

*GRAFFITI AND VANDALISM
AND
THE RTD*

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION

**CONDUCTED AMONG PROFESSIONALS WHO DEAL
WITH THE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY
GRAFFITI AND VANDALISM
AND
INDIVIDUALS WITH FORMER GANG AFFILIATION**

JUNE 20 - 22, 1989

***PREPARED FOR
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT***

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A FACTS CONSOLIDATED STUDY

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report represents the findings of a qualitative investigation designed to provide insights regarding the problems of vandalism and graffiti and how they effect the Southern California Rapid Transit District.

Five small sample focus group discussions were held at FACTS CONSOLIDATED'S focus group facility in Los Angeles. Three of the discussions were among professionals who because of their specific work experiences represent areas of expertise as fas as such things as vandalism, graffiti, and youth gang activities are concerned.

Two of the discussions were conducted among those with former gang affiliations. These are individuals who have been assigned to work with state funded programs of the Department of Youth Authority such as the Graffiti Abatement Unit and the Gang Violence Reduction Project. Some of these individuals are associated with these progams because they have "seen the light", and have put their gang activities behind them. Others have been remanded to the programs as a condition of parole or probation.

The professional groups included educators, juvenile court judges, district attorneys, law enforcement personnel from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles Police Department, Long Beach Police Department, etc., probation and parole officers and others who have areas of specific expertise regarding graffiti and vandalism.

All five discussions were conducted by the same discussion leader, on June 20, 21 and 22, 1989. A discussion outline was generated and used as a guide in each of the sessions. A copy of this outline is appended to this report.

At the beginning of each discussion, a video tape was shown to each group. The tape is one that was produced by RTD, and we elected to use it as a preamble to each discussion because it graphically describes the graffiti and vandalism problem, and accurately depicts its magnitude.

The sessions were audio recorded, and transcriptions of the audio tapes were made. The transcriptions follow this summary.

It is important to note that in this kind of research, the findings are presented in the form of hypotheses. The research team listens to the tapes and reads over the transcripts with a view toward uncovering areas of coincidence and contradiction between groups and among the group participants. The weight of numbers and projectability of a statically sound sample are not present.

II. HIGHLIGHTS, PRINCIPAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. FOR MANY OF THE PROFESSIONALS, AS WELL AS FOR THOSE WITH FORMER GANG AFFILIATIONS, PARTICIPATION IN THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE GRAFFITI/VANDALISM PROBLEM PLAGUING RTD IS BROUGHT TO THEIR ATTENTION.

Although there is awareness that graffiti does appear on the buses, the scope of the problem, as revealed by the video tape shown to the groups, comes as a surprise to the panel participants. Prior to participation in the groups, most tended to view bus graffiti as a harmless, although annoying, pastime in which some juveniles participate. The fact that clean-up and repair could involve millions of dollars comes almost as a shock.

Even among those with former gang affiliations, those who in the not too distant past actually participated in writing graffiti, the fact that these acts cause problems of that magnitude described in the video is not realized. As one former gang member puts it, "... I used to do that myself ... and I didn't realize I was costing somebody money to replace it and clean it."

This remark from a Deputy District Attorney assigned to gang investigations will further illustrate this lack of awareness, "Let me tell you, this tape came as quite a shock to the four of us who deal with this. I didn't know it was that bad. And if I didn't know it was that bad, I guarantee you that the judges don't know that it is that bad."

2. AMONG PROFESSIONALS, GRAFFITI AND VANDALISM IS NOT A HIGH PRIORITY PROBLEM.

Although graffiti and vandalism are acknowledged problems, they are not assigned a high priority by a system that must also deal with murder, mayhem, rape, burglary, robbery, etc.

There are two additional factors that contribute to the low priority status of vandalism and graffiti. One is the acknowledged difficulties involved in apprehending those that commit these acts.

The second is the perception that even when caught, nothing of any consequence ever happens to the perpetrator. This is due in part to the overcrowded situations that juvenile halls and jails experience, or to prevailing attitudes that jail is not the place for a juvenile who commits these acts. It is also due to the fact that the court process involved in dealing with those caught is often viewed as "out of proportion" to the low priority assigned to vandalism and graffiti offenses. Additionally, the penalty phases are perceived to be disappointing, inappropriate or lacking as a deterrent to future offenses.

Some comments from the groups that illustrate these findings follow:

"... Juvenile hall is so full that they are not going to send a juvenile tagger to juvenile hall for any of these kinds of things."

"... Most of the taggers that we dealt with, and gang members who are involved, they think it is a joke. Once they get caught, you know, the words out that it's only going to be a slight slap on the wrist and it is over."

"... In the spectrum of crimes they (the judges) deal with within the system, they view this (graffiti) as one of the least important crimes, and I think what RTD should do is set up meetings ... with all the judges who deal with juvenile courts and let them know the emphasis that RTD places on these crimes, because I don't think it's taken very seriously by the judges."

3. ALTHOUGH THE EFFECT UPON THE DISTRICT IS THE SAME, THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT TYPES OF GRAFFITI/VANDALISM.

The common denominator of the different types of graffiti/vandalism appears to be that it is a form of communication. Regardless of whether it is tagging, gang graffiti or "bombing", it is a way to send a message. Essentially, taggers are "advertising" themselves. Gangs use graffiti to establish their turf, and to communicate with other gangs, and "bombers" consider what they do to be an art form. One professional puts it this way. "There are two motivations here. when you see gang graffiti, gang graffiti is the gang marking its turf. When you have your first layer of gang graffiti, you're always going to get a second layer which is gang members from across the street saying, 'This is my turf, not his turf.' You're going to see "puta" marks or cross outs. So, one thing that RTD should be watching very carefully for is that they get the gang graffiti off the first thing. You can tell the difference between the gang graffiti and the sport of tagging. It's completely different ... the motivation for the tagging is just recognition. Casper wants everybody in the city to know about Casper."

4. BOTH PROFESSIONALS AND THOSE WITH FORMER GANG AFFILIATIONS TEND TO FEEL THAT THE TRADITIONAL PENALTIES, AND WAYS OF DEALING WITH CRIMINALS WOULD NOT BE AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEAL WITH PERPETRATORS OF GRAFFITI/VANDALISM.

When those who are apprehended for placing graffiti on RTD buses are dealt with by the criminal justice system it is the feeling of those who participated in the group discussions that traditional penalties (such as incarceration, payment of fines, etc.) would be neither suitable, nor effective as deterrents.

Putting a youthful offender in jail or detention is considered to be impractical for several reasons. First of all, there exists an overcrowding situation. The city, county and state facilities are filled to capacity, which means that when someone goes in, someone comes out. The professionals indicate that to release someone who is guilty of a crime more serious than vandalism or defacing property in order to accomodate one who is guilty of the lesser crime, is patently ridiculous.

This quote from one of the professional group participants will illustrate. "We give (graffiti writers) a ticket. We don't have enough room in the jails. Even if you get booked, they're going to turn right around and cite you out because we're setting at over 22,000 inmates by court order, we're at max. Somebody comes in, somebody goes out. You bring in 500 graffiti writers, 500 graffiti writers are going to go out because they're not going to let 500 burglars, or 500 assaulters or robbers go out. So locking them up, while I think it has an effect, it's just not going to happen."

Fines are not considered to be an effective way of dealing with perpetrators because it is thought that in many cases neither the parents nor the offenders have the money to pay the fines, and in most cases, the fines imposed are not thought to be a severe enough penalty to be an effective deterrent.

Another reason mentioned for not wanting to sentence graffiti writers to jail time is the belief that incarceration will not only expose a youthful offender to more hardened criminals, but could be a training ground for more serious crimes as well.

5. SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS ARE MADE REGARDING WHAT ARE THOUGHT TO BE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH GRAFFITI WRITERS AND OF PREVENTING OR ALLEVIATING THE PROBLEM.

Participants among the professionals, and among those with former gang affiliations, suggest that perpetrators should be made to clean the buses, and for enough hours to make a lasting impression. Twenty hours is viewed as a joke, hundreds of hours is considered to be more appropriate. Part of the reason for the courts' seeming reluctance to sentence graffiti writers to community service cleaning buses for meaningful lengths of time is attributed to RTD's failure to inform the criminal justice system of the proportions and financial burdens of the problem.

Some of the participants indicate that graffiti writers should clean buses in full view of their peers. It is thought that this additional humiliation will not only reinforce the deterrent aspect of being forced to clean buses, but could also cause other youngsters to think twice before committing similar acts.

Another suggestion made by several of those with former gang affiliations are to use the graffiti writers and gang members as consultants within the "hot spot" areas, and to hire community consultants (who are individuals who have "juice" with the neighborhood "crews") to work with RTD.

These quotes from some of the former gang members will help to illustrate, "... Like the program that we work for ... we work for the whole neighborhood. We work with the actual gang members that are writing on the walls and they get together, not all, but some of them, go out and remove their own graffiti. These young guys (graffiti writers) need somebody to help them, you know, somebody to reach them, so they won't continue doing that ... you got to get to some of the leaders ... like one of the programs we have. We hire the gang member that works or lives or is from that particular neighborhood, that particular gang. And he represents the neighborhood and he works with the whole neighborhood ... That is why they are hired. It is because of their expertise ... like we are doing on our stuff also. Because of our background and where we come from that's where our education comes from instead of a college book, ours comes from the streets and that's who we deal with ..."

"... It would be finding whatever your main problems are ... you know some of the locations ... but you have no way to make contact with those youths. You find someone that can and you find what would be an alternative for them."

"You would have to hire someone that knows how to get through to the younger people that are doing the damage to the RTD buses. So that they could be the advocate for you ..."

"We will hire the actual gang members that do the graffiti writing and they will be working removing graffiti ... we know who the graffiti taggers are ... John Q. Public walking down the street, he don't know a tagger from anyone else, but we do ..."

Suggestions are also made to use bus clean-up activities as a means of providing meaningful employment for neighborhood young people.

Many of the former gang members indicate concern that if RTD acts upon this suggestion, the wrong young people will be hired. This remark will illustrate, "... They will say we are hiring 250 youths, and they hire these kids that live in these homes where the parents make enough money."

It is also suggested that RTD meet with community leaders and elected officials in order to inform them of the problem and to enlist their aid and expertise in developing community outreach programs customized for each community. These would be individuals like Sheriff Block, District Attorney Ira Reiner, School Superintendent Britten, Los Angeles city council members and other elected officials, individual school officials, and school administrators (principals, security, etc.).

Nearly all participants agree that graffiti should never be allowed to remain in place. Removal should be immediate. These quotes from the proceedings will illustrate, "The only way to stop it is by erasing. Because if you keep erasing it, after a while they will finally quit doing it."

"We always approach the problem from wiping it out. We never, never let them stay. High priority item ... something gets written down, we always wipe it off ... no matter what the effort ... no matter what it takes."

There are those from both groups who suggest the implementation of a reward for turning in graffiti writers. One should be able to turn someone in to RTD with the assurance that one's anonymity will be assured. Along these lines, the institution of a "graffiti hotline is suggested. Rewards suggested include sums of \$500 and \$1000, as well as a lifetime bus pass.

It is felt by many participants that parents should be held more accountable and that they should be more involved in the penalty phase. Some even suggest that parents be made to clean the buses. It should be mentioned that there are also some who do not feel this way. Not because they disagree with the basic premise, but because they feel that many parents have no control or influence over their youngsters, and/or do not have the means to allow for the payment of fines.

Also in the areas of apprehending graffiti writers and in prevention of this practice are some other suggestions.

Professionals feel that school administrators should be visible at bus stops and other areas where this type of vandalism takes place. The presence of someone who knows and is known by the youngsters can be a powerful deterrent.

RTD should take advantage of existing agencies, and even help to finance them so that they can continue their graffiti abatement programs.

It is also felt, particularly by professionals, that there should be more unification in the approach to vandalism and graffiti, and that the legislature should be involved to provide funding for clean-up and prevention. It would appear that many professionals feel this way because they also feel that the scope of RTD's problem with graffiti and vandalism should be considered beyond RTD's ability to deal with it without the help of other agencies.

6. RTD IS PERCEIVED TO BE DOING A POOR JOB OF COMMUNICATING WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY.

Professionals feel that RTD has not communicated the extent and seriousness of the graffiti and vandalism problem to the agencies that they represent. These quotes will illustrate the situation with far more clarity than any prose from an analyst's pen. "I think it is...a problem getting the police to (understand) that it's a problem. It's a surprise to me that it's \$100,000 or \$300,000 a month of damage done to the buses. I think that if law enforcement knew that or had that information (they'd deal with the problem differently)."

"Never before, up until now, have the RTD people come to the juvenile court. Increase the courts and the probation department's awareness, the importance of bringing these kids through the court system, and the importance of telling us, all the judges in the juvenile system what damage is being done by maybe showing them that film, and also creating a liaison with all the schools. Keep that as an ongoing open line of communication; probation, courts, schools, task forces, police department. You don't have that now. You really don't have that at all. So we see a bus with graffiti, we don't know that your guys that we saw on television arrested them. They were never brought to us. Somebody in the probation department will let them go. You have to have a complete circle here or it's not going to work."

"There has to be communication between the RTD and the criminal justice system. Including the District Attorney's office and including the judges."

"Let me tell you ... this tape came as quite a shock to the four of us who deal with this. I didn't know it was that bad. And if I didn't know it was that bad, I guarantee you the judges don't know that it is that bad."

"I have never seen a probation report in a misdemeanor vandalism case where they called RTD and asked them what they thought about it. Why don't you recommend that probation officers contact RTD whenever one of those cases comes up. So that RTD's voice will then be heard in the report and they can say ... this vandalism costs us \$10,000 to clean up, and it will give judges a greater sense of the magnitude of the problem."

"RTD is simply going to have to learn the politics of justice. They are going to have to start learning how the system works, how to get their message to those who prosecute these people, and how to get their message to those who arrest these people. And they are going to have to acquire some sort of file system where they can keep track of who is doing the tagging, how many times they've been caught, what is their tag, how much does it cost RTD for this one person alone, how much does this hot-spot cost RTD. ... And they have to become aware of how they can interact or interface whichever one you want to use with the justice system and with those who bring the juveniles to the justice system. That is something that they are going to have to do, if they want to have effective input and cut down the problem by use of the criminal justice system."

7. THERE IS ALSO A PERCEPTION THAT RTD DOES NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE EXISTING GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTITIES THAT DEAL WITH GANG ACTIVITIES AND PROBLEMS OF GRAFFITI AND VANDALISM AT THE COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL.

Organizations like the state funded Youth Gang Services, the Gang Violence Reduction Project, and the Graffiti Abatement Unit are involved on a day-to-day basis with such things as counteracting gang activities, reducing the incidence of graffiti in the neighborhood, removing graffiti, and trying to channel youthful proclivities toward graffiti writing into more acceptable behaviors. These groups, as well as probation departments, special law enforcement task forces, and community groups appear ready and willing to help RTD with the problems caused by graffiti writers and vandals, but there appears to be no awareness that RTD wants, or even needs this involvement.

8. METHODS OF DEALING WITH GRAFFITI/VANDALISM PROBLEMS THAT IN EFFECT "PUNISH" THE VICTIMS RECEIVE VERY NEGATIVE REACTIONS.

Such things as immediate removal of vandalized buses from service, curtailing or eliminating service, or any action that forces riders to experience delays, disruptions of service or inconveniences receives a very negative response from professionals as well as from those with former gang affiliations. Some even feel that such actions could trigger a backlash against RTD. There is a minority viewpoint however, that suggests that perhaps inconveniencing the public could force public outrage against the vandals and graffiti writers that might in turn impede the perpetration of future acts of vandalism and graffiti.

9. THE REVOKING OF STUDENTS ID'S AND BUS PASSES APPEARS TO BE AN ACCEPTABLE WAY TO DEAL WITH GRAFFITI WRITERS AND VANDALS, BUT IS VIEWED AS ONLY ONE STEP.

Professionals, as well as those with former gang affiliations agree that revoking student ID's and bus passes of graffiti writers and vandals is a warranted action, but they also feel that this is not going far enough. In addition to this, most feel that the vandal should be dealt with in ways that would leave lasting deterrents to future actions of this nature. Cleaning the buses, and other types of community service (for meaningful lengths of time) as well as permanent revoking of bus passes and ID's are suggested.

