vest. The insignia consists of three separate sections, or “rockers.” The top rocker carries the club name, the center rocker displays the club emblem, and the bottom rocker designates the club location or territory. A club’s colors may also be worn as a tattoo, which some sources report as being mandatory for certain clubs (i.e. the Hells Angels)[[16]](#footnote-16) and others report as only being allowed after a certain length of time as a fully-patched member.[[17]](#footnote-17) A member is allowed to have only one club patch (which is owned by the club, not the member), the loss of which can bring sanctions, including expulsion from the club.[[18]](#footnote-18)

A nonmember discovered wearing the patch, clothing showing club colors, or displaying the club tattoo will encounter life-threatening violence.[[19]](#footnote-19) One of the reasons for this (aside from the obvious one that a “poser” has not earned the right to show club colors) is that such club colors or tattoos signal that the wearer is a genuine member of that OMG and therefore enjoys the reputation and prestige of the club and the trust of other members of that club.[[20]](#footnote-20) Consistent with the military ties of OMGs, various offenses can result in the “pulling of patches” and the crossing out of the club tattoo.[[21]](#footnote-21) Aside from club patches, Also sewed or pinned on the jacket are other “authorized” patches, which are usually quite offensive to conventional society (swastikas, 666 [sign of Satan], FTW [“Fuck the World”], and 1%). Also worn by OMG members (on the front of their chest) are colored “wings” patches, where the color of the wings designates a specific sexual act that was committed by a OMG member (and witnessed by another member as well).[[22]](#footnote-22) These wings are depicted as shown below[[23]](#footnote-23):



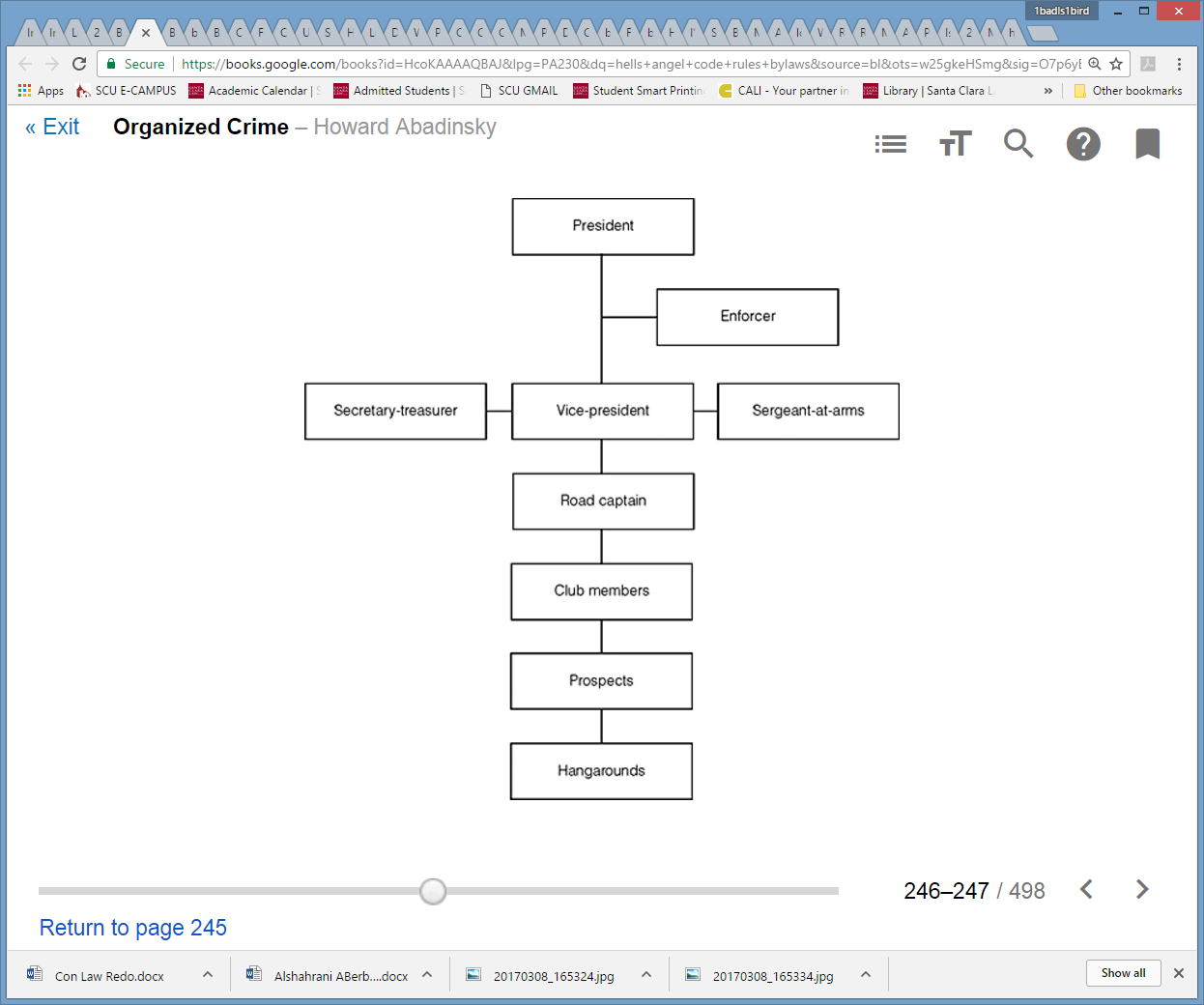
**III. STRUCTURE OF OMGs**

Outlaw motorcycle clubs are characterized by having a club constitution (or set of rules/bylaws), a rigid and bureaucratic organizational structure, and incredibly high levels of commitment to ensure their survival and success. For such criminal organizations, constitutions “create consensus by generating common knowledge about the organization’s rules.”[[24]](#footnote-24) An OMG’s constitution enumerates the most critical expectations of members’ behavior and club procedures, and by doing so, can tell others what the club values or how they operate. This includes guidelines as to the membership process and various levels of association with the club, the rights of membership, and restrictions on members’ behavior, women associated with the OMG, the motorcycles members can own/operate, and more. These clearly set-out rules reduce the potential for intra-organizational conflicts and are consistent with their founders’ background as military veterans (based on the rigid and quasi-militaristic structure OMGs possess).[[25]](#footnote-25)