10. PROFESSIONALS SUGGEST THAT RTD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF "FREE" LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Apparently, at one time it was a practice of RTD to allow law enforcement personnel to ride the buses free. Many of the professionals who come from law enforcement agencies remember this, and are under the impression that this is no longer happening. Since they also feel that a more visible security element on board buses is needed, letting law enforcement ride buses free appears to be an ideal way of obtaining at least some of this visibility, free.

11. GRAFFITI WRITING AND VANDALISM IS CONSIDERED TO BE A STEPPING STONE TO OTHER CRIMES.

Professionals and those with former gang affiliations see graffiti writing and vandalism as a beginning step to other, more serious crimes. In fact, it is within the experience of some of the participants that individuals have been killed over graffiti. This is just another reason why controlling or curtailing the growth of activities related to graffiti writing and vandalism is considered to be in the best interests of all, and not just RTD. These excerpts from the conversations will illustrate. "There is no difference (when graffiti writing is compared to typical gang activities) because the potential for whatever gangs do is there whenever you get a group of kids that are out doing this kind of craziness."

"We have people killed yearly in this town, lots of them, over graffiti. Simply over graffiti. A lot of people die just because of graffiti. How many kids have we found laying dead with the can still in their hand because they got caught by the wrong guys marking out graffiti."

"... What I am saying ... is that if we want to stop gangs from coming up, and gang violence in our inner cities, then we have to put a stop on graffiti."

"...If I wrote my name whether it be on your bus or your wall or something, and he came from across town, or I was in his neighborhood and I wrote in his neighborhood...we are talking about territorial rights...and he crosses me out ... then most likely I am going to go back and beat him up and if he could beat me up, then I would have to take something with me to make sure that I don't lose, right? So it could eventually end up in a death, which most of the time it does."

"What got me out of it (graffiti writing) was that I got tired of seeing death in the community. And that's all that I know graffiti did. It destroyed people's lives, and so now I am all for life. Because I have a new life."

12. THERE APPEARS TO BE SUPPORT FOR USING RESPECTED SPOKESPERSONS PROMOTIONALLY AS A DETERRENT TO GRAFFITI WRITING AND VANDALISM.

There appears to be tremendous respect for the Los Angeles Raiders within the ranks of those with former gang affiliations. Recommendations are also made to include other spokespersons that are respected in specific ethnic cultures, such as Cheech and Chong. The point is made that in order to be an effective advocate against graffiti writing and vandalism a spokesperson has to be respected as a role model by the universe you are trying to influence.

It should be mentioned that there are some who tend to equate the Los Angeles Raiders with activities and attitudes that while acceptable on the playing field, are not compatible with anti-graffiti/anti-vandalism attitudes. What this means is that all aspects of a spokespersons persona need to be thoroughly explored so that the credibility and effectiveness of the message can be maximized.

13. SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS ARE MADE REGARDING A LONG TERM PROGRAM TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC.

The view here is that education in and of itself can become a deterrent to graffiti writing and vandalism.

Suggestions include the following:

- Education programs should begin in the schools at the primary level. They should be patterned along the lines of programs like D.A.R.E. and should teach respect for the buses.
- Alert parents to the problem, using the media, PTA groups, community groups, etc. Pay special attention to how to spot signs of graffiti writing behavior in their own children. For example, teach parents to question the presence of such things as spray cans, markers, etching tools, "monikers" on tennis shoes, books, etc.
- Spread the messages that show how graffiti on the buses can disrupt the community.
- Make the kids aware of the scope of the problem and its effect on the public.

Some of these things can be accomplished through the effective use of community outreach and public information programs. Certainly the use of existing groups and agencies should be explored.

13. GRAFFITI WRITERS CAN SOMETIMES BE APPREHENDED BY MEANS OTHER THAN BEING CAUGHT IN THE ACT OF VANDALIZING A BUS.

Both groups tend to feel that kids who tag buses, will also tag other things, with the same tag, or "moniker" that they or their "crews" use on the buses. By learning to read the tags, graffiti writers can be found by working with the schools and some existing agencies and entities. This type of thing can also be part of ongoing education and public outreach programs to encourage parents and others to learn to recognize those who participate in graffiti writing. These excerpts from the discussions will illustrate. "A kid just can't help putting his mark up or putting his marker on a folder for some reason. And we figured out that if we search the lockers, go through the books, we find it in their books. We know who it is finally and we take some action on who has been doing it on the walls. That's how we identify the person. So that gives you a kind of indicator on what the schools are doing."

"If you were to take off maybe three major names you know are hitting or vandalizing the buses, you alleviate maybe 50% of the writing, because it's a big game to these guys. It's a communication. (The bus) is a message board to these people."

"I happen to believe this because I've seen you guys (the gang cops) come out and do the gang stuff ... and people say 'oh my God, my kids got red shoe laces on ...take those off' and I think if you start doing this with parents (showing them how to read signs of graffiti writing) when they go home and they see their kid's books, they might say "oh-oh, my kid may be doing this so maybe I better intervene."

"The kids who tag buses, they'll tag houses and tag telephone poles and they'll tag anything they can tag. They'll tag their own books, shoes, everything. And that's a way for the transit police to get to some of these taggers."

"(These kids) talk to each other and we found that our field supervisors in the graffiti program picked up whose tag name some these kids were."

14. SOME ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

- A tax on spray paint may not be an effective deterrent since it is believed that many graffiti writers steal rather than purchase the cans.
- Some participants feel that the use of graffiti guard coatings could make clean-up almost as simple as a car wash procedure.
- Although some participants suggested having a designated place for graffiti (ie. special "mini billboards" on the bus, out of service buses, etc.) there are divided opinions regarding the appropriateness of such a practice. While some feel that designated spots for this type of graffiti writing would provide some acceptable outlet for kids who are prone to do this, others feel that by providing designated spots, you lend tacit approval to graffiti writing. As one professional puts it, "Graffiti has a life of its own and by saying you can do it 'here', but not 'there' sends mixed messages."
- Graffiti on the outside of the buses is considered to be the work of taggers. Inside the bus, it is assumed to be gang related.
- Law enforcement participants would like RTD to photograph graffiti before it is removed, in order to provide insights for those who deal with gangs. As one D.A. puts it, "I don't want you to get rid of that graffiti too quick because as a gang investigator it could be important to me."
- RTD should make a more effective effort to advertise what graffiti and vandalism on the buses is costing and causing.

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GROUP # 1 - PROFESSIONALS

Jewel: I'm Jewel. This is Facts Consolidated and we are a genuine research company and do genuine research here and what we invited you here to discuss tonight are the problems of vandalism and graffiti and how they effect the Rapid Transit District, the Southern California Rapid Transit District. You each represent an area of expertise as far as vandalism, graffiti, youth gangs, etc., are concerned and we hope that you will be very generous this evening in sharing your ideas and thoughts and your experiences. Before we get started I'd like to you note several things. First of all, we are tape recording this session. Those are microphones and they are live and they are hooked up to some other tape recorders. The reason that we do this is that we do consider what you have to say to be very important. There is no way we are going to remember everything that you say so what we do is have the tapes transcribed and we're able to read them over and analyze them and really take advantage of the kinds of experiences and thoughts that you share with us this evening. Before we get started on our discussion, I would like to go around the table and you introduce yourselves to me and to each other and tell me who you are and whatever you can tell me about you do and what your affiliation is. It really isn't going to go too much further than this room.

Male: Not too much.

Male: My name is Bob Contreras and I am with LAPD and I work in gang information section. I have worked in gangs for about 12-13 years now.

Male: Wes McBride, I am the operations sergeant for OSS the LA Sheriffs gang unit. I have been working gangs for fifteen years.

Male: Sheriff Brand I am also with the OSS I am a field lieutenant. I've worked gangs since about '71.

Male: Norm Sorensen, Long Beach Police Detectives. I am a gang officer, keep intelligence and assist the prosecution in gang crimes. I've been in

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gang cop for about nine years.

Male: Jay _____, Community Youth Gang Services. I'm a painting contractor and I am also on the board of the Los Angeles Bureau of Mural Services so we actually work with Murals as we replace graffiti in some cases. I also attached to four Trade Associations and I am also working with both Orange County, San Bernadino County and LA County.

Jewel: And what kind of trade associations.

Jay: The National Association of General Contractors, Painting and Decorating Contractors of America, Los Angeles Society of Technology and also the Construction and Specification Institute. Architects, paint manufacturers and painting contractors.

Group:

Male: Wouldn't think he's got enough.

Jay: There more but I can't put it all.

Male: John _____. County of L.A. Manager for a Community Youth Gang Services. I oversee the intervention and prevention of graffiti abatement services for Youth Gang Services.

Male: My name is Ken _____, presently with LA County District Attorney office as an investigator. I had prior experience with the LA County Sheriffs Department as an OSS gang officer. I am also a youth counselor working with youth in my community in conjunction with the city school district and Centinela Valley District teachers.

Male: I'm Art Ponce and I am an assistant principal for Norwalk Jr. High schools. I work primarily with the Norwalk Sheriffs Division.

Male: David Brooks a former school teacher, school administrator of the Norwalk area and have been involved with gangs since the first day I

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started in the educational establishment, thirty some years ago. I am currently the president of Thomas Jefferson Research Center and I work throughout the country with school districts and law enforcement agencies in the prevention of crime and violence and vandalism.

Jewel: Okay. What I think that best thing that we can do by way of explanation is to show you a video tape that's been prepared by our TV and that will explain the problem and we can discuss it.

FILM:

Jewel: Okay gentleman, that's what we want to take about. I'd like to know about the specific kinds of experience that you have had with these types of vandalism and graffiti. I'd like your thoughts on why these acts are perpetrated, the different kinds of graffiti and vandalism and the motivation behind the acts and especially we would like your suggestions about ways of dealing with the perpetrators. So as I said at the beginning, this will be an informal discussion so, you know, have at it.

Male: They're interested in all of their stuff, not just their own stuff. The bus stations and

Jewel: I think they're interested primarily in the buses. I don't know that they're really responsible for the bus stops but we can find that out. But it's -- this is a multi-million dollar problem.

Male: One of the main things we found in East LA is he's pointing out that they're having alot of trouble with erasing. The only way to stop it is by erasing. Because if you keep erasing it after awhile they will finally quit doing it. We have a place in East LA that is run by Edison Company, a substation, a block wall building and every day kids were there writing their names on it. This have been going on for five years. But every day Edison had a painter out there and painted it over. Finally they stopped. It took

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a long time. This is just one little building. It couldn't any bigger than this room. You just have to keep at it. That's how Edison -- it's just a suggestion. You might contact someone from Edison because I think that's their policy at all their buildings is to erase it as soon as it appears.

Jewel: But that's part of the problem because they have many, many buses to service and they can't

Male: Let me underscore it a little bit more. We have approximately two thousand kids every day and schools are unique as you all know. As to the way I think we all know that its a kind of pride, neighborhood statement of pride, a personal statement of pride --

Male: Advertisement

Male: Advertises themselves. They advertise themselves to their friends and to their enemies and hopefully they'll cross each other out and start some kind of problem with one another. In the schools we have little techniques that work for us. We always approach the problem from wiping it out. We never, never let them stay. High priority item. Its something that we always know, something gets written down we always wipe it off. No matter what the effort how much it takes. It take alot of custodial time painting, sandblasting, so and so forth. Technique wise in terms of getting at the kids that are doing it is really tough. In schools the kids carry little pee-chee folders. Kids just can't help putting his mark up or putting his marker on a folder for some reason. And we figured out we search the lockers, go through the books, we find it in their books, we know who it is finally and then we take some action on whose been doing it on the walls. That's how we identify the person. So that gives you a kind of indicator on what the schools are doing. But because we have two thousand kids its hard to identify.

Male: Does the school have any kind of program, I

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don't know, regarding the kind of problem we have with RTD and the graffiti that you know of. I mean has RTD put into any schools, you know, graffiti on the buses or any kind of posters or anything like --

Male: You know what I think happens is aside from people like David going around trying to impress upon people what to do school work and districts work pretty much individually according to their philosophies and they develop their own strategies and for the longest time didn't sort of like what we were expressing a lot of frustration twenty years ago. We were sitting around trying to think how we were going to get rid of it one of the ways to get rid of it is to get rid of it yourself, whatever the amount of energy or time or money you have to get rid of it and that's what we've done in schools.

Jewel: How do you prevent it?

Male: I was going to address.. another thing that you find its not so much here before you had a lot of gang members doing alot of graffiti but these young men and ladies who are doing the bulk of the damage at large now call themselves crews or posies and they are not the traditional gang type of kids that we normally used to deal with. These are kids who are from whatever you want to call it, you know, decent homes. Its a form of art to them, its a way of -- you see the pride that this kid was talking about seeing their names going across the city so erasing it off the bus would mean not much because they're going to wait for the next bus to come by to put it on whatever comes by. When they say tag its a game. How many buses can we tag, how many times can be get our, you know, little crew or posies's name -- they have little groups of them -- eight or ten of them, as long as you can draw and the reason why its even more destructive is that its usually -- they even have a sign they have a tag which is their name and their little groups name and then they have little figures that they put up, little cartoon like figures--

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Male: Butterfly

Male: Yea -- and its more than just the old traditional -- the gang stuff seems almost easy now compared to the vandalism.

Male: It really does

Male: You know, and this new stuff and its not where you can say okay lets get this group of gang members. You really to have to scuffle to find these new kids its --- one of the things that I thought about as far as dealing with it from the onset they have a tremendous pride in the art, they do. Whether you like it or not and for them to see this art, you know, doing this creativity thing, it might mean that maybe they can put some -- since they want to put the crap on the bus -- if you can put those cardboard posters on the side and I'm saying if they're going to do it, if they thought that that would be the spot where they would, you know, and say leave it one for a month or whatever, I'm just using that as an example you could even -- other than the fact it could still be a crime if that's what they want. But I think that the thing is that they are going to have address the fact that these youngsters are going to do this kind of art. There is no doubt about it, whether you want to get a contest and make a bunch of buildings or some walls and let them do it to recognize them and get them and maybe get them from indiscriminately hitting these buses. Right now its just a big game and its going to tough.

Male: They have no territory so its they're not like a club --

Male: No territory, you can't -- they're not in any of the gang files because they're not gang members. They don't cross each other out. If they do anything they will draw over another one but they don't cross them out, you know, they call them pieces more than just saying its a piece--

Male: Pieces meaning masterpieces

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Male: Yea, right

Male: Or pieces for short. The -- like Ken is sharing right here okay the bombing originated in New York.

Jewel: The what?

Male: Bombing, its balloon art with spray cans using different types of tips. With the freeway that they show right off there, off the 10 Hollywood Freeway that the East LA Occupational Center. We use that as a training facility when we bring new hires on to get out the rolling time. Okay now that site right there will attract kids from middle class families from Pomona to south central to the valley, everybody goes there to tag. There carry it in two forms, either in their backpacks or in milk crates. Okay, and to them they prefer the crylon can of spray. Now the writing originated over there but what happens is these guys...to them, like what you were saying, it is like art to them. They think that there is nothing wrong with it, you know, its art they're talented. Some kids are really talented. But the tagging it looks like a handwriting. These guys get upset with that. They are saying that they are being punished because of what these guys are doing on tagging. It's two different groups here now, you got --- - people who are into balloon art and then you got taggers who just do that quick scribble on the bus there and then they run.

Male: What you talking about is still a crime.

Male: Oh yea --- absolutely, defacing property, you know, absolutely

Male: Whether its an art

Male: Yea

Male: Whether you say its a mexican cultural type thing then -

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Male: When we go out there, we send out guys to go-- learn how to surface prep and things like we'll see them bunching up and they're over there making gestures we try to set up a sting operation right there at one point but it was too complicated because it was too wide spread, you know, to catch some of these -- if you were to take off maybe three major names you know are hit or vandalizing the buses you alleviate maybe fifty percent of the writing because its a big game to these guys. It a communication, its a message board to these people and they -- its-- just running games, that's it, advertisement.

Male: I'm sort of, -- first of all I want to back up, that this thing, it is not the hispanic and black gang graffiti that we've always recognized. Its a new kind of thing and I'm gonna back that up. Part of it is, you know, is no crossing out. One of the solution strategies that, start focusing on solution strategies, we must get educators, we must get people in the schools, to get out of the damned school, excuse me, and be in the neighborhood. The statement that hit me most strongly was that you got to get the school people who recognize kids at the bus stops for ten minutes. If you could do anything else, if you could find a way to get...even if it means paying part of the salary of security people, to run around the campus at the major bus stops, during the time, the heavy duty times kids will not do this if they know someone is across the street who can recognize them. Number two is that person should carry a camera with them as Art and I used to do and we were out all the time and we did alleviate alot of the leaving school problems, so that would be a strategy that I would take a look at. How can RTD work with the schools in order to get school people outside the gate of their schools. I have to disagree with the, the poster on the side of the bus --

Male: It's just a suggestion for ---

Male: Yea, I know, and the reason -- my experience was with gang graffiti that when we did place

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posters in bathrooms, posters on desks, it actually -- graffiti has a life of its own and by saying you can do it on here, you can do it on that rug right there -- kids don't have the ability to understand that. If its okay here its not okay on the wall. What that says to them very clearly is its okay anyplace where ever there is a blank wall. I would be very careful about providing an opportunity for kids to display their destructive vandalistic behavior on - in a special place. They don't have the ability to confine themselves to that.

Male: I think, no matter what happens as Bob was saying, its a crime, its going to be a crime in fact, I just reviewed some legislation where they want to make it a wobbler, a felony wobbler. And tie it to the 186 street gang terrorism act. Any gang graffiti and realizing of course, alot of this is not gang but if anybody writes graffiti promoting the activities of the gang, they are going to tag him with a felony.

Male: I'm not sure that that's a great idea, I'm just not real sure of that. To slap a felony on some guy for vandalism. I think Jay may have the expertise we're looking for here.

Male: The third paragraph you will find that the City Attorney's Office, _____ went after Mr. Gonzales in San Pedro and got 130 days for writing on the side of a house. You strengthen the offense so that the punishment outweighs the enjoyment of whatever it is that --

Male: I think that should fall under a misdemeanor law. I don't think that hitting a kid with a felony is necessarily the best way of handling it, but again I am not so opposed to it that-- like is -- but I think .. one of the things they're going to have to look at is we haven't wiped out the gang problem, we're not likely to wipe out the gang problem -- we're not likely to wipe out the graffiti problem, no matter what we come up with, we can come up with all these great solutions, kids are going to get

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around this on something. I think one of the things the school, and I'm sure they have, the transit authority is going to have to look at is paints and Jay probably has the expertise on that, but I went to a couple of seminars over the past few years, and whatnot, I think that LAPH is using some of that paint now that when you write over it, you just wipe it off. It makes it easier than sandblasting, it makes it easier than painting over it. And I think when we use some prevention techniques on that line of just making it easier to remove and quicker.

Male: The latest right now is a sacrificial carbohydrate coating. In fact the city is testing tomorrow a test by the building and safety. Its a carbohydrate, it goes on-- whatever surface it goes on, a bus, what happens is you use a hot water blaster to remove it, so you're doing no sandblasting, no chemicals. You don't work with toxicity or products that have a toxicity problem.

Jewel: And how does that work

Male: The paint doesn't stick to it?

Male: Its guaranteed to come off. Its a sacrificial system so its designed to come back...

Male: You paint the bus every day and every night you gonna spray the paint off.

Male: But its fast

Male: National paint has an anti-graffiti paint that has... when we first heard about it about five years ago it was about \$75.00 a can. I called them us today and it was about \$13.00 a can or thereabouts per gallon. And essentially what that is you paint all your stuff with your normal paint and then you cover it with the anti-graffiti paint. It must be some kind of clear lacquer or something and then nothing will stick to it. I don't know what --

Male: It's what they do, the theory of it. One of the

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things you have to do is harden your target also

Jewel: Harden?

Male: Harden your target. By that I mean, first of all the bus company hasn't got a unique situation. The gang graffiti and the bombing and the tagging and things is kind a new phenomenon. But gang _____ have been around here for a long time and its steadily on the increase as we all see on the news that gang crimes and gang murders are occurring just about every day now, even more than once or twice a day. It is also everything that is associated with gang crimes is escalating and graffiti which is a low rate misdemeanor, that chances are that even they were caught and prosecuted nothing is going to happen to them. Realistically, we cause their release right there on the spot.

Male: The point that you made - Wes is making is making..hammer them with a felony, isn't realistic for that type of crime. Its a property damage and we get made as hell personally about it and they did it to my car, I'd want to kill somebody. But the real fact of it is its a low grade misdemeanor and nothing is going to happen. Mainly, concerning the court and the various laws we have to work with its just not that that particular the aspect of it doesn't seem to be working -- we've had that for a long time and it doesn't work. The increasing violence and things that most of the policemen in here that have worked with -- just like the guy says -- increasing at an alarming rate -- is out of control, its going to hell and the graffiti is coming along right behind it. And that escalating. In Long Beach we have several grants, we have a graffiti abatement program and that's merely, like Chuck was saying, get it all away, that's the theory, of this, free of charge the city sends out a painter and makes an estimate goes back there and paints out the graffiti. On the buses, I haven't noticed, this is a first time its been brought to my attention, maybe because I don't

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get around the bus, but now that I have seen the tape and I didn't even know what they were calling tagging, we actually had a case the other day and he was a skater and he, but he looked, smelled and acted like a gang member but he had never been arrested before, no tatoos, nothing to indicate that he was a member of a street gang, per se, the ones that are committing the violent acts, and he was still in school, but he said that that was the thing that they do and they were using crayolas.

Jewel: Now you say a skater?

Male: A skateboarder

Jewel: Oh a skateboard

Male: A skateboard enthusiast

Male: You know when you say that though the thing we see, of course we see the emergence of gangs and then they disappear all the time. Every different kind as you do. And the thing that I react to is there is traditional gangs like the hispanic and the black gangs and what we relate to as the gang type of gang, _____, but we have seen the emergence of a myriad of many types different gangs where you get into the heavy metal or the punkers, sub-punkers and the skaters are just as gang oriented as anybody else and they do the same behavior and they hang around together and they roll together, they beat up people together, some more than others, but ultimately, the way that I view them is there is no difference. There is no difference because the potential for whatever gangs do is there whenever you get a group of kids that are out doing this kind of craziness and yea skaters get together to go skate someplace but ultimately when you see a group of guys that are up to no good someplace they are up to no good and

Jewel: Okay, we -- I'd like to stay on target with the graffiti and the vandalism because these are the things that affect the district. And it does

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cost them a lot of money and in a sense what it does is cost the public because the public doesn't get the first rate....

Male: But until those social conditions are addressed though...that allows guys to do what they do ..do ...short of installing maybe some kind of _____ on the back of a bus...they are going to have to address those individuals away from the bus route. They are going to have to.....

Jewel: Okay, let's talk about --

Male: You might want to try installing the same thing that on every bus going from LAX for the Hertz Rental car lot and that's a TV camera, that's recording the faces of the people in the cars behind them. It might not be a bad idea in high risk areas to place in a secure place a TV camera, you know, a TV camera actually transmits the picture to the bus driver so he can see what's behind him.

Male: RTD has some cameras at some of the bus stops but the kids have painted over the lenses.

Male: If they're on the bus and the bus is moving is may be a little more difficult --

Male: Have is mounted inside --

Male: Yea, so I'm making a suggestion that they might take a look at some type of security system that includes a security camera.

Male: Or a lens that covers it when --

Male: Or a submachine gun --

Male: As Norm was saying, you've got to make your target like you said, hard. If you put the paint on there that you can easily remove the stuff from and if you put the cameras, that's a good idea, I didn't know they were doing that. If you can mount the cameras where you can photograph the suckers then prosecute them when you can catch them. Prosecute them to the limit

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of the law

Jewel: That's another thing, what kinds of penalties are appropriate, what would work, what wouldn't work.

Male: Jail, jail is out. You could just forget jail they -- as full as the jails are and juvenile halls, they are not going to put kids who are marking up buses in jail. I'll tell you right now. They would have to make an economic bill. Your either going to have that kid clean it up. You know make him go to work for RTD for free for six months cleaning that stuff up, you know something like that or have his parents pay for it. You know to repair the damages.

Male: \$2,000.00 is on the law right now.

Male: \$2,000.00 becomes a felony.

Group:

Jewel: We have to talk one at a time okay.

Male: You could give them whatever conditions of probation you want.

Jewel: You were going to say...Ken?

Ken: Obviously, there is not any one solution and there has been alot of good suggestions that can be tried. I think that there hasn't been alot of media coverage as far as how much damage is really being done and I think when people are more aware that the vandalism ultimately costs them or will be costing them as far as an increase in fee, where maybe more and more people will become more aware and maybe there can be some inroads made where you could -- some things could be pointed towards -- not so much stiffer penalties but some of the laws that are there we will maybe be effective or we will target more arresting some of these kids for vandalism. But I still say that one of the things that might some inroads is the fact that the youngsters want to do this, are going to do

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this until we stop them or they feel like stopping that there should be some recognition for them, - to vent some of this art. If RTD wanted to spend some money, find some place where they can have some, please where they could recognize some of these crews and have contests. Sounds stupid, but all they want is recognition and I'm saying you can keep it off the buses that's rolling and maybe have some contests say crews or posies that want to do some drawing come over here to this some walls or wherever they want to buy and, you know, have contests for them and do it in conjunction say recognizing that we know its wrong you can't put it on these buses but we recognize that you have some artistic value, come over here in such and such, you know, Saturday, and we'll have a contest and draw. That's all they're doing anyway.

Male: You know _____ that one kid made a comment.. you know...Why do you tag? We can't go on AM Los Angeles so we tag. To them it a big ink. Now these kids are very -- they try to stay a step or two ahead of everything that goes on. When they see a sacrificial coating or anti-graffiti coating on the outside of a RTD bus you know what they will do? They will go get a scribe and they will scribe and carve into that. They carve into windows where it cost local merchants thousands of dollars. And that is even harder to -- you have to replace the whole glass.

Jewel: They do the same thing to the RTD buses, they etch the windows.

Male: Now those should be prosecuted as felonies.

Male: You know, I still think that at the risk of being a little negative is that not only is it an art and not only is a private neighborhood, personal pride statement but its also an act against something. And I don't think that if you make it okay that it will correct it. I just kind have a feeling that its an anti-establishment thing is I can get away with my

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name going all over town and that makes it a part of the contest. Part of the thing that they love is the fact that they can get away with it. There is nothing anybody can do about it and so -- and the other thing is that alot of these gang things where somebody does a gang shooting, you get a guy who you believe is a suspect and you take him in and find out he's got press clippings all over his pockets, he's been saving up all kinds of stuff. He gets pride, he wants to see it in the papers. He wants to know that everybody is reading about this guy he shot. There is a kind of mindset where in some cases the need for this pride that they're receiving from it is so important that there isn't anything you can do them to make them hurt for it. I have talked to -- I'm sure you've interviewed gang members, I've been interviewing them for 22 years and I've talked to them about aren't you afraid of this aren't you afraid of that and I've had guys that have told me that I'm not afraid to die, I'm not afraid -- if you're not afraid to die then what you afraid of? There's nothing, so the only thing is you can point to be the guy that holds down or walks in and is respected by all the other gang members. So if they're getting their kicks by writing their name and everybody knows them that way then you have a situation there that is going to be very very difficult thing to address. Now one of the things that works is getting rid of it. That's the one thing that I think we all agree with. I mean, we all have different ideas on how to approach the resulting problem that the one think that everybody here agrees with is that you can't let it stay and I think you talk about extinguishing behaviors, yea, you get into a situation where you allow it here and you don't allow it there, if you allow it anyplace, it promotes it, I think. And its- - I think the main think to do is to make the parent pay, to get pictures of people doing it and prosecute and as much as possible hurt the parent.

Male: I want to add on to the picture thing. I think the picture thing in and of itself is somewhat

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of a deterrent. I know was it was when I held a camera. If I held a camera up kids would start running so I think it may be somewhat of a deterrent. I have a real radical kind of a thought and I'm sure that the RTD people will not be happy with this because it may effect ridership. Periodically you stop the bus that some people just marked and waited for a maintenance people to come and clean the bus. You might get some kind of public outrage that was -- obviously there is no public outrage about this because people aren't reporting it. It is even hard in our city to get people to call in sometimes with graffiti all over our walls and, you know, I'm not sure that that would work in all cases. But, what if, you know, people do get outraged when their bus has a breakdown, they have to wait for the next bus. What if somebody, driver reported, well we just had some kids from that school right there right in your neighborhood, write on the wall of the bus so we're going to stop here and wait for the maintenance guy, you have to get off and get on the next bus. You might have some people calling schools, calling other agencies --

Male: You'll have somebody punching your driver. You punishing the victims and --

Male: I know, and I agree with that, yea, I agree with that --

Male: I don't think that that would work because those people who have no cause or effect over the graffiti writers. If they did in some relation or knew them --

Jewel: Let me jump ahead a minute and tell you RTD is doing something and they are thinking of doing some other things. And some of them are along the lines of what you just suggested. Let me tell you about a few of them and then we can discuss it. First of all, RTD is currently taking away student bus passes from a juvenile who is caught vandalizing an RTD bus. Now what this does is it forces the juvenile or his family to purchase a new pass. RTD is also

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actually revoking student IDs from repeat offenders. The student ID allows the student to buy a monthly pass at a discounted rate so revoking his ID causes the student to pay full fare when riding the bus. Now another thing that the RTD is thinking about is to reduce service in order to fund cleanup activity. What could happen if they do this is that fewer buses would run less often but the buses that do run would be cleaned and they wouldn't have any etched windows or vandalized seats or whatever. Another thing RTD is considering doing in various configuration is bypassing what they call hot-spots. If a driver on a particular line runs into acts of vandalism then the radio dispatch center would be notified and all the buses on that line would be instructed to bypass that stop. So what this would do is it would cause riders who were waiting at the stop to be passed by it would also prevent passengers from getting off the bus at that stop but it would prevent vandals from vandalizing the bus in that particular area. Now another thing they are considering is, that if a bus does become vandalized enroute the bus driver could have the authority to order all the passengers to leave the bus and the bus driver would then take the bus to the nearest division in order for it to be cleaned up and repaired. What this would do is, it would cause the passengers to experience disrupted service while waiting for the next bus in order to continue their trip. Now another thing they're considering is to actually eliminate locations where a great deal of vandalism takes place to just either eliminate a bus stop or eliminate several stops or discontinue service throughout that whole area.

Male: The problem with that is that they're just going to move. You're talking about taggers. If the bus doesn't come by for two days, they'll say, well hell we'll just move somewhere else, even if its another city. Because we aren't talking about gang members who aren't that mobile. Apparently these kids are very mobile.

Male: I think you're just putting something off.

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Male: Where you said if they were caught vandalizing, to get another bus permit, what are they going to have to do.

Jewel: They would have to buy another bus pass.

Male: Why give them another bus pass?

Jewel: Well this is what they're thinking of doing is revoking--

Male: The kid is probably going to do it again if you do them--

Male: What give them two chances?

Male: Once he's caught a few times take it away forever. Then the kids are going to start catching on, hey, I'm not going to lose my bus pass forever. Then they won't do it.

Male: Most of the kids doing the writing, do they even care about riding the bus? I don't think so. I think most of -- you don't see any of those kids jump off the bus and paint the bus.

Male: Apparently they're writing on the seats though and stiff.

Male: There is that, there is the internal stuff but-

Male: The external stuff it look like --

Male: Those taggers probably rode their skateboards or live in that area. They're not --

Male: Personally, I wouldn't give them another pass.

Male: If I did I would charge them four times as much.

Male: The first time should be it, they're gone.

Male: You know it says here in this article that they spend, it says, \$50 million dollars a year, LA County government spends for removal.

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Male: That's between city, county and state agencies within LA County geographically.

Jewel: Okay, RTD is currently spending about \$9 million dollars a year on cleanup activities and on transit police who are, you know, devoted solely to this type of surveillance and this type of apprehension. And they're not catching all of it. Actually they could probably spend twice that.

Male: Penalizing the passengers on the bus isn't going to help either. I mean --

Male: That's the public outrage idea which is what-- you know, I think what David said is in some way taking pictures, is going to be an effective way

Male: I think that very expensive though.

Male: some of these kids don't care--

Male: You don't have to have cameras on every bus, just put it on the hot-spot buses.

Male: Some of these kids, they don't care if you take their pictures, some of them are proud.

Male: That's the only way you're going to be able to identify a rider and prosecute his parents. You know, you can hurt a kid and he won't care, if you hurt his parent financially you've got a little bit of fighting chance. I don't think you can take away his pass and hurt him, I don't think you can, what were those things? ID, you know, you're not going to hurt him. You reduce service you're going to hurt some other people. Hot-spots the same thing there, clean up the bus on the spot, that's a public outrage idea, same problem, you're hurting others. You eliminate bus stops, same problem. About the only thing you have in my opinion is identify the kid who's doing it and hurt his parent financially. If you can hurt his parent he will think twice.