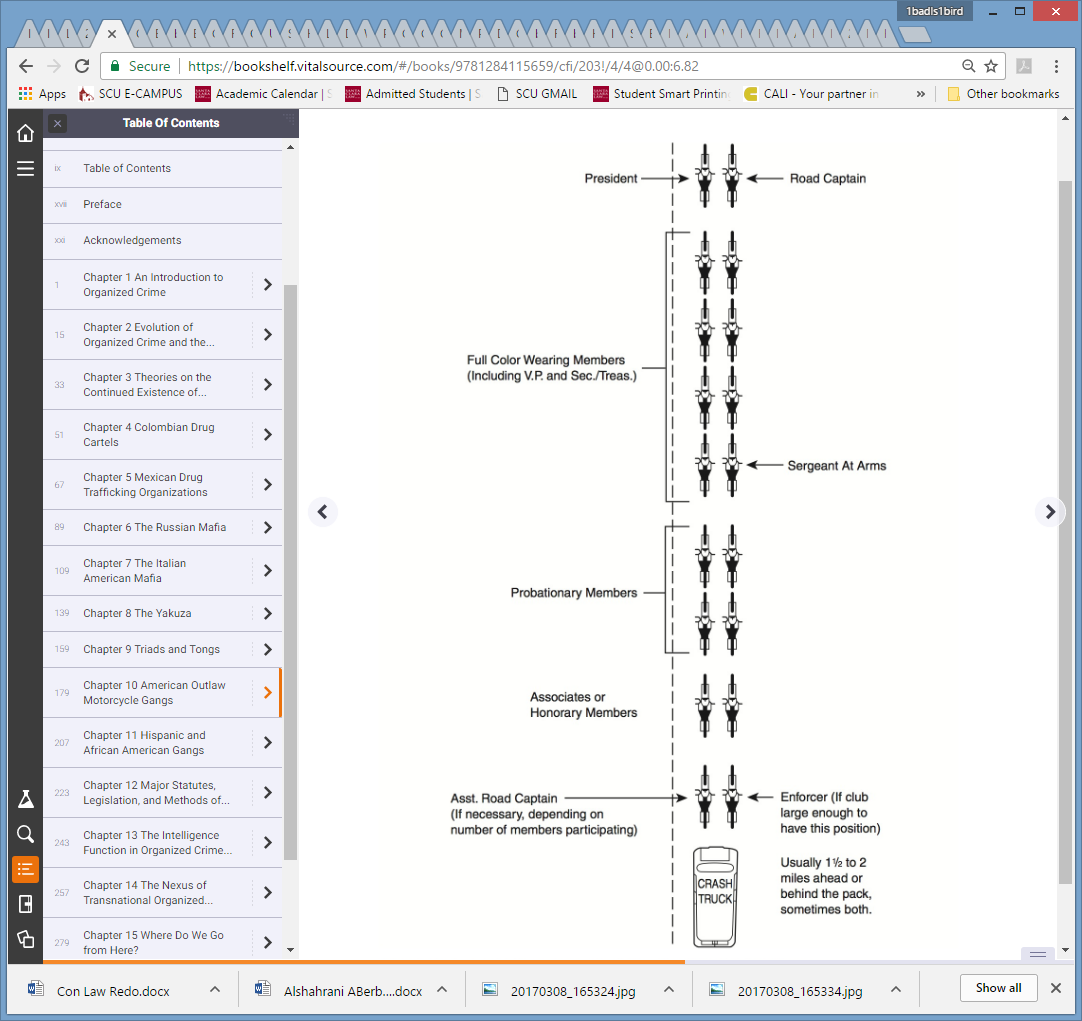
Most OMGs have a mother club that serves as the national or international headquarters. This mother club is led by the national president. Mother club responsibilities include making decisions on problems that the local chapters are unable to resolve and setting the guidelines for the operation of its local chapters.[[26]](#footnote-26) Each club chapter has a president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, road captain, and enforcer (the club has multiple enforcers but the mother chapter has its own) as seen in the Figure 1 below.[[27]](#footnote-27) The President serves as the leader of the OMG, has final say over all club business, and can even overrule any of the decisions that are voted upon by the general membership.[[28]](#footnote-28) The Vice-President fills in for the President when he is not available and assists him in whichever way the President desires.[[29]](#footnote-29) The Secretary/Treasurer keeps formal minutes during club meetings, collects dues and fines for bylaw violations, pays all of the club’s bills and bonds for arrested members, is responsible for names and phone numbers on the OMG’s roster, and maintains the club’s financial records.[[30]](#footnote-30)

The Sergeant-at-arms is one of the toughest and most violent members within the OMG, and thus commonly serves as the OMG’s enforcer or assists the enforcer.[[31]](#footnote-31) The Road Captain fulfills the role of logistician and security chief for club-sponsored “runs” or motorcycle outings, maps out routes, arranges for refueling, food, and maintenance stops on runs, and establishes “strong points” along the route to minimize the chance of encounters with law enforcement or rival motorcycle clubs.[[32]](#footnote-32) It should be noted that non-criminal motorcycle clubs possess this type of organization structure as well (although they have no need for enforcers and the roles of their officers are fundamentally different based on their lack of criminal involvement).

Outlaw clubs have several mandatory runs each year, and all members not otherwise incapacitated, hospitalized or imprisoned, must participate with motorcycles and full colors (See **Figure 2** below[[33]](#footnote-33) for how OMG officers organize themselves on club runs). Finally each mother club (and some local chapters) has an Enforcer, who serves as a “hitman” or “fixer,” and answers directly to the President while dealing with both members and outsiders that have gained the club’s negative attention.[[34]](#footnote-34) The names of enforcer squads for some of the largest OMGs include the: “SS” for the Outlaws, the “Filthy Few”/”Death Squad” for the Hells Angels, the “Black T-shirt Squad” for the Pagans, and the “Nomad Chapter” for the Bandidos.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

**IV. MEMBERSHIP WITHIN AND ASSOCIATION WITH AN OMG**

1. **Stages and Levels of Membership/Association.**

OMGs have various levels of membership and association with their motorcycle club. With each increased level of membership comes increased involvement in club activities and a higher level of scrutiny. Moreover, anything that arouses the suspicions of club members can mean that club members choose to delve into an individual’s background, employment, criminal history, financials, and family life at an earlier stage than normal. The following stages of membership are discussed in increasing order of involvement and commitment to the club.

* 1. **The “Hang-Around”**

Being a hang-around is the first stage for both individuals who may have no intent to become a full member of the OMG and those who expressed interest in joining the club’s ranks.[[35]](#footnote-35) Most hang-arounds have been invited (sponsored) by a club member, a friend or family member who is an OMG biker to an event.[[36]](#footnote-36) This is because a strong friendship between the hang-around and the member or a strong reputation (for the hang-around) is a required in order to reach this step. [[37]](#footnote-37) Other club members are constantly judging the hang-around’s character and ensuring that they always shows respect and never interrupt members when they are talking.[[38]](#footnote-38) To become a “hang-around” without introduction from an existing member is a difficult process. It helps if you have some skill the gang finds useful — usually criminal in nature.[[39]](#footnote-39) Regardless of how an individual becomes a hang-around, the sponsor s fully responsible for the behavior and end result of the hang-around’s association with the OMG club (meaning the sponsor can lose his reputation, pay a fine, get “stomped”, lose his patches, or more). [[40]](#footnote-40)

* 1. **The “Associate”**

Associates are individuals who may not have a strong desire to become a prospect or member, but whose association and relationship with the club is mutually beneficial.[[41]](#footnote-41) Because of this, some individuals may choose to remain at this stage or level (others who wish to progress to prospects and ultimately members will be evaluated and judged accordingly).  The following is what an anonymous OMG member has said in regards to the purpose of the Prospect phase:

* 1. **The “Prospect” (aka “Striker” or “Probate”)**

It is during this period that the OMG will determine whether or not they think you are suitable to become a fully-patched member. Most clubs required prospects to be sponsored or nominated hang-arounds or associates who are in good standing based on their acts and reputation up to that point (good standing is required). The gang will generally run a background check including credit checks so the gang can verify a prospect’s identity as thoroughly as possible (not only to look for law enforcement trying to infiltrate the club but also to see who may have large outstanding debts that may get in the way of full devotion to club activities).