Jewel: Jay, you had something you were gonna say.

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- Jay: For a vandal that is 30 years old is not a juvenile. A couple of things you can do is the City of Palmdale has a reward system if it leads to the arrest and conviction of graffiti writers. It pays off \$1,000.00. It paid off three times in the last year. \$3,000.00 as opposed to \$8 million and that way the constituent has a camera, he runs around and I almost got a photograph -- twice people came out with cameras getting me to hold still so that could get my picture. Because I have spray cans, I carry thirty or forty in the back of my car because I do testing. And they were determined I was a graffiti writer and they were ready to detain me so that they could get the \$1,000.00. Another thing you can do is a restriction on aerosol cans of paint. They've done it in Texas and they've also done it Philadelphia. Which you have to lobby for that, you have to organize constituents.
- Male: Has there been a decrease?
- Male: Well we have container law now
- Jay: You have assembly bill 2992 by Richard Katz which says you can't sell to a minor. One of the things that happens with kids which you will find out when you talk to the gang members later on this evening is that they maybe buy one can and they rack about three of those, just stiff it is their belt. And when that happens, even if you are restricting the sale from the point of view of who you're going to sell it to, if they're stealing it from you it doesn't matter.
- Male: They'll get it somehow.
- Male: Alot of the places are putting their spray cans behind the counter where its not accessible to the customer. And there is a law currently on the books now that a minor can't possess a spray can more than 2/3's full of certain types of paint.
- Male: That's why they like the Krylon. They rip them in half so they can sniff it afterwards.

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Male: One of the items that specifically addresses this. We have a graffiti reward, its only \$500.00 dollars, we're a little bit cheaper than they are. And we have paid off on it several times with arrest and conviction. And we have alot of involvement _____ in peoples minds that somebody ...at least they get the opinion that somebody is watching them. You know in reality they may not, they probably are not. But the gang members or the graffiti members might perceive that they are actually being watched.

Male: Last but not least, one of the things the bus company may consider is hiring more cops. When you've got two cops and ten million buses and you're trying to address a crime problem, seems to me that terribly understaffed. So if you're going to address this for enforcement purposes they're going to have increase their undercover officers to chase them down. Graffiti writers aren't 300 pounders like some of us guys are, they run like gazelles and they're young people. They're going to have some young officers out there that can run just as fast as they can. They ain't gonna sit there and see if they can catch them. They're going to have to go on foot pursuit.

Male: Has the RTD converted to running these cases through penal code 594 or are they still running --

Jewel: Could explain that to me?

Male: Penal Code 594 is a vandalism law and as I understand RTD was running the cases through as a citation. If you can run it through under the vandalism side the City Attorneys Office has already agreed to help support that going through the article as well as _____ with is underneath James Hahn, so that is another avenue you can take it. And as far as the punishment goes you don't want to put a gang member in jail. You want to give him community

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service time and a tagger you want to put in jail for a few days. Some of them are really green and they don't like going to jail. Different punishment for different kind of person.

Male: Even more if it is a 594 for an arrest in our our city and I think its true in most cities in the county is the fact that if its an adult, anyone over the age of 18, they get arrested for a misdemeanor, they're cited out on the spot. They're not even booked.

Jewel: What does that mean?

Group:

Male: We give them a ticket. We don't have enough room in the jails and if they're -- what's the bail? -- \$5,000.00? Unless you've got a bail a crime bailable of \$5,000.00 or more you're not going to get booked in LA County jail. Or you're gonna get booked and they're gonna turn right around and site you out because we're setting at over 22,000 inmates by court order, we're at max. Somebody comes in, somebody goes out. You bring in five hundred graffiti writers, five hundred graffiti writers are gonna go out cause they're not going let five hundred burglars or five hundred assaulters or robbers go out. So, locking them up, while I think has an effect its not going to happen.

Male: The other side is the counsel assembly bill which is 2412 I believe, has a 20 hours of community service time and goes with riding on a transit vehicle. That needs to be higher, 20 hours isn't enough.

Male: That's right. I think that was kicked around a moment ago. I think that's, you know, if you can make that kid come out or his parents pay for it or his parents come out and do it. --

Male: That's the answer right there.

Male: That would be real embarrassing for me if my kid

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got caught and I had to go out and paint, he wouldn't be doing it because he wouldn't be capable of doing it.

Male: That's the answer

Jewel: But

Male: We have overlooked one of the most powerful kinds of tools that we can have for prevention and that is education. I don't know that I have seen any heavy duty education programs that talk at the kindergarten through sixth grade about vandalism and destruction of other peoples property related to the RTD. I have seen them where they work.

Male: Do you guys do that at your school program?

Male: We are mainly geared towards drugs, graffiti things like that, I mean not graffiti gangs and drugs.

Male: Is that alternatives to gang members?

Male: Yea, alternatives to gang membership, fifteen week curriculum and.....

Male: The parallel program

Male: Its similar to that but we're a little more advanced than that now.

Male: I don't think there's been enough publicity on the --

Male: I've never seen this tape, I didn't know there was all these tagging and bombings. I've seen the buses. I just took it for granted its what's its always been, you know, the gangs. I had no idea that those other kids where involved. I think they need a big publicity campaign.

Male: They could get it for free

Jewel: How?

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Male: That video tape right there --

Male: That should be shown at every single police briefing in the county.

Male: It should be shown --

Male: They could make up a couple hundred copies of that for next to nothing and send a few copies to every police department. There are 48 police departments in the county. Send one to each police department say would you please show this at all you briefings for the next three days.

Male: I have to say when you show this at a PTA meeting I happen to believe this because I've seen you guys come out and do the gang stuff, and people say, oh my god, my kids got red shoe strings on, take those off. And I think if you start doing this with parents when they go home and they see on their kids books skater, they might say oh-oh, my kid might be doing this so maybe I better intervene.

Male: We have a monthly gang meeting of gang investigators throughout the county. Its getting big. We have a hundred easily. At least a hundred gang cops from all over the county. Southern California really because they come from as far away as San Diego, Riverside, out in there, San Bernadino. I've never seen that tape, that would be, you know, if we could get a copy of that we could show it at the gang meetings. Actually, it would be nice if they had a little better tape, a little longer, what's that about 5 minutes.

Jewel: I think its about ten minutes.

Male: Yea

Jewel: Well, six minutes and sixteen seconds.

Male: I'm having a seminar, Norm and I are putting on a seminar next week, over 500 cops over three days, we could make the time to show that.

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- Male: If they can provide a tape, we'll get it shown no extra charge for it.
- Male: And some school people too.
- Male: Yea, we can do it too.
- Male: There's no solution overnight on this problem.
- Male: But you've got to have education.
- Male: You've got to go through your education institutes.
- Male: But that tagger, the education isn't going to do anything for him. The education got effect him before he became a tagger.
- Male: Yea, that's true
- Male: The education for the tagger is oh if I do that, I've got to work 25 hours or 100 hours over here painting buses, I don't want to do that. That's his education.
- Male: Maybe a little different type thing. All these guys, whether you do you call them Taggers, gang members, if they paint graffiti, to me they're little criminals. They should be dealt with like criminals. I'm not in a rehabilitation program or anything like that. Catch them, book them, put them away. If you have to go after the parents, go after the parents. If we have do something in the schools, or something like a DARE program for the narcotics, why can't we have something like that.
- Male: You know one of the reasons I think the schools have been very good and effective is because previously we were dealing primarily with gang kids and with a gang kid if you get somebody you know is writing you can say, you know what, I continue to see that block up there I am going to transfer you to that high school --
- Male: You identify them --

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- Male: -- and he says, whoa that where the enemy is. I can't go there. They won't write. Not if you get bombers and taggers and they don't have that problem that can be different so a guy can get stopped that is going to be very important.
- Male: If a tagger tags a bus, you might consider having the bus tag a couple of taggers. Just one a week. Just roller them in front of the bus.
- Jewel: Is that tongue-in-cheek or is that a serious suggestion.
- Group:
- Male: That's serious
- Group:
- Male: Make public, you know, let the people know that there was a considerable amount of buses not coming to their community or they might decrease some of their services I believe that they might pay more attention to the bus.
- Male: Yea
- Male: All those ideas you mentioned were good ideas.
- Jewel: There are a couple of other things that have been thrown out by RTD. Things that they, you know, might possibly want to get instituted. Let me throw them out to you and see what you think. Local cities could be required to pay for the cost of repairing vandalism that occurs within the city. That would be one thing. There could be a tax on spray paint with the money to be used for the repair of vandalism and additional police protection of transit services could be provided by the county and the local cities, where, you know, the buses travel through. What would that do?
- Male: The aerosol tax was recommended at one of the meetings of the mayors task force on graffiti back in April of '86. Paint Lobbyists from Washington D.C. started coming down on Los

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Angeles trying to fight and oppose it that because that would have generated within LA County about 1-1/2 to 2 million a year, minimum. Instead, the mayors paint task force was established from the National Paint Coatings Association was started with \$100,000 donation and that was kind of a replacement for the 1-1/2 million it would have generated.

Male: Is the RTD a city government?

Male: County

Jewel: County

Male: Is a government right?

Male: Or is it a private enterprise?

Male: Or is it like public utilities

Male: No, its run by -- its under the supervision of the county board of supervisors department of transportation.

Male: They're always a possibility - we were discussing this before we came over - people may not buy off on making vandalism a felony but maybe they might buy off on making it a felony to vandalize any county, state or federal property, which would include the buses. Any governmental property. Now they might buy off on that, I don't know if anyone has ever attempted it. Now in the area of legislation you might think about that, making it a felony. That way you wouldn't have to worry about that \$2,000.00 limit which is there now. Because alot of these kids, you know, its a five dollar crime. Depending on what kind of paint they use and how big they write it. But if you could get the state legislators to pass a law making damage to any government property a felony, you can do alot of things. Cause once you guys get a guy on felony probation, you don't have to send them to jail the first time, once you get him on felony probation, he does it again, he's gone. He's history, he's in state prison. And

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you didn't even have to put him in jail. They just take him off the street and he's gone.

Jewel: And they got room for him there?

Male: State prisons, they, believe it or not, have alot more room than we have.

Male: In light of all the crimes that the police and sheriffs and all the police agencies are responsible for, one of the recommendations you that mention there, you know, cops to ride shotgun, or whatever you're talking about, you're talking about a very expensive proposition. We don't have enough cops and sheriffs to take care of the violent crimes. Just about every police agency will tell you the same thing that they're going from one felony call to another. In order to ride shotgun to prevent a non-violent, crime essentially, just isn't cost effective.

Male: Isn't even feasible

Male: I don't know if RTD would want to mess with the liability anyway. For awhile there RTD was letting police officers ride the buses free and that way they got some free security. I don't know what ever happened to it.

Male: I think that we had some -- they gave our officers the opportunity to do that, and we have our own Long Beach transit, but its the same theory and I'm sure the same things happen to our buses as happened there. But the officers felt it was kind of a liability, they didn't want to ride the bus. And, you know, you say 50 cents, but I take a chance to have to get involved in something off duty. Quite frankly it isn't worth our time to get involved in off duty situations like that. It wouldn't be worth it for me, I know.

Male: You would almost have to do it on a overtime basis for guys to get involved and it would be expensive.

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Male: Very

Male: Very expensive. They could probably hire private security alot cheaper.

Male: \$1,000.00 reward though, sounds like a pretty good idea.

Male: It only paid off three times and I was in Palmdale four weeks ago, the original estimate we gave for Palmdale was about fourteen months ago, I think. When I was back there four weeks ago, graffiti was next to nothing up there.

Male: Is that right?

Male: But then I can relate to that because I got stopped once.

Male: I think that might be a pretty effective idea.

Male: Maybe in Palmdale but I don't know about South Central LA.

Male: You could offer million dollar awards down there

Male: You're stepping out there for \$1,000.00 and get your head blown off.

Jewel: Let me

Group:

Male: Is it worth it to get your head blown off down there for \$1,000.00. There are worse things

Male: It is the photograph you know if you have _____ of film you just get the kids photograph. The City Attorney's Office said, "that's close enough", so

Male: They will probably start ratting on each other.

Male: Now, how do you find this kid? You know you take a picture of him and then you have to follow him around to find him.

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Male: You start riding around on the Goodyear Blimp.

Male: That's what law enforcement is for

Jewel: If it was your responsibility to develop a program of prevention, apprehension and penalization of vandalism and graffiti on RTD buses, what would you recommend. I would like to go around the table. One at a time, tell me. If this was your job to do this

Male: Stop it, slow it down or whatever?

Jewel: Everything

Male: Everything. First of all, like I've said, anybody caught, pull his bus pass, like I say, you might not prevent the graffiti from the outside but you can stop the graffiti from occurring on the inside. There is more than just graffiti and one of my jobs is reading reports throughout the city all day. We get assaults, numerous assaults on these buses at all times. If you can prevent some of the problems inside the bus that would be part of the solution. The other solution is stiffer penalty. Like maybe put out a reward type thing. Anybody helping with the conviction of so and so, you know, \$1,000.00, some people will start turning in their own buddies for that much money. Going after the parents. Some of these parents, they don't have nothing, you know. Some of them might be a waste of time, so just a stronger, more education in the schools. Better program. I've never, really like one of the guys was saying, this is the first time I've ever seen something like this, videos on the graffiti. A lot of people don't know, a lot of people don't use the buses. They are in their cars. They may see it every once in awhile but they don't know the big problem we are having with the graffiti. More education, maybe that might help slow it down a little bit. This problem is going to take time. Its going to take awhile to stop it. We've had graffiti going back 60, 70 years old. Its like this

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gentleman said, for some of these people, it a way of the culture. To me its, I hate to say it, but, I work with gang members, hard core gang members, and to be a gang member that marks up is like a dog who is leaving his mark. Those are some of my suggestions.

Jewel: Wes

Wes: Well mine are kind of all the same line with the police background. I think you start with the educational programs in the elementary schools at the earliest level, work over the evils of doing it, that type of thing, that will prevent some guys from doing it. But once they have decided to do it I think several suggestions we talked about, I think the cameras, I think the school teachers on the streets, some sort of program that would enhance that. Severe penalties for the perpetrators, severe ones. When I say severe, when we can't get time for murderers that's a problem, but I think the community service time for them, community service time for the parents, heavy fines. But again, fines don't do you any good if they don't have any money to start with.

Male: Or if you don't catch them.

Wes: Or if you don't catch them. So I think that the bus security, the camera in the back of the buses. If the RTD are putting out that many millions a year, it would be fairly inexpensive when you are talking in the millions. Put the cameras, particularly on those buses with the hot runs. The other side of the coin is to leave those buses alone in that area. Keep them on that route. Don't ever let that bus go anywhere else. Well that's not a -- that's back to letting them do it and get away with it. But maybe the people in that area will get sick of their buses being the ones that are torn up and they will come back and say why aren't our buses like the ones in Beverly Hills that aren't done that way. Well, do something about it. It may require, as Bob was saying, were talking about long term, because there is not a short term

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solution, but in the short term they may want to put some money into paying cops overtime to ride the buses. That would prevent some of the problem inside the bus but how is he going to know -- I'm sure that bus driver doesn't know unless we have the cameras that they are being painted on the outside.

Male: One of the things you mentioned there in the trouble spot areas, first advising the people of the problem and if the problem continues that the bus route will be discontinued because of the graffiti and let them know that RTD means business.

Male: RTD put out a flier by any chance to passengers that get on the bus. Have they ever tried that? That might be something.

Male: A flier to the passengers as they get on, laying out hey this is why your fares, you're always screaming about the RTD fares, that's one of the reasons they are up. You can't put \$9 million dollars into just graffiti abatement and not expect fares to go up.

Jewel: Charles

Charles: Well being a cop, you've got to catch them. So apprehension has be pretty sure. Probably the camera idea goes along with it. Maybe his idea about having teachers at bus stops after school in the hot areas, even if you pay teachers a bonus or something like that I would probably wouldn't cost alot of money. How much could it cost to have a teacher stand on a bus stop for half an hour. Maybe not just teachers, what about former gang members that know the gang members. We have gang cops that know the gang members. Every local police department has cops, you have probation officers, you've got alot of people already in place right now who know the gang members, you know if your talking about gang graffiti. And believe if you think things are bad now, wait until they get that bus running down Long Beach Blvd or that train. This is nothing. You haven't seen anything yet.