“The [prospect’s] attitude is conditioned so that he displays a sense of responsibility and respect toward the patch-holders of the club, without which he will not develop a sense of brotherhood. He is educated in the basic MC (motorcycle club) protocol and etiquette. He is given time to develop the habits that are basic to good security and good communication. To get the man into the habits of participating. To give his family time to adjust to the demands of the club. To experience and learn an essential degree of humility. To become accustomed to trusting the judgment, at times blindly, of those patch-holders who will someday be his brothers.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

Prospects are allowed to attend more events (most are actually required to attend some [if not most] bike runs, funerals, and other sanctioned meetings); however they are not allowed to vote on club matters (there will be some meetings that prospects not allowed to attend).[[43]](#footnote-43) The prospect becomes the subject of pranks, performs humiliating acts on demand, and is expected to do menial grunt work like cleaning and guarding bikes.[[44]](#footnote-44) The prospect period is designed to make candidates show their loyalty to the club, which often includes committing crimes and using controlled substances in front of other members (violence on demand is also expected by the gang).[[45]](#footnote-45) The ultimate way for a prospect to prove his loyalty to the club is through murder, although prospects have to commit whatever criminal act(s) the club deems necessary to prove themselves (which is why a prospects are often times the most volatile and credible threats towards law enforcement).[[46]](#footnote-46)

* 1. **The Full-Patched Member**

This is the final membership stage in an OMG, and is typically only reached after some type of vote involving the other members of a club chapter. For some clubs, this vote must be unanimous.[[47]](#footnote-47) These members will be able to participate in all club events and wear the three (3) main club patches on the back of their vests/jackets.

1. **The Patch-Over Process.**

The larger OMGs have puppet clubs, which are smaller, locally based clubs that support the larger, controlling club’s interests and are generally subservient, carrying out orders for the latter.[[48]](#footnote-48) Members of a puppet club who have proven themselves over a period of time can be “patched over” to become full-patch members of the larger OMG.[[49]](#footnote-49) Moreover, the entire local puppet club can even be patched over by the controlling OMG club (thus bypassing the customary waiting period imposed on prospective members).[[50]](#footnote-50) In such a scenario, the puppet club can be absorbed by the local chapter of the large OMG club (to strengthen their position in that geographic area, especially in times of turmoil or war with other OMGs); however, typically this all-encompassing puppet club patch-over occurs when a major club wants to establish chapters in certain areas.[[51]](#footnote-51)

1. **Women in OMGs.**

Biker women are treated as property and those are seriously associated with the club and one of its members wear colors with the inscription “Property of [club name].”[[52]](#footnote-52) There seems to be no shortage of women willing to become “old ladies,” “mamas,” or “sheep,” who are women associated with the OMG club but who are treated as nothing more than playthings—objects to be used, traded, and sold.[[53]](#footnote-53) Women referred to as “old ladies” belong to only one club member and cannot be touched by another member without reprisal; they do not attend club meetings.[[54]](#footnote-54) Sexual and other demands for their services can be made without reprisal only by their husbands or boyfriends.[[55]](#footnote-55) “Mamas” and “sheep” belong to the club at large and are expected to consent to the sexual whims of any club member.[[56]](#footnote-56) Often forced to work around an OMG clubhouse as prostitutes, dancers, or masseuses to support biker or OMG members, biker women are abused frequently and often initiated into the OMG by undergoing a “gang bang” (rape by most members), which is referred to as “training” or “puling a train” by the OMG’s members.[[57]](#footnote-57) Biker women frequently provide housing for club members and work regular jobs to provide income for the member(s). These women often drive the crash truck during runs.[[58]](#footnote-58)

While women in some clubs are not permitted to wear club colors, they may wear denim jackets with the inscription “Property of …” with the club’s name embroidered on it (more recently, “Property of” belt buckles have been favored by some OMGs – perhaps to be more discrete).[[59]](#footnote-59) Women often carry the club members’ weapons and engage in prostitution or drug trafficking (most likely based on the mistaken belief that women will be less prone to be searched by law enforcement).[[60]](#footnote-60) Because of the freewheeling image of the outlaw clubs, some teenage girls are attracted to them. Girls may also be photographed for blackmail purposes or transported to other states for employment in sex-oriented establishments.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Biker women are also used to gather intelligence. One way to provide this service is through their employment in strategic locations such as utility companies, telephone companies, and police departments.[[62]](#footnote-62) Operating in places such as court houses, law offices, and licensing agencies provides these women with opportunities to falsify documents, create new identities for members, and monitor law enforcement and task force efforts.

1. **Membership Obligations and General Etiquette Around OMG Members.**

Club chapters usually meet anywhere from weekly to monthly (at the least), and these meetings are referred to as “church.” [[63]](#footnote-63) These meetings involve the bureaucratic attributes of typical corporate meetings, including: roll call, reading of minutes, motions, discussion, and voting.[[64]](#footnote-64) The failure to attend meetings without justification (essentially limited to imprisonment or hospitalization) results in being fined, expulsion, or more (punishment for such violations are discussed below for specific OMGs).[[65]](#footnote-65) International clubs have monthly executive meetings, annual conventions, and “world runs” attended by members from all countries that have chapters, while major national clubs have national meetings to which all chapters are expected to send representatives.[[66]](#footnote-66)

The general public must also realize that they are obligated to follow certain norms when in the presence of OMG members. Some common rules that must be followed to prevent an altercation with an OMG member (meaning members since an altercation with one OMG means an altercation with several other members if they are present) include[[67]](#footnote-67):

* + - 1. Never touch a one percenter.
      2. Never touch a one percenter’s cut or patch (even brushing by in a crowded room could get you beat up).
      3. Never touch a one percenter’s motorcycle unless you enjoy getting yourself a proper beating.
      4. Make sure your girlfriend never touches or sits on anyone’s bike but your own.
      5. Don’t think that wearing a support shirt buys you anything. You are not a member, you are a civilian.
      6. Never wear a support shirt anywhere that a warring club can see, or you’re dead meat.
      7. Keep your thoughts to yourself. Until you show yourself as being about something and not one of the walking dead [citizens], one-percenters don’t give a shit what you think.
      8. Never disrespect a one percenter’s “Ol’ lady” (girlfriend or wife).
      9. Never interrupt two or more patch holders when they are having a conversation. This is disrespectful.

**V. EXAMINING THE HISTORY OF THE FOUR LARGEST OMGs AND COMPARING THEIR RULES OF CONDUCT**

1. **Hells Angels *“Three can keep a secret if two are dead.”[[68]](#footnote-68)***



* 1. **Introduction**

The Hells Angels MC (motorcycle club) originated when some members of the “Pissed off bastards of Bloomington” (POBOB) decided to split off and form a new motorcycle club. This club was formed by a group of returning WWII veterans, who decided to form a MC in San Bernardino (this first chapter was led by Otto Friedli). This initial chapter got its name from a WWII Bomber Squadron called the “Hell’s Angels”, who took the name from the original 1930 Howard Hughes movie titled “Hell’s Angels” (based on the squadron’s actions during WWI).[[69]](#footnote-69) This initial chapter of the Hells Angels was referred to as the “Berdoo” chapter. Moreover, the Hells Angels “winged death head” club logo was borrowed and modified from the fuselage of a WWII bomber plane from the 358th Bomber Squadron. The Hells Angels will sue, and has sued, to protect their copyrighted “death head” logo.[[70]](#footnote-70) In fact, they have threatened to sue or actually filed suit against the following entities: Saks Fifth Ave, Gotcha Sportswear, Marvel Comics, and Walt Disney Corporation.[[71]](#footnote-71)

This chapter served as the center of HAMC operations until late 1950’s to early 1960s, at which time, Sonny Barger (who was the Oakland Chapter President) assumed leadership of the club, thus moving the mother chapter to Oakland, CA.**[[72]](#footnote-72)** Although initially confined to three (3) U.S. based chapters (Berdoo chapter in San Bernardino, CA, the Frisco chapter in San Francisco, CA, and the Oakland Chapter in Oakland, CA) and one in Auckland, New Zealand, the Hells Angels triumphed over persistent law enforcement efforts and expanded during the 1960s and 1970s.[[73]](#footnote-73) The amount of disgruntled Vietnam veterans coming home during the 1970s along with the publicity the Hells Angels were receiving in the news, television, and even movies allowed this expansion to occur.[[74]](#footnote-74) Today, they have thousands of full-patched members and have well over 100 chapters internationally.[[75]](#footnote-75) The Hells Angels’ first expansion outside the United States occurred in 1961 when a charter was established in Auckland, Australia.[[76]](#footnote-76) The first European charter was established in London in 1969, followed by Zurich, Switzerland, in 1970; Hamburg, Germany, in 1973; and Paris, France, in 1981 (Haut, 1988).[[77]](#footnote-77) At the present time, HAMC has more charters outside the United States than within the country.[[78]](#footnote-78)

* 1. **Membership Attributes and Structure**

The Hells Angels also refer to themselves as “Local 81 (based on the placement of the letters “H” (8th) and “A” (1st) in the alphabet)”, “The Big Red Machine” and the “Red and White (based on their club colors).”[[79]](#footnote-79) The Hells Angels, provide for more chapter autonomy with important decisions made at regional, national, and international meetings (Barker 2008).[[80]](#footnote-80) In regards to membership in the Hells Angels, having been employed, or even having sought employment, in law enforcement precludes consideration for membership. If membership slips below six, the chapter may be dissolved, its members moving to become part of another chapter, or other chapters. Or members from nearby chapters may be sent to keep the chapter viable. Club officers are chosen by secret ballot and candidates are usually experienced members. To become a full-patch member of the Hells Angels, a candidate (“prospect”) must be at least 21 years of age and have no background in law enforcement. Other major outlaw clubs (e.g., Pagans) are less rigid about having law enforcement experience.[[81]](#footnote-81) Hells Angels will never go out together without their "colors". If one Hells Angels member is pulled over by police, the entire group often will pull over. Members can't talk to the media and can never talk to the public about the club, their rules or other members[[82]](#footnote-82) (although the same also applies for many other OMGs).

* 1. **The Hells Angels’ Bylaws**

Although I will discuss the Hells Angels’ bylaws in this section, I will also perform my comparison of their rules in sections to follow that cover the Outlaws, Bandidos, and the Pagans. The Hells Angels bylaws are as follows[[83]](#footnote-83):

1. All patches will be the same on the back; nothing will show on the back except the HELL ANGELS PATCH. A city patch is optional for each chapter. One patch and one membership card is allotted per member. The member may keep the original patch if it is made into a banner. Prospects will wear the California rocker on the back and a prospect patch left from where top of pocket is on a Levi jacket. FINE: $100 for breaking above bylaw.
2. No hypes. No use of heroin in any form. Anyone using a needle for any reason other than having a doctor use it on you will be considered a hype. FINE: Automatic kick-out from club.
3. No explosives of any kind will be thrown into the fire where there is one or more HELLS ANGELS in this area. FINE: Ass-whipping and/or subject to California President’s decision.
4. Guns on California runs will not be displayed after 6 P.M. They will be fired from dawn until 6 p.m. in a predetermined area only. This rule does not apply to anyone with a gun in a shoulder holster or belt that is seen by another member if it is not being shot or displayed. FINE: $100 for breaking above bylaw.
5. Brothers shall not fight with each other with weapons; when any HELLS ANGELS fights another HELLS ANGELS, it is one on one; the rule for prospects is the same as that for members. If members are from different chapters, the fine goes to the California Treasurer. FINE: $100 for breaking above bylaw or possible loss of patch.
6. No narcotics burns. When making deals, persons get what they are promised or the deal is called off. FINE: Automatic kick-out from club.
7. All HELLS ANGELS fines will be paid within 30 days. Fines will be paid to that chapter’s treasurer to be held for the next California run.
8. There is one vote per chapter at California officers’ meetings. For California, two no votes instead of a majority is required to kill a new charter; if a charter goes below six, they must freeze or dissolve on the decision of the California officers’ meeting.
9. If kicked out, a member must stay out one year and then go back to his original chapter. The HELLS ANGEL tattoo will have an in-date and out-date when the member quits. If a member is kicked out, the HELLS ANGELS tattoo will be completely covered with a half X through the tattoo.
10. Runs are on the holidays; the three mandatory runs are Memorial Day, July 4, and Labor Day.
11. There is no leave period except for hospital, medical, or jail reasons

Although the Hells Angels is the largest OMG in existence, their bylaws are the shortest of the four largest OMGs studied here. It lacks substantive rules that regarding the membership process, the role of the mother chapter, females associated with the club, and many more topics. As I will discuss later in this paper, the bylaws fail to mention anything concerning motorcycles, despite the fact that it is well known to law enforcement that all members must ride a Harley Davidson or other make of motorcycle produced by a company owned by Harley Davidson (e.g. Buell). This indicates that the Hells Angels place a higher value on secrecy and discreetness.

Moreover, became I am unsure of where Mallory sources these bylaws (which are cited in various other books that explore OMGs) or when these bylaws were produced, it is quite possible that these bylaws have been revised and shortened to minimize any issues for the club from a criminal prosecution standpoint (although the narcotics transaction related bylaw seems to defeat this argument) or perhaps that these bylaws are a very early version of rules that had not been fully developed. Of course, another possibility is that the Hells Angels believed that the information found in their bylaws was the only relevant information that needed to be memorialized (perhaps to enhance mystique about membership process instead of laying it out as if it was a simple employment process). Notwithstanding, there are some interesting parallels between the Hells Angels and other criminal and non-criminal cultures. For one, the aforementioned “naroctics burns” bylaw demonstrates how the Hells Angels enforce rules on their own members in order to prevent the deterioration of the club’s overall reputation and its standing in the criminal world. Moreover, the fact that a member who has been kicked out for a year in similar to the Amish tradition of requiring ostracized (individuals who have gone through the *meidung* process) to be accepted back by their own familial congregation before they are accepted back into the large Amish community.