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Because they're building six stations right smack in the middle of south central LA, Compton, all the way to Long Beach.

Male: Its worse in Long Beach.

Charles: And everyone of those stations isn't going to fit to live in the day after its built, the day after it opens. And I'll tell you right now unless they do something, they better do something real quick because, I wish I had an answer for you, its going to be a combination of all of this. LAPDs got their program, we've got the same program, alot of the other schools, they have their programs that are already in place mainly teaching anti-drug curriculum and some anti-gang stuff. If you can get in touch with those people, the people who run those programs, and maybe have them show that video at their classes you would be hitting almost probably 75% of the 5th and 6th graders in LA County. And probably 100% of the ones in the hot area.

Jewel: Norm what thoughts do you have?

Norm: I think that Chuck is right on track. As I understand the question is, if you were the administrator you were going to clean up this particular problem with the Rapid Transit District alot of the things would be out of that persons hands. The ones that deal strictly with what they could do, as an administrator for RTD is distribute that to the police departments and awareness campaign, it is called an awareness campaign making law enforcement aware of what the problem is. That's a great start right there. Secondly, I think the reward for graffiti writers has considerable merit when you're taking that they are fronting the money for this campaign. They're paying out a million dollars for a particular problem a \$1,000.00 or \$2,000.00 or even.. if you lived in the barrio or the ghetto, your not going to come forth any bucks well raise it to \$5,000.00 \$10,000.00 or whatever, make it worth the guys while if he going to risk his life, make it worth his while

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to come forward and prosecute and even make a citizens arrest and apprehend so what I'm talking about is a reward system. And the last thing that I think I think this hypothetical RTD manager would have would be the anti-graffiti paint I hold a lot of store in that. In harding your targets. In other words make it more difficult for them make, I don't know what kind of glass, there is scratch-proof glass, that eventually that they get it all covered or they polish it out, that doesn't work anymore. They could start harding the target, the new buses they buy have the appropriate non scratch-able glass in it. Have it painted with the anti-graffiti paint to make it an easier clean up. They still are going to have to clean it up but they're going to do it like that instead of scrubbing on it for hours and days or whatever they have to do. So anti-graffiti paint, the reward system and the point I wanted to make, I would definitely have more than two officers working the enforcement section of this. Its ridiculous to have a system like that and only have two people. If that's their big concern I'd damn sure have more people out there doing what we thought needed to be addressed. I assume their thing is enforcement so I would recommend that they - I don't know how many buses they have - it would have to do with how much graffiti and things or how many trouble spots they have. They already identified these things. If I knew what was identified I could better say okay we need twenty officers, or thirty officers or whatever it is. But it's damn sure going to have to be more than two.

Jewel: Jay?

Jay: This is a little devious but I'd recommend a pilot arts program that draws in the taggers. Video cameras to film alot of that and whether you decide to continue that after three months or whatever, that would be the choice of RTD but the taggers are accessible and you're looking at probably about 300 taggers that are responsible for 90% of everything that you have in the way of tagging going on the bus. LA Beautiful is

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connected to some arts coordinating programs where they have access to a lot of the taggers that are out there. Proving that they're the taggers and all the kind of stuff is real difficult and I stay away from the phone numbers because my desire is towards the law enforcement side and I would like to catch them. But if you would start something like that with the video cameras down the road, they are already committed on film to their tag their symbol, whatever. Create a wall somewhere, give them a wall somewhere, let them but their tag on the wall. They have identified themselves, they show how they are. Down the road, if something should change and can't fund that type of a program anymore, their tag is up and you've seen their style, you've seen their work, you have it on video. The other thing, of course, is an anti-graffiti products. There's different products that are out and RTD has used graffiti resistant paints in the past but they haven't gotten into the coatings. The difference between the paints and the coatings are the body of the consistency of the product. The coatings have more of an orange peel effect of the outside of the bus but they last longer than the current paints that RTD is using. Basically, the same suggestions have been passed around the table as far as increasing the penalty. I'd like to see a restriction on access of aerosol paint. Increasing the penalty with the transit bill which is now 20 hours up to maybe 100 hours.

Jewel: John

John: Putting anti-graffiti coatings on the outside of the buses, whatever. What you got to remember is to hard core gang members, taggers, whatever, the biggest disappointment is that they don't get the recognition. As soon as it goes up you have to take it off. Some type of system where that bus ends it route it goes in and it goes off the line and into a cleanup process. And then a fresh bus comes in. Because their thing is recognition, the communication. As soon as we can get it off the better it will be. We

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talked about spray cans. Its not so much that they are purchasing them out here at the local stores, they can go to the swap meet and get them. That's where they get the spray cans and they can purchase any spray can they want at a lower cost, so that where we have to channel our attention is at the swap meets. That's where they purchase them. The other thing is stiffer penalties, your talk about the photos is really a good idea. Prosecute them, making it hard on them and giving them community hours and holding the parents accountable as well. You know, just making it really tough on them. We talked about something up in the valley, wire brush brigade. Don't give them a roller with nine inches on it give them a little toothbrush and let them scrub until their hand swells, you know, make it tough on them, after awhile, you know, your out there, summer is right around the corner, it get hot, you're out there removing graffiti, you get tired of that. You're too bombed out to do anything else, no energy left. And if you're really serious about moving it, you talking about anti-gang task force you almost need a graffiti task force. Someone who can understand the problem a little bit more.

Jewel: Ken

Ken: Okay, most of the guys have covered most of the areas I feel strongly and again I would like to emphasize the publicity aspect not only with the police but with the community should be made well aware coupled with the fact that knowing that if the problem doesn't cease in some the areas some of the services could be curtailed and I think that makes alot of people upset if they thought that would happen. The schools would definitely hold a key to it because most of the schools run special buses that run just for the youngsters and you have some very key locations that the youngsters stand there just to tag because they know its going to Washington its going to Fremont and its those key locations could be centered in particularly the different taggers that have these little rivals going on. It would keep the graffiti task force aware of

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aware of what taggers and which ones are having the little contests. That would also go well with having a contest, and I keep saying it, because I know the youngsters would come and you would get immediate identification, they would get what they want and I think the task force or anybody else would get what you need to start some identification process. Also, you would get a chance for some of these youngsters to get some of this anxieties out which is part of the problem. Also I think that the RTD along with the enforcement should deal with sweeps just like they do with gang sweeps. They should happen along some known tag lines where the bus runs. When I say sweeps I mean to have their officers on specific beat for the particular taggers. It wouldn't be hard to define those areas. Along with rewards I know it you were given \$5,000.00 reward some people would do it just to get the reward knowing that they wouldn't get much time in jail and that would be the biggest game in the world. I think a reward might be, make a lifetime bus pass or something like that might be more in line with fairness as far as turning someone in and getting a lifetime bus pass. More than just the cash outlay because I know people who run a gang just to do it just to get the money. I think that really you're looking at from a policeman's point of view you have to arrest, but if RTD wants to look at it, they're going to have to look at it from a social values have to be changed.

Jewel: Art?

Art: Okay I'm going to give my opinion on some of the things you mentioned over here, the citizen bus passes and the I.D.s, I don't think they're gonna have a large effect on the kids. It's just a personal opinion. I think that if you reduce bus services to certain areas, I think that they'll, that the people will not identify the problem. They will confuse themselves and get mad at RTD, rather than themselves, or their kids. So that's some of the things. I did write down some of the things that the other gentlemen said. I want to talk about them. Advertising and

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using us, the educational system I think is a good idea. I think that a lot of people are not aware how much it's costing and to point out in creative ways how much it's costing the average citizen and so on and so forth and to tie in all the graffiti, not just what's happening to you so that the people really do realize what a serious problem it is. Cleaning the buses, whatever the state of the art is, to being able to quickly clean the bus, even if you could clean it on the spot, I got an idea right now, I don't know how practical, it may create a new problem but if you could hire some youngsters to ride buses. To do two things, one is to clean the bus immediately and to identify and to photograph kids and they begin to do it. It may be well worth your money to do that. Particularly if you can identify areas where this is common. It's probably going to be more effective in getting teachers to take on that job because some teachers are _____, if though they're a little money hungry, they're not usually wanting to be in situations that are uncomfortable for them. They are the victims of having two thousand kids around them all the time. Sometimes they're afraid to make kids mad at them. Do whatever you can to create legislation that would make the stuff as unavailable as possible. If they're selling it at the swap meet then address that in some way to try and make it unavailable sort of like the drug problem. I'm not sure that would help anything but I think that everything has to be attempted. Prosecute always, always, always and hurt the parent as much as possible. I mean that in the sense of... doesn't that sound nice?-that's what we do in education, we make it inconvenient for a kid to attend school where we, 'your kid's messing up in school, he's going to go to that school over that and you won't like it over there' and so the parent can do a lot. We only do so many things. We can't hit kids, we can't do anything. The parent can take away the car, they can keep them from going out at night, they can stop him from using the telephone. All the kinds of things that really hurt kids. We can't do that kind of stuff. We

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can't hurt the kid, so if you hurt the parent,
the parent will hurt the kid.

Male: Maybe.

Art: Maybe. Yeah and those are the ideas that I have.

Jewel: Okay, Dave?

Dave: I'll be quick because most of it's already covered. I would agree with a contest, a tagging contest, only if it was used for intelligence and I.D'ing that little boys and girls were doing this. Primary education to me is critical. We know that primary education works. When we use kindergarten through eighth grade to develop things like DARE somebody needs to develop a systematic program for all kids. Public education is very important and it's gotta be focused on "IT COSTS ME", I'm the one it costs. Even if I don't ride a bus, it costs me. Photo-prevention, same way as we did with the monikers, you know we started to copy everybody's moniker, put them in the file and all of a sudden graffiti stopped. More RTD police. More interaction between RTD, law enforcement and schools and maybe it's because I'm out of the picture, but I haven't heard of RTD doing this kind of thing before so maybe there needs to be more of it. Target one line and find out what works, what the hell works, you know. Does a sweep work? Immediate clean up is my, is been my credo since I wrote this little booklet, immediate clean-up is the primary....even if it hurts the rider. It's too bad, those riders, those kids live in that community and some of them are children. I like the "we tip" kind of idea, the reward. School security. I wasn't really talking about school teachers because I think it would be impossible I was talking about the awareness of the school security person or the vice-principals, who aren't doing anything else in schools, should be or part of their thinking should be to get off the campus in the car, school car, and drive around. Community service for parents that I agree with. Flyers, the other one "what does it

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cost me the rider?" and I think that RTD ought to take a careful look at educational providers, the quest program, my particular school programs. I'd be more than willing to write just another short unit into my programs issuing over five hundred schools and going into all L.A. Unified Schools. With, if they would provide me with the material, I would provide a unit and a video so teachers could talk about this in school, especially the junior high school level.

Jewel: Okay, before we say good night, I would like to have you meet some people who probably already know you because they've been sitting behind the glass listening. These are some people from RTD and I think they may have some questions to ask you.

Group:

Jewel: This is Alice Wiggins.

Group:

Alice: I'm Alice Wiggins, I'm manager of marketing passenger communications for RTD and this is my boss, _____ who is director of marketing communications. We really appreciate all of your help here.

Male: We heard some really good things here. I had a couple of questions I want throw out real quickly because I know you want to break up. But somebody mentioned earlier where we could reach most of the fifth and six graders and I didn't catch how.

Male: That was the Paramount program. SANE and DARE are counterparts but essentially the Paramount program or those programs contact and teach anti-gang to fourth and fifth graders. It's a gang awareness, anti-join gangs and all the school districts use them...

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Male: No, not all of them.

Group:

Male: The theory is you gotta get them while their young, when they are still impressionable and you still have a captive audience. If you wait till they get in junior high school you might as well forget it because it's a lost cause.

Male: This is the best way to mount into the curriculum...

Jewel: David says no.

David: No

Male: The best way to get into the curriculum and I am very fond of DARE and SANE, but the best way to get into the curriculum is to start and give teachers kindergarten through sixth grade something to do each year so that the mind starts being formed when the kids are very, very young. While DARE and SANE are great, it's got to be systematic school-wide so there's got to be some incentive for my elementary school to say "This is going to be anti-graffiti week kids, we're going to do posters and we do it every year", kindergartners do it and sixth graders do it and every year it's repeated so the kids expect it. But there has to be an incentive there for school people because school people are reluctant to do anything but teach math and science and social studies. This is a new burden for them.

Male: It's just a new curriculum...

Male: It'll cost the school district money.

Male: That's why RTD...

Male: The big deal about that is where they just aren't funded for that type of thing. Curriculum is set down for your full year to begin with, so you have to contact unified school district.

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Male: Very difficult. That's what I do for a living. That's a very difficult process. Schools are reluctant to do it so it's got to be something with some big contest or some incentive that will make the principal say 'Oooh, we need this for our school'.

Male: And I can tell you why their reluctant.

Group:

Male: You'd have to do it district wide.

Group:

Male: It would have to be a large program. It would have to be a program that's agreed upon by the Board of Education so that everybody could do it and it has to be, the incentive has to be large enough to where you are giving away something so that the teachers is going to work at the level that the teacher works.

Male: See the fire department does it, Fire Prevention Week, they do it and they give contents and my kids, I remember my fourth grade prize for drawing the best fire prevention thing. That's what I'm talking about.

Male: Where does the L.A. County award come in?

Male: They have no real power. They're the ones who sign the checks.

Male: They don't, they don't do anything _____, because you have L.A. City School District and then you got the this school district and then you got the other one.

Group:

Male: You wouldn't want to use the county for their consulting services to propagate this kind of information, but they really don't have the power to say 'You do it. The local school board has the power.

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Male: Each, you'd have to contact each board.

Male: How about the use of a video in schools?

Male: It makes sense. How else...

Male: Powerful.

Male: Excuse me?

Male: Most powerful way kids learn today is through video. Their whole lives are video.

Group:

Male: What kind of address then would be worthwhile?

Group:

Male: Produce it, copy it, distribute it...

Male: I'd get it on T.V.

Male: Put a curriculum guide with it call me. Put it in service type things Saturday-Sunday morning.

Group:

Male: And like they said force law enforcement.

Male: _____ on that is we're gonna get copies, you know,...

Group:

Male: You talked about getting teachers involved, you know, outside the school at the bus stops and...

Male: Yeah, I really want to say...not teachers. I want to say an awareness for the school security and the school administration because they're patrolling anyway. We patrol everyday after school and what I'd like to do...what I think you might want to do is get them to understand that the school goes beyond the fence and that you know, your kids are actually clustering at

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Seventh and Jones Street bus stop and could you, could you do one of two things, could you keep an eye out there and if you observe a problem, could you call us and we'll send out the security people. Now that's worked for me, that's worked for you Art, it's worked for, you know, we did it all the time at the Sheriff's department. We would see a hot spot and we would call. We both converged on it. I would converge because I want to be able to identify my kids for you.

Male: Okay. Now if crime is progressive and I don't know that it is, but say that a young person starts off with little crimes and works their way up to big crimes. If that point could be gotten across, and it's a valid point, picking up on, on you know you mentioned that you've got so much violent things to take care of...now how could you give priority to the non-violent things, such as things like graffiti, but if it's progressive and we get the point across. If it's a valid point, if you stop a young person early in age and you look at graffiti as a crime as some of you said it was, and you punish it or do something with it, can that not be a deterrent for that person to graduate to certain future crimes?

Male: One of the things that got kicked around here was the social conditions that, and I think that if kids don't have respect for other people's property, they lose respect for a system period. I mean that's not saying that some graffitist is going to turn into a mass murderer tomorrow nor that a kid who smokes one marijuana cigarette is going to turn into a heroin addict, but he deals in that crowd that, that's, and it's a step toward getting heavier involved. We have people killed yearly in this town, lots of them, over graffiti. Simply over graffiti. A lot of people die just because of graffiti. How many kids have we found laying dead with, with the can still in their hand because they got caught by the wrong guys marking out graffiti so it's not a simple, it's not just....

Male: Well that gets back to the old ..._____ if

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death is not a deterrent that what is.

Male: Yeah right, and you've got, you know, you've got people who are willing to die over that.

Group:

Male: They're willing to kill over it.

Male: I want to thank all of you for your discussions and your suggestions they were really great.

Jewel: And I'd like to add my thanks to all of you.

Alice: There is a seminar coming up and there's going to be a lot of taggers at it very shortly.