1. **The Outlaws *“God forgives, Outlaws don’t.”[[84]](#footnote-84)***



**a. Introduction**

The Outlaws MC was formed in McCook, Illinois in 1935 and was originally known as the McCook Outlaws Motorcycle Club.[[85]](#footnote-85) In 1950, their club name was changed to the Chicago Outlaws (after the club grew larger and moved to Chicago, IL) and again in 1965 to the Outlaws Motorcycle Club Nation.[[86]](#footnote-86) The mother chapter for the Outlaws was originally located in Chicago but later moved to Detroit in 1984.[[87]](#footnote-87) The Outlaws website lists nearly 100 chapters across the Unites States,[[88]](#footnote-88) and they also have 116 chapters in 14 countries outside the United States (with approximately 3900 members worldwide).[[89]](#footnote-89)Outlaws chapters are concentrated in the Great Lakes, Midwest, Northeast, and Southeast regions of the United States (*i.e.* Florida, Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky, and Indiana).[[90]](#footnote-90) The Outlaws’ logo and “colors” consist of a skull over crossed pistols and is named “Charlie.” (the design was borrowed from *The Wild Ones* film starring Marlon Brando.)[[91]](#footnote-91)

The Outlaws and Hells Angels have been at war since the late 1960s, waging in battles over turf and drug markets.[[92]](#footnote-92) Such battles have resulted in bombings at each other’s clubhouses, murders, assaults on members, and the theft of each other’s stolen property.[[93]](#footnote-93) To help assist in waging war with the largest OMG in the world (the Hells Angels), The Outlaws frequently align with another large OMG, The Bandidos, who are also enemies of the Hells Angels (and will be discussed later).[[94]](#footnote-94)

1. **Outlaws’ National Constitution**

The Outlaws bylaws are as follows (please note that the formatting/spelling has been kept intact from its original source)[[95]](#footnote-95):

* + 1. ALL MEMBERS MUST BE 21 YEARS OF AGE AND OWN HIS OWN MOTORCYCLE AT ALL TIMES. 30 DAY GRACE PERIOD IS ALLOWED. CHAPTER DECISION.
    2. ALL MOTORCYCLES MUST BE AMERICAN MADE 1000 CC OR BIGGER.
    3. YOU HAVE TO HAVE 100% VOTE FROM MEMBERSHIP. THE SPONSORING CHAPTER MAY BRING A NEW MEMBER UP FOR VOTE AFTER HE HAS PROBATED FOR A MINIMUM OF SIX MONTHS. HAS ATTENDED AT LEAST ONE NATIONAL. ATTEND ALL FUNERAL BILLS PAID TO DATE. AND 100% VOTE OF SPONSORING CHAPTER. YOU MAY ONLY BRING UP A NEW MEMBER FOR VOTE THREE TIMES.
    4. A PROBATE WILL NOT BE TOLD TO DO SOMETHING THAT A MEMBER HIMSELF WOULD NOT DO. PATCH PULLING OFFENSE FOR INSTRUCTING A PROBATE TO COMMIT A FELONY.
    5. NO NEEDLE LAW. PATCH PULLING OFFENSE AND EXPULSION IN BAD STANDING FROM CLUB.
    6. NO PCP, CRACK, HERON, NO BULLSHIT DEALINGS INVOLVING CLUB. EXPULSION IN BAD STANDINGS FROM CLUB.
    7. CLUB HOUSES TO REMAIN CLEAN, AND MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR GUEST. IF YOU CAN’T EAT IT, DON’T BRING IT.
    8. NO PRACTICAL JOKES THAT MAY ALTER THE STATE OF MIND OF YOUR BROTHER OR GUEST. PATCH PULLING OFFENSE.
    9. MEMBERS MUST BE IN CLUB FOR ONE YEAR BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO HAVE A CLUB TATTOO. CLUB TATTOO’S ARE CHARLIE, OUTLAWS, AMERICAN OUTLAW ASSOCIATION, OR ANY ABBREVIATION. MEMBERS MUST HAVE FIVE FULL YEARS IN BEFORE HAVING A BACK PATCH. A MEMBER LEAVING IN GOOD STANDING WILL HAVE HIS TATTOO DATED.
    10. WHEN CHANGING CHAPTERS YOU MUST CLEAR THROUGH BOTH PRESDENTS AND HAVE A 100% VOTE BY NEW CHAPTER. MUST HAVE ONE YEAR IN BEFORE YOU CAN REQUEST A CHANGE.
    11. ALL NEW CHAPTERS ARE TO HAVE A 100% VOTE BY ALL PRESIDENTS. NEW CHAPTERS MUST MAKE TWO NATIONALS. ATTEND ALL FUNERALS. ALL PROBATES IN A PROSPECTIVE CLUB WILL WEAR A PROBATIONARY ROCKER ON BACK AND A.O.A. [AMERICAN OUTLAW ASSOCIATION] PROSPECTIVE PATCH ON FRONT.
    12. ANY OUTLAW LEAVING CLUB IN GOOD STANDINGS IS TO BE RESPECTED AS SUCH AND ANY BROTHER NOT HONORING THIS WILL IMMEDIATELY HAVE HIS PATCH PULLED. ANY DISRESPECT TO YOUR PATCH OR STEALING FROM BROTHERS IS FORBIDDEN AND IS AN AUTOMATIC PATCH PULLING OFFENSE.
    13. WHEN LEAVING CLUB, MEMBERS MUST HAVE AT LEAST TEN YEARS IN BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO KEEP PATCHES OR ANYTHING WITH CHARLIE OR OUTLAWS ON IT. MAJORITY VOTE OF CHAPTER FOR APPROVAL. MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING ONLY.
    14. LOSS OF PATCH BY NEGLIGENCE WILL RESULT IN A $500.00 FINE, AND TO PROBATE AGAIN. PROPERTY PATCH $100.00 FINE ONLY. FINES PAID TO CHAPTER (1/2) NATIONAL (1/2). STOLEN PATCHES BY LAW ENFORCEMENT WILL BE LEGALLY PURSUED BY PATCH HOLDER.
    15. FUCKING UP AT NATIONALS TO FRONT OFF CLUB AND/OR PUTTING YOUR BROTHERS IN YOU WILL PROBATE AGAIN.
    16. $100.00 FINE AND A THIRTY DAY PROBATE PERIOD FOR THE FIRST BROTHER THAT PUNCHES ANOTHER BROTHER. FINE PAID TO CHAPTER OF BROTHER PUNCHED.
    17. MISS THREE NATIONALS IN A SEASON, YOU PROBATE AGAIN. MAKE ALL FUNERALS UNLESS IN JAIL, HOSPITAL, OR COURT. A $100.00 FINE FOR MISSING THE ABOVE. NATIONAL FINES PAID TO NATIONAL. FUNERAL FINES PAID TO CHAPTER.
    18. WHEN IN ANOTHER CHAPTER THEIR BYLAWS AND OFFICERS ARE TO BE HONORED.
    19. SECURITY AT NATIONALS SET UP BY REGIONAL OFFICERS WITH HELP OF OTHER CHAPTER OFFICERS BEFORE RUN AND NOT AT THE RUN. NO PROBATE TO STAND GUARD ALONE. ANY MEMBER CAUGHT SLEEPING ON GUARD OR HOUSE DUTY WILL BE DEALT WITH ACCORDINGLY BY CLUB OFFICERS.
    20. INVITED GUESTS WILL BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AT ALL RUNS AND EVENTS. ANY PROBLEMS, CHAPTER PRESIDENT FROM CHAPTER THAT BROUGHT THEM WILL BE RESPONSIBLE.
    21. A $100.00 FINE FOR PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT NOT REPRESENTING CHAPTER AT PRESIDENT MEETING. FINES PAID TO NATIONAL. PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT ONLY TO ATTEND MEETINGS.
    22. RETIREMENT: 15 YEARS, ATTEND ONE FUNCTION A YEAR. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO NATIONAL WHEN POSSIBLE. MEDICAL: TO BE DETERMINED WHEN NECESSARY. ALL RETIRED MEMBERS SHALL BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY, UNLESS THEIR OWN ACTIONS PROVE OTHERWISE.
    23. ALL FINES TO BE PAID WITHIN 30 DAYS.
    24. ANY CONSTITUTION CHANGES WILL BE PRESENTED TO MEMBERSHIP AND DECIDED AT PRESIDENTS MEETING BY MAJORITY VOTE

1. **Comparing the Outlaws to other OMGs:**

It should be noted that this set of rules listed as the Outlaws’ National Constitution may be different than prior versions. For instance, according to *United States v. Bowman*, the Outlaw’s Constitution had included a “Whites only” requirement or rule (according to the facts outlined in this case that dealt with criminal conviction of the Outlaws International President Harry Bowman for racketeering, conspiracy to murder, firearms and drug related offenses).[[96]](#footnote-96) This is indicative of the fact that the information pertaining to OMG club bylaws and constitutions can vary over time and that diligence should be used to determine how accurate such information is.

It is readily apparent from the pure length of these bylaws that the Outlaws have provided their members with rules that cover a broader array of subjects and situations compared to the Hells Angels, but not the Bandidos or Pagans (as seen below). This may suggest that the Outlaws provide for less member and chapter autonomy than the Hells Angels; however, once rule that may cut against this is the fact that rule #18 (xviii – “WHEN IN ANOTHER CHAPTER THEIR BYLAWS AND OFFICERS ARE TO BE HONORED”) implies that each or at least some chapters may have their own bylaws (something that is not indicated in the bylaws of the other OMGs studied in this paper).

Another difference I noticed is that the Outlaws’ Constitution advises that its “probate” members (essentially what they call prospects) are not to be forced to perform an act that a full-patched member would not do (or commit a felony). This is the only OMG that has a clause like this in its bylaws, and I find it odd that such a term would exist. As mentioned earlier, prospects (*e.g.* probates or “probees”) are expected to use narcotics, commit crimes, and perform demeaning acts as part of their probation period. Thus, the aforementioned term goes completely against this mentality. One possible reason for this is that the Outlaws may have amended or added this term as a result of their members or prospects being prosecuted on criminal charges where such conduct by probates/members was relevant. In other words, the term may provide a defense in future criminal cases.

Another difference I noted was that the Hells Angels bylaws lists fighting another member as an offense punishable by a $100 fine. However, the Outlaws forbid even a “practical joke” that alters the state of mind of another member, an offense punishable by the pulling of the offending member’s patches (a far worse punishment). In fact, it appears that most of the punishments listed in the Hells Angels’ bylaws are less severe than the ones listed in the Outlaws’ Constitution (or that of the Bandidos and Pagans). This may be evidence of how important enforcement of club bylaws are to each of the clubs (information on the actual enforcement of the bylaws may shed more light on why these differences exist, but such information is not readily available). Finally, the Outlaws (like the Bandidos) require that full members be at least 21 years of age (something not mentioned in the Hells Angels’ bylaws or even the Pagans’ bylaws [who only specify that prospects must be at least 18 years old]).

1. **The Bandidos *“Bandido by profession, biker by trade, lover by choice”[[97]](#footnote-97)***



* 1. **Introduction**

In 1965, a group of military-veterans turned dock workers began to get together and party in San Leon, Texas (a small fishing town) after work and weekends.[[98]](#footnote-98) By March of 1966, Donald Chambers brought this group together to found the Bandidos OMG.[[99]](#footnote-99) In 1968, the Bandidos moved to Corpus Christi, Texas, and subsequently to Houston, Texas (the location of the current mother chapter).[[100]](#footnote-100) Chambers enabled the club to expand within the state of Texas until he was arrested for murder in 1972.[[101]](#footnote-101) Soon after (1974), Ronald Hodge was elected national president to replace Chambers; however, Chambers continued to possess a great amount of power over the group’s operations while incarcerated.[[102]](#footnote-102)

The club members (of which there are approximately 2,700 to 3,000 of internationally) refer to themselves as the Bandit Nation (with power being pluralistic just like all other OMGs), and members consider the OMG to be separate and independent of the U.S. government.[[103]](#footnote-103) The colors of the club are yellow, gold, and red, and the club logo is a pot-bellied cartoon figure wearing a sombrero and holding pistols.[[104]](#footnote-104) This club logo is referred to as the “Fat Mexican” and came from the popular Frito Bandito commercial that used the “Frito Bandito” cartoon character (however the Bandidos’ character was changed slightly and holds a machete and revolver in his hands).[[105]](#footnote-105) Incorporated in Texas in 1978 (and in Washington and Alabama as well subsequently) as a nonprofit organization, the club now has at least 170 chapters in fourteen countries including Scandinavia, France, and Australia (90 of these chapters are in the United States that are concentrated in the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, New Mexico, Colorado, South Dakota, and Washington).[[106]](#footnote-106)

Members who have been in the group for 5 years, are considered a charter member and are thus allowed to wear the club patches.[[107]](#footnote-107) Unlike the Hells Angels or some other clubs, the Bandidos allow non-whites (there are numerous Hispanic and even Middle Eastern members in the group) to join their ranks, much like the Outlaws MC whom they align with (against the Hells Angels).[[108]](#footnote-108) In fact, the Bandidos sought and received permission from the Outlaws before starting a chapter in Oklahoma.[[109]](#footnote-109) The Bandidos have recruited from Hispanic street gangs as well (especially in the southern California region were Hispanic gangs flourish).

* 1. **Bandidos Bylaws:[[110]](#footnote-110)**

Below are the Bandidos’ rules and guidelines:

* + 1. Requirements for a Chapter:
       1. Five (5) member minimum-One (1) “Charter Member”. Charter Member=10 years.
       2. Keep pictures and information on all members. Hold weekly meetings.
       3. $25.00 per month, per member to National treasury (by the 1st of each month).
       4. Probationary Chapters (new) will pay a one-time donation of $1000.00 to National Treasury.
       5. Probationary Chapter members bikes and titles will be pledged to National Chapter for the first year.
    2. Patches:
       1. Only a Top and Bottom rocker, Fat Mexican, 1% diamond and MC patch should be on the back of your cut-off, It should be visible from 150 ft.
       2. A 1%er diamond will be worn over the heart.
       3. Anything else is up to the individual.
       4. Year patches and buckles are not to be given early. National can grant a “Lifer” patch or membership on a person to person basis.
       5. One Property Patch per member. If she rides her own bike it is NOT to be worn while riding with or around Patcholders or Prospects. It should not be worn in public without her old man in view.
       6. There is no limit on Property Belts.
    3. Do’s:
       1. Labor Day and Memorial Day are MANDATORY RUNS. A Chapter may leave one (1) member behind from a mandatory run. A member on medical leave or a Life Member is that member. This is for security reasons, that person should have access to a phone as much as possible.
       2. When you are traveling you should attend your host chapter’s meetings. You must abide by those chapters [sic] By-Laws and policies.
    4. Dont’s:
       1. Things that will cost you your patch:
          1. You don’t lie.
          2. You don’t steal.
          3. This includes OL’ Ladies as well.
          4. Needle use will not be tolerated.
          5. Neither will smoking of any chemicals-coke, speed, mandrax…if it didn’t grow, don’t smoke it!
    5. Motorcycles:
       1. Each member will OWN at least one (1) Harley Davidson or facsimile of at least 750cc.
       2. No more than 30 days a year down time. After 30 days that members Chapter will pay National $500.00.
       3. Have a good reason? Ask for more time.
       4. Road Captains should inspect all bikes regularly.
    6. Membership:
       1. Hangaround period to be determined by chapter President.
       2. Harley Davidson Motorcycle or facsimile capable of meeting the demands of Pledge period.
       3. Members must be at least 21 years of age.
       4. Sponsor-May be individual (preferably charter member) or may be Sponsored by chapter as a hole. Sponsor, Do not turn your Pledge loose without help. If you think enough of him to sponsor him into this club, it’s up to you to teach him the right way, the BANDIDO WAY. If you’re not ready to sacrifice your time and share your knowledge. Don’t do it. The simple things-Who’s the neatest M.F. in the world? Or don’t wear your Patch in a vehicle. Trivial things that will get a Prospective BROTHER run off. –
          1. Pay $275.00 to National Treasury.
          2. Pledge bike and title.
          3. Be voted in as Pledge by Chapter (100% vote).
          4. Receive your Patch or Rocker.
          5. DO YOUR TIME.