Group:

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Jewel: My name is Jewel. This is a research company. This is all we do is research. We've asked you to come here tonight because we're interested in what you know and what you think and what kind of help you can give us as far as the problems of graffiti and vandalism are concerned. We're interested in finding this information out for the Southern California Rapid Transit District, the "RTD". They have a tremendous problem with vandalism and graffiti on the buses. It costs them about \$9,000,000 a year to try and clean it up and deal with it and they're not even getting all of it so it is a tremendous problem and we feel that you young people have some ideas, you have some knowledge about why these are being done, how they're are being done, what can be done to prevent them and that's what we want to talk about tonight. But, before we get started, I would like for you to tell me who you are and whatever you care to tell me about you and what your experiences are. Could we start with you Derek?

Male: My name is Derek Franklin I work for graffitti for the Lennox area and, my main job is just to keep the walls clean, talk to the youth and just tell them not the things to do and so far they seem to be listening but there's always a few just continue on writing but I'm getting through to them so...it's just a matter of time.

Female: My name is Judy Herrera and I work on the Graffiti Abatement Unit for Community of Gangs Service and I've been with them over two, three years. I worked as a crisis intervention worker and then I got transferred to a sports activities we had and then I came to the grafitti unit.

Male: My name is Warren Pierce, I work for the Community of Gangs Service Grafitti Abatement Unit, I do the contracting for Cal Trans taking the graffiti off the freeway walls. I've been doing it for about two and half years already keeping the freeways clean.

Male: My name is Sean_____ I'm a consultant for Gang

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Violence Reduction Project. I work with the youth and grafitti removal also.

Male: Dan _____ and I work also with the Gang Reduction Project. I'm a consultant and I do a little bit of removing graffiti but mostly stopping gang violence on the streets.

Male: My name is Eric _____ and I work for with Gang Violence Reduction Project. I worked a lot of years with graffiti removal neighborhood beautification and things like this. I also work as a consultant and activities director for our unit.

Female: My name is Leticia _____ I work for Gang Violence Reduction Project. I work with the graffiti removal and...

Female: My name is Martha _____ and I also work _____ their agency and, I started out _____

Male: My name is Hector _____ and I'm the supervisor for the Lennox area for the graffiti unit. We sandblast the walls and we do paint outs and we also do special projects on weekends.

Male: My name is Daniel Martinez, I am the graffiti component manager for Youth Gang Services. I have been employed with them for eight years. Four years as a CIW worker, Crisis Intervention Worker, and four years in the graffiti unit. I pretty much trained most of these guys working for the program and I supervise the South Central district from Lennox to Lynnwood, Compton, Watts, _____. And I also do murals in the involvement of crime reduction.

Male: My name is Julius _____ I also work for Gang Violence Reduction project. I have worked with graffiti as well as reducing the violence out there.

Jewel: Ok, by way of starting the evening, we'd like to

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show you a video tape.

Male: Turn around a little bit.

Jewel: Can everybody see?

VIDEO

Jewel: Okay that's what the problem is. I would like to knowI would like you to tell us what your specific experiences are or have been with this type of vandalism and graffiti why these things are done suggestions. Dealing with the perpetrators, what kind of penalties that can be imposed that would be effective, what is appropriate. What works, what doesn't work. How do you catch these people? How do you prevent these things from happening? This will be a very informal discussion, if you have something to say, please say it. Just don't all talk at once, because then our mikes can't pick it up.

Male: Could I ask you a question?

Jewel: Sure.

Male: Do you know, or do they know is that the same kind of statistics for other, for other...for like the Orange County Busses, for the Ventura Busses, or just RTD.

Jewel: What you just saw here is just RTD. It is just the Southern California Rapid Transit District.

Male: Yeah. I know that they were only talking about that but....

Jewel: I am sure that it is a problem all over. But we are concerned primarily with RTD. If you know of anything that worked some place else or anything that you have heard of or ... you know whatever you can contribute.

Male: Well what type of graffiti guard coatings are you putting on the busses right now.

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Jewel: What type of what?

Male: Coatings:

Jewel: Could you explain that?

Male: Graffiti guard coatings. What we use is a polyurethane coating. Well we mainly use it on walls. It is a two part component with a silicon base and a polyurethane finish. And with that you could use a solvent that would take off the graffiti alot faster. Alot easier. Do you use any applications of that. On RTD's that you are aware of?

Jewel: Do you know if they do anything like that.

Female: I believe that RTD does have it...we did ...we were doing an _____ in the Northeast area which is councilman's Alotory's area. We were doing a sting operation for RTD which didn't come down as well as we thought it would. We were on the ...Morengo and...I think they showed the same one on Beswick and Morengo.

Jewel: Could you explain what a sting operation is?

Female: What we were doing is that we cleaned up the whole bus station and LAPD was supposed to be there...we came in and cleaned it up. We left. And then we waited for the kids to come out of school. And LAPD was supposed to be there to actually catch these youths writing.....

Male: A surveillance program.

Female: Which didn't hold out very good because no kids came in and wrote on the walls...like two days later there was nothing on the walls so it didn't really work. But I believe that RTD is using sulfate as a cleaner. They are using the black and blue label.

Male: Well with the sulfate they don't need a graffiti guard coating.

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Female: So that's what...they are using that already.

Male: But they are using a graffiti guard coating on their walls.

Female: On some of their walls.

Male: On their walls. But on the busses.

Female: On the busses, the sulfate will knock it off the windows.

Male: Because we even do a wet sandblast on some of the bus stops.....

Male: Was in the text book that they were making this kind of stuff for vehicles.

Male: For vehicles that stuff is polyurethane coating.

Male: That's what they use now?

Male: Yeah. That's probably what RTD is using now.

Jewel: Tell me what you know about this type of vandalism?

Male: You showed right there. You know the tigers.

Male: You know groups hanging around together.

Male: They are all tagging. They are all doing the same tagging.

Female: And the thing is we met a few youths at RTD there thing is like it explains on the film. Their name is being from here in LA to Hollywood, it is being shown all over the place. Those busses go from here to Chino and back.

Male: Free advertising.

Female: Free advertising.

Male: Because it makes them feel good. Macho.

Male: Then you also have the feeling that one of them

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was talking about. Challenge of getting out there and getting away with it.

Female: Right.

Male: Plus in New York, Chicago, those places that have sub-ways you know they did the tagging and the bombing over there...so now these guys are trying to compete with that.

Jewel: What is bombing?

Male: That is the larger block letters that are filled in

Male: Different colors. All different colors together.

Male: Or even if they are just two colors a black outline with the grey inside. That is a bombing because it is a larger....

Male: Like in that movie they showed. You have the bombing in there. On the Morengo wall.

Male: Where it said cash in there in the little box.

Jewel: What were you going to say Dan?

Dan: I was going to say that one of the things....like the program that we work for...we work for the whole neighborhood you know like Sean and some of the others, myself, and some of the others in the program. We work with the actual gang members that are writing on the walls and they get together, not all, but some of them, go out and remove their own graffiti. But these young men over here, these young guys need somebody to help them, you know, somebody to reach them, so that they won't continue doing that. Because they are like addicted to it.

Jewel: How do you do that?

Male: You gotta get to some of the leaders.

Male: You have to have programs and live with those

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programs. You gotta develop the leaders in there.

Jewel: Okay. What kind of programs?

Male: Well like one of the programs that we have. We hire the gang member that works or lives or is from that particular neighborhood, that particular gang. And he represents the neighborhood and he works with the whole neighborhood. And they work not only with graffiti but with all the other problems that are there.

Jewel: How do you find them?

Male: They are there!

Male: That is why they are hired. It is because of their expertise. You know like we are doing on our stuff also. Because of our background and where we come from that's where our education comes from instead of from a college book. Ours comes from the streets. And that's who we deal with, the people from where we come from. We are able to....

Male: _____ in our neighborhood.

Male: You gotta hire us to get to them.

Male: You can't just get some things from _____

Male: Plus they have to have a positive attitude and want to do good for their neighborhood. To clean up you know and help out.

Male: You don't get nothing for nothing. You know, in order to get something you have to give something in return.

Jewel: Okay. Elaborate on that.

Male: Okay. It would be finding whatever your main problems are...you know some of the locations, but they have no way to make contact with those

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youths. You find someone that can and you find what would be an alternative for them. Like what I have done in the past, I have done murals. I give them a mural or in their case since they already artistic give them a wall where they are able to put this graffiti up. All these kids that do the graffiti or the bombing what they do is, once they do it they will take a picture of it right, and they will send it to this magazine in New York and they will be entered into a contest. And the ones that win you know they get recognition, their pictures will be photographed and posters circulated throughout the United States. And since they can't do it legally, you know get someone to sponsor them, who will go out and buy the paints and everything, they will do it illegally and then it becomes more of a challenge and more excitement. So that would be an alternative for it. You get a wall, say you have bus stops, let them decorate them for you. These guys are artistic, you know, they have the capabilities of doing something that not only would be a creation of their own, but if you have an idea they will represent maybe for ...like in your case the RTD System, something that would be joining not only the RTD System but the community involved around there. Whether it be black, brown, white or whatever. And you let them put up something from cultural to futuristic or whatever. You would not only be getting participation and not having colors forced upon them. Or things that they have to see, because how much does the community have you know as far as the say-so in what billboards or this bill board that they have to see advertising some sun tan lotion, you know, and the neighborhood is black, you know. Who wants to buy sun tan lotion there. Or you know the colors there, they don't go along with the area there, you know the white and pink you know, you know in my neighborhood, I wouldn't want white and pink you know...stripe busses going through it.

Jewel: What color would you want?

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Group:

Male: What he is saying is thatif you look all over the city around here. If you looked at it through someone else eyes.... you would say hey RTD busses are putting graffiti up everywhere, man, every corner I go to is an RTD sign, an RTD bus, initials of RTD, the colors of RTD, they are putting their stuff all over, they are tagging the community. And they have paid these firms from all over Madison Avenue to go out there and do it. And what Danny is saying is; maybe you pay these kids to do something else, and decorate their own community, and maybe it still says RTD but maybe in another way.

Male: You know for instance in the neighborhood that I grew up in is full of courts. You know me and my home boys we used to write on the walls. And we used to have some guys there ringing fire alarms and you some guys just did. Stealing and all that stuff like that. Well the community got together there, some of the community based agencies, you know the fire department, the merchants association, got together with some of the guys and were willing to speak with them in meeting. And so they asked what can we give you so that in exchange you guys won't be ringing fire alarms, you won't be stealing from our stores, and stuff like that. And we told them, we have alot of walls in our neighborhood, how about if we paint murals, you know. So we got the fire department to donate the scaffolding, we got the merchants to donate the paint, we got hamburger stands you know to kick down and have BBQ's for us and stuff like that. And we got a mural project going and the whole neighborhood all they talk to you about is that the Court has the largest mural project in the whole world. That is at Olympic and Marino.

Jewel: How would this translate into RTD's problem?

Male: You would have to hire someone that knows how to get through to the younger people that are doing the damage to the RTD busses. So that they could be the advocate for you, you know.....

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Male: It is like what Danny said earlier, and that was you don't get nothing for nothing.

Jewel: Okay. So that is what I said. Tell me about it.

Male: Well he is telling you...some of the interests that these kids or gang kids have, you trade it off forwell we will give you a baseball team...we will help you with a scholarship...we will do these other things. RTD will trade off those things and in turn you leave their stuff alone.

Male: Hey, we are not saying that RTD doesn't at this time. They might be making some very nice donations you know...how many are actually given and making an impact in the barrio?

Male: How much of it reaches the streets. How many of the youths know that it came from RTD if in fact....

Male: It is like right now I do graffiti removal in Lynwood where they have the new transit system being built. You know it is going to be providing the rail system I guess from Long Beach to LA. And those walls, as soon as RTD is putting them up, you know, the structures of them the foundation of them, they are being written up like crazy. Now those are excellent walls, that the riders wouldn't even be able to see those walls. But if RTD wants to keep them nice they should give those walls to the community that sees the graffiti. Let them have an alternative to it. You know open up contests for them. You know make it where the ones that does the nicest mural or something will get to keep it up there for say an existence of three years or more. You know and maybe a scholarship with it. Because you have got guys that are from the barrio that don't have the education.

Jewel: That are from where now?

Male: The barrio, the community.

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Jewel: Yeah.

Male: And they don't have the education or they can't afford to get the education that they would like to follow up on that particular field which most of them are artists. You know give them some scholarships so that they can advance themselves, you know where, that it is not something where it is a rivalry or something of destruction, but it is where it is something positive. You know.

Male: You know, I wonder how many of those kids that are actually doing all that writing, know how much it is costing RTD, it said right there in the video, Nine Million Dollars. Just imagine, if they could get some of that money and work with these kids they are putting up that graffiti. You know get one person to represent a whole group or two or three whatever, to begin to work with his own neighborhood, or community or those friends of his who are actually doing that writing. You know they could have an impact. That is what is happening with some of the other neighborhoods again, that I came from, just as an example. The neighborhood that I came from has a long history of graffiti. And what was it..about ten years ago it is decreasing. You can go by there and there is hardly...you don't see any graffiti at all. And it is happening in all the rest of the neighborhoods around it. They are catching, you could say, the vision, the spirit, or just you know...it just seems right...yeah, they are seeing a change in the community, they are bringing a change in the community, and it's because of them. They are the ones that put it up and they are the ones that are taking it off.

Jewel: You are awfully quiet Garrett.

Male: I'm just listening. No suggestions.

Jewel: How do you find these people?

Male: Well you have to hire

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Group:

Male: New programs such as ours.

Male: You have to catch these people and ask them what they want.

Male: Yeah like you know, like with our job, we caught alot of these taggers doing the tagging and the bombing on the on the Soto Morango wall. And alot of them, they wanted to get into contests. They would like to do it for people in their stores, you know as advertisements for them, you know to make money.

Group:

Male: Some stores do let them do that. Some guys are real talented with their bombing and tagging you would be surprised.

Male: Nice stuff.

Male: All you do is need to work with them.

Group:

Male: They don't have the time you know to hire the people to do the work, you know, to work for RTD. You could fund into programs such as theirs and ours and us be the mediators of it, you know. But we do the dealing with them and we handle the dealing and if we are not successful and then they don't continue to fund us, you know. But we felt, and I am sure, you know, them as well as us _____ you know. Like you said the graffiti is going down there little by little.

Male: There has to be something a change into the community because you know, everything isn't brought on because the people want it like that, you know, as far as drug selling or violence or crime or whatever, it is not because the people want it, sometimes it is just that the community has no choice but to survive through that

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system.

Male: You know that he said that they said that it was Nine Million Dollars being spent. The agency, Youth Gang Services started with One point Three Million Dollars, just servicing just the city and half the county with One Million Dollars. And here they spent Nine Million, an extra Eight Million is just going down the drain. At the bus terminal where they wash them.

Male: And then alot of these kids that are writers, they are not so much gang members. They are writers. There is a difference in their style. Which might eventually become gang members such as Rockwood you know. Rockwood were Taggers before, and now they are gang members.

Male: Yeah. Hardcore.

Male: Yeah. And they are pretty strong.

Group:

Male: A much younger group. To them, most of them started up in this area out this way, Hollywood. And then down to East LA.

Male: And then one of the things with graffiti is that, is that you can reverse it. If they were once artists in the sense, you know putting on graffiti and now they are moving into becoming a hard core gang member, well then, you need to reach them to take off that graffiti again, so that will stop them from identifying to be a hard core gang member because you know, we know, most of us here know, that graffiti can get somebody killed.

Jewel: Could you elaborate on that?

Male: So what I am saying, in other words, is that we want to stop gangs from coming up, and gang violence in our inner cities, then we have to put a stop to graffiti.

Male: More of that on the killing is what he is

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talking about over the graffiti is that if I wrote my name whether it be on your bus or your wall or something and he came from across town or I was in his neighborhood and I wrote in his neighborhood, which we are talking about the territorial rights...and he crosses me out...then most likely I am going to go back and beat him up and if he could beat me up, then I would have to take something with me to make sure that I don't loose, right. So it could eventually end up in a death which most of the time it does.

Female:

Male: Like in our program, what we do right now, because we have been trying to combat the problemswe don't have the money really, actually, to put into the communities, you know, to the barrios, to give the services that are really needed. But what we do, is by working with inter agencies and working with the resources that we have developed, you know, on a low budget, we try to create whatever we can. Like what we have tried is not only working with the gang member himself, but also into the prevention stages of that, working with the youth. We have a component that is called, Career Paths, and by working in hand with the gang to combat gang homicide, gang related homicides, is that we deal with working with the youth at a stage before they get involved into that. Working with the elementary's you know, teaching them and schooling them, and you know, just letting them know what is happening and what the alternatives are at that stage before they find out that it is too late, because they went through it, or because they are following in their brothers footsteps.