Prospect 6 months MINMUM.

Probationary 1 year MINIMUM.

This man is pledged to the whole BANDIDO NATION, not just one Chapter or area, City or State. He will attend every meeting, party, bike event or gathering of any kind in his area where Bandido Patcholders will be present. He will not miss any National or Regional runs, especially Funerals.

This club is about sacrifice, get used to it! His motorcycle should be in up and running condition his whole Pledge period, ready to go anywhere. In other words, NO DOWN TIME.

* + - * 1. Pledge is not eligible for vote if there are any outstanding debts, Chapter, National or Private (inside club), he should start into this club on a level playing field.
        2. After the mandatory time period has passed, and the Sponsor feels the Pledge is ready, a meeting should be called. All surrounding Chapter Secretaries should also be notified (in advance).
        3. The Pledge should be voted in by a 100% Chapter vote. Club members outside the chapter should have a chance to voice their opinions. The Pledges Sponsor should base his decision on these things, for he is the One whom will have to fade it if things go foul.
      1. Charter Member is 10 years of unbroken service.
      2. National may grant Leave of absence – this is not automatic.
      3. Two (2) year members are eligible for transfer, only if both Presidents involved have agreed and a $50.00 fee is paid to National Treasury.
      4. Other National Fees
         1. New Patch Fee $275.00
         2. Transfers $50.00
         3. New Charter $1000.00
         4. 30 Day Downtime rule $500.00
  1. **Comparing the Bandidos to other OMGs**

The Bandidos bylaws are comparable only to the Pagans in length and subjects covered. Some of the unique aspects of the Bandidos bylaws is that they are very specific in regards to prospect and probationary (for new members) periods (6 months and 1 year respectively). None of the other OMGs specify an exact timeframe for these periods. Whether or not the Bandidos adhere strictly to these timeframes is unknown to those outside of the club, but perhaps the rationale is that if someone has not proven themselves (or continues to raise doubts about their qualifications) for the set time periods, they are not worthy of the membership (drawing out the process might not make sense). Moreover, the shorter and specified timeframes are offset by the longest and most thorough “membership” bylaws section of all the OMGs studied in this paper. This extensive membership section of the bylaws could mean that the Bandidos are more stringent than other OMGs in determining who joins their ranks, but it could also merely be an indication that they

Another unique aspect of the Bandidos bylaws is that they allow a “facsimile” or equivalent of a Harley Davidson motorcycle to be used by its members. The Outlaws are the only one of the 4 largest OMGs to not specify that the motorcycle at the very least be made in America; whereas the Hells Angels require that members ride a Harley Davidson or Buell (which is owned by Harley Davidson). It should be noted that the Hells Angels do not list this requirement inside their bylaws; however, based on my training, experience, and conversation with OMG testifying experts/trainers, this is in fact a requirement. Given the fact that the Bandidos have actively recruited from criminal gangs (primarily Hispanic street gangs), the lax motorcycle requirement makes sense (perhaps the criminal purpose and club’s other rules take priority over the core essence of being an OMG [riding motorcycles]).

1. **Pagans “*Live Pagan, Die Pagan*”[[111]](#footnote-111)**



* 1. **Introduction**

The Pagans were founded in 1959 in Prince George’s County, Maryland, and its chapters are primarily based on the East Coast (including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland), but had chapters in Texas, Louisiana, California, and Florida as well.[[112]](#footnote-112) This OMG was fairly benign until around 1965, when the Pagans evolved into a fierce gang with ties to organized crime groups such as the American Mafia.[[113]](#footnote-113) Furthermore, their violent tendencies increased under the leadership of John “Satan” Marron in the early 1970s.[[114]](#footnote-114) The mother club has moved from Maryland to Pennsylvania to Suffolk County, New York. It is the only major club that does not have international chapters, although it does have ties to outlaw bikers in Canada.[[115]](#footnote-115) Unlike other OMGs, the Pagans do not have a geographically set mother club, but rather have a collection of former chapter presidents who serve as the mother club and alternate meetings between Suffolk and Nassau County on Long Island, New York.[[116]](#footnote-116) Finally, chapter presidents answer to the mother club whose members serve for life.[[117]](#footnote-117)

The Pagans’ “colors” (or patches) depicts the Norse fire-giant *Surtr* sitting on the sun (while holding a sword), along with the word “Pagans” in red, white and blue.[[118]](#footnote-118) Unlike most outlaw motorcycle clubs, the Pagans’ full-patched members do not include the geographical chapter they belong to on their the “colors” (as mentioned before, most non-nomadic full-patched OMG members were a bottom rocker indicating which chapter they belong to).[[119]](#footnote-119)

* 1. **Pagans’ Club Rules**

The discipline and structure of the Pagans are the most rigid of the Big Four OMGs, leading many law enforcement agencies who have contact with them to consider them as complex and diversified as the Hells Angels.[[120]](#footnote-120) Below are the club’s rules and guidelines:

* + 1. Mother Club: The Pagan motorcycle club is run by the Mother Club. The Mother Club has last and final authority over all club matters. Any violation of the constitution will be dealt with by the Mother Club. Six (6) members are needed to start a chapter. No new chapter may be started without approval of the Mother Club.
       1. President—Runs chapter under the direction of the Mother Club. Keeps the chapter organized, makes sure chapter business is carried out, inspects all bikes before runs, and makes President meetings.
       2. Sergeant-at-Arms—Makes sure the President’s orders are carried out.
       3. Vice-President—Takes over all the President’s duties when the President is not there.
       4. Secretary-Treasurer—In charge of minutes of meetings and treasury.
       5. No member may change chapters without the permission of the Mother Club members in his area. All present chapter debts are paid and are approved by the president of the new chapter he wishes to change to. If a member has a “snival,” he must use the chain of command—in other words:
          1. (1) His Chapter President
          2. (2) A Mother Club member in the area
          3. (3) The President of the club.
    2. Meetings
       1. Chapters must have one organized meeting per week.
       2. Chapter meetings are attended by members only.
       3. Members must be of sound mind (straight) when attending meetings.
       4. If a Mother Club member attends a meeting and a member is fouled up, he will be fined by the Mother Club member
       5. Miss three (3) meetings in a row, and you’re out of the club
       6. A member must attend a meeting to leave the club and turn in his colors and every- thing that has the name PAGANS on it (T-shirts, wrist bands, mugs, and so on).
       7. If a member is thrown out of the club or quits without attending a meeting, he loses his colors, motorcycle, and anything that says PAGANS on it, and probably gets an ass kicking.
       8. When a member is traveling, he must attend the meeting of the area he is traveling in.
       9. If a vote is taken at a meeting and member is not there, his vote is void.
       10. The member must have colors with him when attending meeting.
    3. Bikes
       1. All members must have a Harley Davidson 750–1200 cc.
       2. If a member is not of sound mind or is too fouled up to ride his motorcycle in the opinion of another member, his riding privilege may be pulled by said member until he has his head together.
       3. All bikes must be on the road April 30, or otherwise directed by the Mother Club.
       4. All members must have a motorcycle license.
    4. Mandatories - Two (2) mandatories, July 4, and Labor Day; Mother Club may call additional mandatories if need be.
    5. Funerals
       1. If a member dies in a chapter, it is necessary for all members in his chapter to attend his funeral.
       2. The chapter is in charge of taking care of all funeral arrangements, parties, police, procession, and so on.
    6. Parties - Pagan parties are Pagan parties only. Each chapter must throw (1) party or run a year.
    7. Respect
       1. Respect is to be shown to all Mother Club members, officer members, member’s personal property, bike, old lady, house, job, and so on. In other words, if it’s not yours, “Don’t Mess with It.”
       2. No fighting among chapter members is allowed; any punches to be thrown will be done by the Sergeant-at-Arms or a Mother Club member.
       3. No stealing from members.
       4. Respect your colors.
    8. Colors
       1. The President gets colors from a Mother Club member in the area when a new member is voted in.
       2. When a member leaves club, the President of his chapter turns over his colors to the Mother Club member in his area.
       3. Respect your colors; don’t let anyone take them from you except the President of your chapter or a Mother Club member.
       4. No colors are worn in a cage, except during funerals and loading or unloading a bike from a truck.
       5. Nothing will be worn on the back of your jacket except your colors, Diamond, 13 Patch.
       6. No Hippie shit on the front.
       7. Colors are to be put on cut off denim jackets only.
       8. The only member who may keep his colors if he leaves the club is a Mother Club member.
    9. Old Ladies
       1. Members are responsible for their Old Ladies.
       2. Members may have more than one (1) Old Lady.
       3. Members may not discuss club business with their Old Lady.
       4. No Old Ladies are allowed at meetings.
       5. No property patch is worn on an Old Lady—so if you see a chick, you better ask before you leap.
    10. Prospects
        1. Prospects must be at least 18 years old.
        2. A prospect must be sponsored by one member who has known him at least one year.
        3. The sponsor is responsible for the prospect.
        4. The prospect must have a motorcycle.
        5. The prospect must ride his bike to the meeting at time of being voted into the club.
        6. The prospect cannot do any drugs.
        7. Prospects cannot carry weapons at meetings and Pagan functions, unless otherwise directed by the president.
        8. No stealing from Prospects is allowed.
        9. Prospects must attend all meetings and club functions.
        10. The prospect must do anything another member tells him to, that a member has done or would be willing to do himself.
        11. The prospect must be voted in by all members of the chapter and three (3) Mother Club members.
        12. The prospect must pay for his colors before receiving them.
        13. The probation period for the prospect is determined by the Mother Club member.
        14. Pagans M.C. is a motorcycle club and a nonprofit organization.
  1. **Comparing the Pagans to Other OMGs**

As mentioned earlier, the Pagans seem to have one of the most rigid and comprehensive set of club rules out of all the major OMGs (even those not covered expressly in this paper). For instance, it is the only one of the major OMGs to have an entire section of guidelines outlining the rules pertaining the “Old ladies.” Moreover, the Pagans’ club rules seem to be the most thorough and specific of all the major OMG clubs in regards to prospects, meetings, and even club colors. All of this supports the fact that the Pagans value a more firm and defined structure and set of behavioral norms.

On top of this, the Pagans bylaws is the only one of the four OMGs covered in this paper that has an entire section devoted to its mother chapter. This may indicate that Pagans members and chapter clubs possess less autonomy than in other clubs (that either make no mention of the mother club or do not cover the mother club’s role and guidelines to the same extent as the Pagans). Examining some of the Pagans’ other rules may also be evidence that the Pagans are the most rule-oriented OMG. For instance, they are the only ones to explicitly require (at least according to their bylaws) that each member possess a valid motorcycle operator license. On the other hand, another possibility is that the Pagans decided to put more information in their club rules than other OMGs, who may instead wish to limit the information they put into their club rules for more secrecy. As mentioned earlier, OMGs have learned to become more secretive and law enforcement has infiltrated them in undercover operations and have even changed their bylaws to prevent criminal culpability.

1. *Stephen Mallory*, Understanding Organized Crime (2d ed. 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Thomas Barker,* Biker Gangs and Transitional Organized Crime, 2nd Ed., 76 (2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. 2011 National Gang Assessment, FBI, Feb. 9, 2011. https://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/2011-national-gang-threat-assessment [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Mallory* at 181. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Howard Abadinsky*, Organized Crime (10th ed. 2013) at 249 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Id.* at 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *Id.* at 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Mallory* at 195 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. James Quinn, *Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs: Aspects of the One-Percenter Culture for Emergency Department Personnel to Consider* (Mar. 12, 2017, 08:30 PM), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4100862/#b7-wjem-15-523 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Mallory* at 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Texas Joint Crime Information Center (October 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *Mallory* at 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. *Abadinsky* at 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Deputy John Williams (Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department), *Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs* (Power Point presentation) – unknown date, https://info.publicintelligence.net/LA-OutlawBikers.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Peter Leeson and David Skarbek (2011: 282) [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *Mallory* at 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Id.*at 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. *Id.* at 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Barker* at 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Id.* at 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. From the OMG power point slide from LASO - https://info.publicintelligence.net/LA-OutlawBikers.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *Barker* at 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. *Mallory* at 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. *Abadinsky* at 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. *Mallory* at 194 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. *Mallory* at 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. *Id.* at 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. *Abadinsky* at 250 [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. .*Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. *Barker* at 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. *Abadinsky* at 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. *Barker* at 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. All from the OMG power point slide from LASO - https://info.publicintelligence.net/LA-OutlawBikers.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. *Mallory* at 184 [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. *Mallory* at 185 [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. *Barker* at 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. *Barker* at 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. *Abadinsky* at 245 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. *Id.* at 248 [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. *Id*. at 249 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. *Mallory* at 197-198 [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. *Abadinsky* at 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. *Mallory* at 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. *Abadinsky* at 257 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. http://www.outlawsmc.com/chapters.html [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. *Mallory* at 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. *Abadinskly* at 257-258 [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. *United States v. Bowman*, 302 F.3d 1228 (2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. *Mallory* at 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. *Abadinsky* at 257 [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. *Mallory* at 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. *Abadinsky* at 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. *Abadinsky* at 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. *Id.*; *See also Mallory* at 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. *Mallory* at 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. *Abadinsky* at 257 [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. *Barker* at 380-383 [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. *Id.* at 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. *Id.* at 259; *See also Mallory* at 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. *Mallory* at 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. *Abadinsky* at 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. *Id.* [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. *Id.* at 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. *Id.* at 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. *Id.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. *Mallory* at 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)