Male: Well one of the things too that we can't say, if there isn't money or something like this for a program to develope out of this whole meeting here. Because there is. Now I remember when the Olympics were coming around to LA they did everything that they could to clean up everything. So I mean, somebody can't tell me

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that it can't be done.

Male: But once the tourists left it was like they forget about the City. They even helped out the homeless. You know.....

Group:

Jewel: Do any of you know of any other methods of prevention that have been tried in other places successfully to prevent this type of vandalism and graffiti. I mean have you heard of any programs?

Male: Other than reinforced by law. No.

Male: Well in the City of Montebello they offer rewards.

Jewel: Could you tell me some more about that.

Male: Well they offer rewards for graffiti. They offer \$500.00 reward to anybody that will identify or testify against someone that they know that they can identify as the writer.

Jewel: Does that work?

Male: There is no writing in Montebello.

Male: It doesn't work 100%.

Jewel: Could you tell me some more about that?

Group:

Male: You know one of the things too that you are talking about Montebello, East Los Angeles, Pico Rivera, City Terrace, City of Commerce, you know some of these other areas where at the time gang violence is really heavy really up. It has decreased, so along with that went the graffiti. You know, and as a result of these programs right here, it is successful in bringing down the violence and the graffiti, so therefore, you don't see too much of it.

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Male: It is almost like the bus company saying, we don't care if you kill yourselves, sell dope to each other, do your neighborhood in, we don't care what you do...but when you write on our busses you cost us money and we want that part resolved. We will pay a consulting firm, we will pay you, we will look into all that, but they are not looking at why is everybody writing on these walls and putting up this kind of graffiti except for the taggers, maybe, it is a whole gang element. Rtd is not going to deal with the whole gang element. They just say don't write on our walls because it costs us money, don't write on our busses. It makes our business look bad. But it is in effect of a long term problem and that is what he is talking about. If you...if somebody doesn't deal with the long term problem, because that is just one extension of the long term problem is the writing.

Jewel: How do you deal with the long term problem?

Male: You mean how does RTD deal with it or how does....

Jewel: No. You tell me how you would deal with it.

Male: One of the ways is just from my personal view, is that these people are doing it for a reason. You know, and you have to take that reason away. Number one, like he said, they don't realize what they are doing. And you probably will not believe it, but, all of us were not...I used to do that myself. I enjoyed it alot. It was an addictive thing. You mentioned addiction, and I started with just a little bit and I went into full _____. I would go into a place, like here, I would have my name about seven times already just by being here. I would have it on her chair, on the walls outside, in the elevator, and I didn't realize I was costing somebody money to replace it and clean it. And it was to me in a big building so these people got money what do they care. That was just my mentality. Nobody sat me down and told me, look at all this money, manpower, work, tools, and

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all that. Maybe I wouldn't have cared, but what I am saying is it is not being realized. And all that was happening to me was a bigger addiction. I wanted to do it more. Bombing wasn't popular at that time, but I would put block letters as big as I could reach with a spray can in about two to three minutes. And I was proud of it. That is another thing talking about the artists. I used to write my name, and if I was with a home-boy and he couldn't write good I said you don't write. I would write my name your name and his name. Because you guys write my stuff. We wanted you know...if somebody was there that wrote better than me, say you put on....they wrote it.

Group:

Male: Yeah. Whatever it took.

Male: Each guy would climb on top of the other guy.

Male: Like some of these RTD bus stops like you see on the freeways on the top of thethe overpasses...they jump up on the top of that thing and spray, spray paint up there real big, or hang over the thing.

Group:

Male: Somebody out there I wanted to do it and his friend it would become more popular.

Jewel: How did you stop?

Male: It is a long story. But I'm saying, in other words to us it was popular, good, and reinforced itself. You need to get the message out there that it is not good.

Jewel: How do you get that message out?

Male: Well if you are talking masses you have to take it to the media. The media is out there and we don't want to see just some marketing commercial. You put something that relates to us. In a black community you put something that

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relates to them. You know, we relate to Cheech and Chong and this man from zoot suit _____, and you know, and you get them up there and start saying, hey, stop writing on the busses where my quanta and my sister and my kid gets on and sees all this, your making our casa look like....we will listen to that....see...you get the black actors and sports people that they look up to in the community and you get them up there and you start telling them how things really are in the community. So that is one way. Radio and TV and you know. Alot of positive direction.

Male: Like the regular posters that they put up on the busses and all that....you know the difference with those posters to some other kinds of advertisement on the busses, you know, which one is actually being written up more. Which one has the message for the community that's not being....

Jewel: Which one does?

Male: Well I have never seen a Raider poster written on.

Male: They respect them.

Group:

Male: You know we are against vandalism and all that. Well you know, let's get down to the community and say well you get to go to this home game man, here is some tickets you know, and you don't write on our busses when we ride through your community you know. And just different things see what works. There is researching right.

Jewel: That is what we are doing now.

Male: But what we have done in our job, which we don't have enough funds to provide it all year round, but during the summer what we will do is get City or County funds and what they have is CETA...it is not CETA anymore, but... and we will hire the actual gang members that do the

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graffiti writing and they will be working removing the graffiti.

Jewel: Yeah. But how do you find them. How do you know which are the gang members that are doing the writing.

Male: That is our specialty.

Group:

Male: It is just like the cops the way they stereo type a person. You know. We know who the graffiti taggers are, you know.

Male: In other words, the average person in the street isn't going to know.....it is not his job, and it is not his interest to know. John Q Public walking down the street, he don't know a tagger from anybody else. But we do.

Male: We know, because we live next door to them.

Male: Our background. _____ to them and they sometimes live in our own house.

Group:

Male: But you know, one of the things too, is that it can be done. It can be done. Because I am pretty sure, _____ we used to do it. But we don't do it anymore. Because we are coming against that kind of thing. We want the community clean, we want our city clean, you know we don't want our names up there, and then mom sees it and says oh man, is that my kid.

Group:

Male: So that is the only way that you are going to do it. You develop a program or something to get a hold of the person who is doing it so that he can begin to take it off and he can see that...you know what, it looks alot better clean than all the writing on the wall. And it can happen. It is happening in some parts of the

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community.

Male: See because every generation will fade out but then there is a new one to replace it. So you have to work with the generation that exists now. And the one that will be coming in next, following their footsteps.

Male: Show the new ones.

Male: Like he said. You know it is a matter of getting the proper funding you know to help out hire more youth. Get them involved. Get them into positive thinking.

Male: See this is not only RTD's job alone. It is all, the City the Government, the Schools, everybody pitches in to set up a program that way. If it is graffiti removal or sporting events, or whatever it is. You all push together...see all the businessmen it hurts them too. Well they have to give some money too. RTD....well they are giving up money in other ways...they are just wasting it. You know just washing all this....they are trying to come up with a super duper heavy duty remover and the super duper that lasts long but comes off easy when you want it to be clean...and in a way they are blowing money that way. They are not stopping the problem, you are stopping the effect.

Male: And your not even stopping....

Male: Yeah. You are just inching it away.

Male: You have to go to the source of the problem.

Male: And they are not ready to deal in that capacity, I am going to write to the president about it.

Jewel: How do you know they are not?

Male: Well maybe they are....but I haven't heard about it. We have been working with them off and on. RTD and everybody trying to save..you know stop this graffiti or slow it down.

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Male: Yeah. What is the best product. I mean one day..._____ used to work for us...he brought in some Tigers that he was working with...and this one kid, they were talking about...they were talking with Jay Beswick, you know Jay Beswick...they were talking with him, and they had some workers in the _____, and Jay was telling them aboutoh our cleaner will clean that stuff up...this one kid pulled out a marker, I don't know what it was...he said this stuff will penetrate glass. A marker that will penetrate glass. You know, these kids know that is going they know what RTD can take off, what they can put on. And the more they come up with the deeper that they look into something that lasts longer, and is harder to work with.

Male: Well you see what is the trick about it is...it is not only the problem of the merchants, the business and all that...it is also a problem of the homeowners, but in the long run it is the homeowners that are actually paying more than anybody else, because the value of the properties decreases because of the surroundings or because of the graffiti on their own property or next door...but most of the people that are doing the graffiti don't come from families that own those homes and stuff so they don't care about them. So there has to be...so in the long run what it breaks down to is that programs have to be provided to counseling and direct positive direction provided to the youth that are doing the graffiti. There has to be someone touching them, helping them.

Male: It has got to come to it in a number of ways, like he is saying through those channels, through media, through awareness, through making people aware, and to offering them other outlets and whatever Dan is going to say right now.....

Group:

Male: United Way has accepted that. You know they give donations and stuff like that to communities or agencies and they are getting the

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effect that they have which is very positive. Because they deal with them and they give it toDan is a specialist there and he is up on his program and he will know how to handle that. And I won't have to. And I will have a set budget, and I know it is not going to decrease, or fluctuate or anything like that. And he knows what he is doing.

Male: See the whole thing is not only just to remove the graffiti because anybody can do that. But it is reaching the person that is putting it up there. See if there is a name up there and you just keep on taking it off, you never know who that person is....until you go and meet that person, you just tell him, why are you doing that. You know there is something else. Bring another spirit to him. Bring some other kind of mentality to him, you know. Like a change of life, you know, and you tell him, that hey, you know what, that's not right. You know you can tell him, you can talk to him, and you can probably help him change and alot of times, alot of these kids do change. But you know what, they just need that help, they need that direction, and you know what, they can do things positive and constructive. And I think that the best way to reach them is to find someone that they can relate to. Someone that they respect, you know, then people like them will make them realize that they know the world is good.

Jewel: Give me an example of someone that...

Male: One from the neighborhood. One of them.

Male: Right.

Group:

Male: Someone that represents their area. See if I go into my neighborhood and I tell them they will respect my word. Because I will give them something in return. Like me and _____, are from the same area. And there is one owner, a guy that owns a business, one day we will paint his wall...and the other day he asks me...that

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he was going to donate a car. Help with group with the people in the area, the community, donate...he gave them meals, he said community and he will donate a car. _____ You know you got to give something back to get something. Like everybody keeps on saying.

Male: Tell her what that lawyer thing did when you guys were.....

Male: Like the other day they were writing....there was some writing in my neighborhood, and I had to go and remove it, and we were painting in an alley right behind the lawyers office, and the lawyers came out and then _____ it was in my own neighborhood right, and my own boys were always writing on their office, okay, so what he did, he told us, instead of writing on our office I will hire you to keep it clean. You know so they hired him, they hired the home-boy that was writing on the wall...they hired him to keep it clean, they hired him to do jobs around there, you know, around his business, to he was giving them something to get something. Keeping his office clean you know.

Group:

Male: They have a relationship now.

Male: See most of these people who write on walls, see they won't write on somebody's wall that they know. But if they know that person they won't write on that wall anymore. Or...on a bus...see RTD guys like _____ these guys, they won't go back and write on the bus because they know that RTD gave us this or that. And plus they got paid for it. They got paid to clean it up. That is something that I painted and that I am proud of.

Group:

Male: So now it has been over a week, and that building was being written on everyday. You know they would paint it every month. But it just so happened that he had seen me painting in

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the alley you know...and asked who is this guy and this and that and I told him you could get him and hire him and keep it clean. It worked out real good.

Male: And _____ would employ a lot of people man.

Group:

Male: Then they even hired them to keep their yard clean. They helped him out on the lot you know. Now he not only has himself a little job he ain't writing on the wall no more.

Male: It is what we call putting back into the community what is being taken away.

Male: You know the people pay to ride your busses, the people....they pay to ride them

Male: Notice how they went up I remember when I was taking RTD it was only about \$.35 cents now what is it....

Group:

Male: You know what that makes me mad. Getting kicked out from school and you can't take the RTD bus. That is where alot of it comes from.

Male: You know that brings up a new spirit to the community. They feel alot better toward themselves. Because the community now is not dirty and all written up. That brings a new spirit, a positive not a negative _____ not caring about it.

Jewel: Let me tell you about some of the things that RTD is doing and thinking about doing. And I would like to know how you feel about those things. One of the things that they are doing right now, is

Group:

Jewel: We are going to have a transcriber.

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Male: Can we see it after it is written up.

Jewel: Sure.

Group:

Jewel: Okay. One of the things that RTD is doing right now is that they are taking away the student bus passes from juveniles who are caught vandalizing RTD Busses.

Male: Yeah. That is good.

Jewel: Now what this does, is that it forces that juvenile or that family to purchase a new pass. Another thing that they are doing right now is that they are revoking student ID's for repeat offenders. The students ID allows the student to buy a monthly bus pass at a discounted rate. If they take this ID away from the student, then it causes the student to pay full fare when he rides the bus. Now one thing that they are thinking about doing, or that they could do, is that they could actually reduce RTD service to fund the clean-up activities. Now what this could possibly do would result in fewer buses, that run less often. But the busses that do run wouldn't have any graffiti or etched windows on them.

Male: There a _____

Jewel: Well tell me about it when I'm finished.

Male: Okay.

Jewel: Another thing that they can do, is that they can by-pass what they call hot spots. Like if a driver on a particular line runs into acts of vandalism then the radio dispatch center would be notified and all the busses that are on that line would be instructed to by-pass that particular stop. So what this would do is that it would cause riders who were waiting at that stop to get on the bus to be passed by and it would also prevent passengers from getting off

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the bus at that stop.

Group:

Jewel: Another thing that they could think about doing is that if a particular bus is vandalized, the bus driver could order all the passengers to leave the bus and the driver could take the bus to the nearest division for clean up and repair. Now what this would do, it would cause the passengers to experience disrupted service while they were waiting for the next bus in order to continue their trip.

Male: But it is also hurting the people that are not even doing anything wrong.

Male: Right.

Male: And also alot of ones that are writing they are not there to get on the bus they are just waiting for the bus to come by and write on them and take their names on down the street.

Jewel: Okay. One more thing that they could do is they could examine locations where alot of vandalism and graffiti take place and they could eliminate a bus stop at that location, or they could eliminate several stops or they could discontinue service through the area. Or they could eliminate an entire bus line. These are some things that could be done.

Male: Who funds RTD?

Jewel: Who funds RTD?

Male: Where do they get their money from?

Jewel: Where do you think they get their money from?

Male: I am asking you?

Male: The people who ride the bus?

Jewel: That is one place certainly. And in essence the people who rides the busses are paying for this

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clean-up. The fare has to increase in order to accommodate it.

Male: And they get supplemental money right?

Jewel: From the County?

Male: Yes.

Jewel: Right.

Male: So they are going to....it is discrimination. You know what I mean. They are going to discriminate against a certain area, but yet they are going to use their tax money, and he has to walk to the next bus stop and get on and the money is still going to go back to RTD.

Jewel: They may not do this.

Male: No I'm saying....No I understand it is hypothetical

Jewel: What would it do? Would it accomplish anything.

Group:

Male: No. They will just go to the next bus stop. And pretty soon they are going to have no RTD...Then we are we going to put the money. See you only going to have from Wilshire to Anaheim to El Monte people are _____ and they are....where are the graffiti going to go...they are going to go to the next bus stop and they are going to write there too. And then that becomes a hot-spot and they are going to eliminate that one and pretty soon you are going to have ten stops in the whole city or county and that is not going to work. The whole city and county is paying the money to supplement RTD. So it is my fathers taxes being spent on it he should not be losing the service. So

Male: You know if they cut off a certain stop _____ that is paying RTD for their advertisement and no one is going to be going to that bus stop the bus has been discontinued you

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are also being unfair to that buyer of advertisement.

Male: So why did they

Male: Well revoking the student bus pass I mean, if that kid goes home and gets a whipping because he got his pass taken away because he wrote on the bus he is going to mess up that bus even more. And make sure that he doesn't get caught next time.

Male: He will write on a Mercedes.

Male: He will tell his friends, you know this is what happened they will get together and they will even vandalize it more.

Male: I feel that it is wrong that they should take it. If they find somebody it is different. The people they catch they should take them over there to clean it up.

Group:

Male: You could also fine them. Even a big fine they won't do it again.

Group:

Female: In the City of Downey, if you are caught writing on the walls in the City of Downey there is \$1,000.00 and if your under age your parents have to pay that fine. And there is 100 hours community service. We just had a kid who finished doing his hours maybe about a month ago and he got even on the LA Times giving a little story about our program and him having to come and do the community hours with us. He said it is alot easier putting it on than taking it off.

Male: I'll tell you the City of Downey is clean.

Female: Downey is clean. Believe me. You got to look for graffiti out there. You can drive all over Downey

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Group:

Male: See the whole moral break-down on the whole country and maybe the whole world is this breaking down. See you have alot of kids out there who don't care. And you can say we are going to lock your mother and father up and they will say I don't care. I don't care. Lock them up.

Group:

Male: And if he is on the bus, a student and they take away his pass what are they going to do to me, I am not a student and I ride the bus all the time. What are they going to do to him now that he is not a student. They can't take away his card and he will get on and write some more.

Jewel: Are you writing on the busses now?

Male: See what I am saying. Because of that break down and because of that break down, society is...they don't care no more. You got the kids in there not caring. So you have to...Somebody has to start working on that to change it around. Or it is just going to continue.

Jewel: How do you change it?

Male: You got to work with the people. You can't ...you know you are saying about locking these guys up or the parents orwhoever you lock up you gotta let somebody out. Whoever comes out is going to be a lot worse that the person doing graffiti I will tell you that much.

Male: They need to start a program. RTD needs to start a program somewhere for the youth....

Male: They can even start it with our agency. And that's the way it has been it starts slowing down and then stops it.

Group:

Male: What's it going to hurt to try it. One year.

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Our program. We have nothing but positive comments coming back.

Group:

Male: You have two successful programs here that have been in existence fortheir's have been what ten years...going on ten...ours we are going on fourteen years and they have been on the paper and they have been on the TV and I don't know where everybody is at. Where are their minds...putting pressure on the people...but here we are people working with those people.. And we have positive results.

Male: The only problems that maybe you could call it a fear outside of the community or say by business or whatever in funding or whatever in funding or sponsoring our programs is that we are from the streets who deal with the streets. So that might be a fear to some programs. Well I am not going to put money...give that gang member money to go work with other gang members. But we are successful though.

Male: We face that already alot of times.

Jewel: Well let me tell you.....

Male: Well let me tell you one more thing about the break-down and it is not that we are only looking at the little guy right here. But he sees the rest of the world okay, and if you could see Exxon go doing graffiti in the ocean and nothing is happening to them by the government that is in charge and you see all these big corporations filling up the atmosphere with all the stuff that they burn and pollute with and they can't come with a legislation to regulate it and you see all the money spent on the cars and the automobile industry and all those things that they are trying to do to clean that up.....then you go to a guy writing on a wall and you are going to take away his bus pass. I mean it doesn't make sense. In their eyes it doesn't make sense.

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Male: Good.

Jewel: Okay. If it was your responsibility to develop a program that would prevent vandalism and graffiti that would apprehend those that are committing those acts that would penalize those that are committing those acts...what would you recommend. I would like to go around the table and I would like you each to address this for a couple of minutes.

Male: Could you repeat the question again.

Jewel: Okay. Suppose it was your responsibility, suppose that RTD came to you and hired you to develop a program that would prevent...help to prevent acts of graffiti and vandalism on the busses, that would help to apprehend or catch the perpetrators of the graffiti and vandalism and that would penalize them in some way for committing these acts. What kind of a program would you recommend?

Male: Well I would suggest if they get caught, I would agree with Judy in the community service hours. 1000 hours or 100 hours whatever and a fine I think that that would slow them down a little.

Jewel: Okay. Judy?

Judy: Exactly what I just explained that it does, because we got the results out of the kid that had to do 100 hours up there. We put them on that Morango wall that you might have shown there. We might have painted that wall at twenty times now.....Tony Danny....I say like a stricter fine.

Group:

Female: A lot of times the judges and the courts just like slap these kids on the hands and let them go...so these kids are saying ahh....I went to court for putting up graffiti and all the judge said was \$20.00, and my mom paid it and now I am going to put up some more.

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Jewel: Okay _____.

Male: Yeah I go along with what she is saying. Just like everybody else you know you have to help some of the youngsters out because they are coming from broken homes where they don't have the right guidance you know that they need. So give them back something. Give them some programs you know, open some doors for them too.

Jewel: Sean?

Male: Well I feel the same way. If they get caught have them paint what they wrote and with everything else, you know whatever they wrote and like all of us, community service and fine them.

Jewel: Dan?

Dan: I am not giving my ideas anymore. People hear them and they use them and it works so...I'm just kidding. I believe that you have to work with the total person. You know, I believe that there is programs out there...there is good programs. You have to just work with the right ones. The ones that are successful. The ones that are really working. The ones that are really doing the work. And flood that person and get him all the help that you can get him and work with...you know and take the whole community you know it takes the whole community to get involved to turn that person around it is going to be worth it. Because that person can be a producer of someone just like yourself. But you have to work with the total person. You have to work with him and that might just take the whole community. And it is just like I said, it is just working that whole person, working with the whole community, that they are able to handle it. It can be done. I am a product of it.

Jewel: You are playing games. Henry?

Male: So what were you saying if I was put in charge....

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Jewel: If it was your job to develop a program for RTD.

Male: I would do the same thing as they are doing. Hire you to make a study. And find out the different ways and find the program that works. You know that is the way it works. That is the way things get accomplished. But to me, people do that to get attention. So I would find another way for them to get the same attention.

Jewel: Leticia?

Female: Well what I would do, like him, him, and him, they are probably a friend of the neighborhoods. If I would see the graffiti and I would see him writing say I would get in contact with them, talk to them, next time, somebody else would write on the bus or whatever, for _____ on their own particular neighborhood and the next time I would see them I would talk to them and let them know what is happening and let them know or have them pass out the word not to write on the bus or whatever and that's what I think.

Jewel: Marci

Female: Well what I think...I go along with everybody, you know doing community hours and stuff and bigger fines. But not only that, having working with individuals, I think themselves like it is I mean being teens and being youths and being so young they have alot of problems at home and they don't care anymore. They have this attitude...well nobody cares about me so I should just go get beat up. No big deal. As it is the world...they think that the world is going to erupt. So I think you should work with them as individuals also.

Male: I think that if they catch a certain guy writing on a bus

Group:

Male: If they catch a guy writing on a certain

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bus...make that guy ride on the bus for two months straight. Eight hours with the bus driver. At the end of the day, make him take off all the writing that is on there. That way he and the bus driver be looking. You know eight hours a day with the same person you are eventually going to like him or you are going hate him. You are going to have a relationship with this bus driver. Two months can you imagine riding a bus for two months.

Group:

Female: You got to clean it after.

Male: Yeah. Yeah.

Male: Make it the last run.

Male: Yeah. Make it a big brother thing. Yeah.

Male: All of them busses got different lines....

Male: No the bus that he gets caught writing on. See what I mean.

Male: Keep him on the same line?

Male: Same bus. He will get tired of it.

Group:

Male: That is his problem.

Male: You know not to break the circle here, but you know maybe there is a problem with the kids in the bus trade.

Male: Did anyone ever look into that?

Male: They have been cutting me off.

Male: Like there was this kid you know. He was down syndrome and every time he would go to catch the bus you know he would get up on the bus and he would say "Hi bus driver" and the bus driver would throw him off the bus. You know and start

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beating him up. So one day the kid got his parents to go and see what was actually happening right. So the parents were out there waiting and they had some police out there with them and the kid goes into the bus and...you know the bus pulls up and the kid goes in there and says "Hi there bus driver", and the bus driver gets off that throws the kid off and starts beating him up so the police jump on him and the parents say you know what is going on...why are you picking on this kid and the bus driver said he is always making fun of me.

Group:

Male: But anyway

Male: You forced comedy on us.

Male: Anyway if you take the _____ and that is the major result of the problem, I would ask you how much are you going to spend. Because I know...I do have the resources being that I do come from agency that has been successful...all of us pretty much do here...at the table...like my first question to you would be how much would you be willing to spend? Or if you want me to develop a budget I would develop a budget with a proposal and present that to you. Whatever I feel would be necessary to fund the alternatives to this. You know to be able to combat it. And like come from a program that has already the existing components I would work with those, you know from my program and work with those components that have been successful. In my job would be to identify the person who is committing the crime to you or to anyone else? My first commitment would be to that person to help him. So that he would eventually not only stop doing what he is doing now, but also join into my efforts to help stop other people from that area. And that is my specialty.

Jewel: Joey.

Male: If I was paid to start a program I would develop a program like he said, we here to get

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these kids who are writing find the best writers and have them do some kind of murals to advertise RTD. And also as for the other guys that can't write I would have jobs for them you know to clean up the busses. For the people who were caught for a penalty I would have them clean up the busses as well and that's the type of program that I would develop.

Male: The name of the program would be. Maybe now maybe later.

Group:

Jewel: Before we say goodnight. I would like you to meet some people who are with RTD, they probably have some questions to ask you. And some of you may have some questions that you may want to ask them. So.....

Male: Could we get a break.

Jewel: What?

Male: Could we go to the rest room?

Jewel: Yeah.

Jewel: They are going to come in now.

Group:

Jewel: This is Alice Wiggins and this is Tony Fortino.

Alice: We enjoyed it.

Group:

Male: Yeah. I think we had as good a time as you did.

Male: That smells good what is it?

Alice: Something that I picked up. I am not really into perfume. I take whatever is the cheapest.

Male: That smells good.

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Male: Perfumes choke me and that smells good.

Alice: I think it is call Areal.

Male: I want a chance at one question that was asked by Henry, because I think it is a good question. He wanted to know how do we get funded. We do we get our money. Well 40% of it comes from the fare box. That is the people that put the cash in and buy the monthly pass. 60% comes from partly the federal government. Through federal taxes. Everybody pays income tax. But a good portion of it comes from the sales tax now. And whenever you buy a hamburger in a restaurant now, you pay sales tax, 6.5 % the 1/2 % we get a part of that. So your funding every time you go and buy something you or anyone you know. Your paying sales tax you are helping pay RTD so are the kids that are vandalizing the busses and putting graffiti on it.

Male: When they buy the spray cans.

Male: What?

Male: When they buy the spray can.

Male: Yeah. Exactly that too, come to think of it. So that is where we get our money. _____ you made a comment about some of the programs you have gotten positive feed back on. Can you tell me a little bit more about some of the positive feed back and which program.

Male: Well just like from different councilman's areas, we get requests from the councilman area so when we do the assignment, the actual removal off the walls, they will call back to the councilman's area and the councilman will call us hey these people called back they liked the job you went and did right...so they call us back and get set up again and usually it is not as bad when we go back.

Male: Okay so you are hearing direct results.

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Male: You see also because within the structure of the program that they work for as another unit which works in conjunction with them which are crises intervention workers that do direct intervention with the gang members. See they are combining the graffiti and dealing with the gang members themselves.

Male: Well in our program, these people are hired specifically for the removal of the graffiti and then we have another component that deals with the gang members themselves and then another component that deals with the parents, the teachers of the schools that they attend, and then another component that deals with prevention with the youth at a younger age.

Male: Okay. So there is different parts to the program.

Male: Well they are catalysts.

Male: Now you asked how much RTD wants to spend in solving this problem. Well let me tell you about a plan we have about spending money this summer. And I want to hear from you, you can knock the plan down.

Group:

Male: I will tell you how much we are spending. We are spending Three Million Dollars this summer to hire 250 kids from the high schools to help us clean the busses. And the reason it cost Three Million Dollars, is because we also have to hire supervisors to supervise the kids, and then we have to hire supervisors to supervise the supervisors. So when you look at everyone that is going to be hired from 250 kids plus the staff we are going to spend three million dollars. The money is coming from Kenny Hahn. He is going to give us the three million dollars to do this. This is for the L.A. Pride Program.

Male: _____

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Male: What do you think? Do you think it will work?

Male: I think that you should give us alot thought because we deal with alot of these people that ride on your busses.

Male: You think that we should give you _____

Male: We could recruit the people that are actually doing the wiring on the buses.

Female: Right. Because alot of times too, they will say we are hiring 250 youths they hire these kids that live in these homes where the parents make enough money and they live in ones.....

Male: Okay, now that's

Group:

Male: Okay you hire them.

Male: They hire the people that don't even ride on the bus.

Female: Right.

Group:

Male: The people that are doing the writing.

Group:

Male: You say you can hire these kids...the kids that are writing on the busses, they will not only stop writing but they will help clean it and that will be more effective.

Group:

Male: They can be working eight hours cleaning the busses....they are not going...after they worked eight hours cleaning the busses have somebody go write on a bus....

Group:

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Male: They will say hey man I am working for them. I am cleaning those things. You better not be writing on them.

Male: There is still time maybe to make a change here. Because I don't know if they have the equipment started...

Female: Because believe me.....

Male: That's cause....you are taking students that don't mean nothing about writing. To hire a "A" student to go clean it off...you don't have to be an "A" student but somebody that don't even write on the bus...the guy that does the writing he is not going to care.

Group:

Male: Well here is some more for them here... They didn't hire me to clean these busses. It like it is their job to write on these busses.

Male: It is like if you pulled up in those _____ five or six guys right there and you told one of them if he wanted a job, right, and say he is not even from that group he just tags along with them and you happen to ask him and you told him since you hang around in this area maybe if you hire you know he would be able to help us with this problem. But he will have no words with those boys you know. But because you are outside that area and not knowing them, but like say in our case, we know who those people are...and if we were given the opportunity to do that recruitment for you we would get the ones that we know...whatever he says to his group that what goes...you know. and so on and so on....

Male: That's what I said earlier. I was doing some painting last week, in my neighborhood, and it was all WG WG writing right. And certain names...and I was painting and the guy came outside and it was the lawyer's office and he asked me well whose is this guy that cleaned up the writing, you know I'll hire him to keep this

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building clean and have him not get anyone else painting on it. So since then they hired him they cleaned it they even got him a job cleaning their office yard whatever it is...and now he is keeping it clean and not letting nobody else write on it. He is not even writing on it himself. He made himself a little money. Their office now looks nice. You know.

Male: Out of the three million that is coming from Kenny Hahn's district. Out of the nine million that RTD is spending right now, what is happening with that money?

Male: This is an additional three million.

Male: To the nine.

Male: Yes.

Male: You are still spending the nine.

Male: So now you will be spending twelve.

Male: When we say we are spending nine. The problem is nine million dollars. And we are trying to catch up with the problem. But our actual rate of spending isn't that high.

Female: That is how much it would cost if we were actually effective in cleaning.

Male: Yeah. If we could do the whole thing in one year it would cost us nine million dollars. But we are still trying to re-paint, still trying to change the seats, putting new windows in, taking the old ones out, re-finishing them because we can re-use them.

Male: Because I was going to say that my suggestion would be that if you have the three million that Kenny is making available to you...and you use it out in this area...I would say RTD should not be afraid to run some other programs. They already have nine million dollars to play with, but _____ is not nine. But go ahead and do another district another way.

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Group:

Male: That is why we are here. To find out about some of the things that we might be able to do.

Male: Then when it is successful you turn around and sell it to San Diego, and Orange County, and give us the residuals.

Group:

Female: I would like to ask you, how you were all taggers or involved what made the change...and what influenced you to suddenly go on the other side and try and help the problem.

Male: Me in my situation. I am a muralist. So when I used to write my name, I used to do it real good. I could do it in old english all different types of writing right. So to me it was a thing of pride. Saying who I was and where I was from. And if anybody didn't like it they saw who I was and where I was from. And I never wrote in my own neighborhood either. Which that's another story. That's just a whole thing. So now that I paint murals, I started painting murals and that is how I started pulling up myself, my expressions, my feelings was now in an artistic way of doing murals. And where I used to write my name it would ge cleaned off...maybe a week, maybe it lasted three months, maybe even longer, but with murals, I have done murals since '69 they are still up. And my murals don't get graffiti on.

Female: Because people will recognize your signature in the neighborhood.

Male: The way I stopped too. There was alot of writing in my neighborhood and I always used to say you know no one likes some other neighbor to come and write in your neighborhood and used to say oh...only if we had some paint to paint the wall and you know it would be for just our neighborhood and no one would come and write in our neighborhood. So this program came along to

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help us out. They hired me to keep our neighborhood clean. So now you know, I am fighting against it and there is no writing. There is writing you know in the alleys but it is not the way it used to be. It went down.

Male: Well that is what we are thinking now, there is no way of stopping it all. We can't prevent it forever. If we can cut it 50% and that would be a milestone.

Male: That is why us a experts you know what we are dealing with right now ... if we are successful to a certain limit but with \$.50 cents you can buy enough paint to cover maybe 5 feet. But with additional money, you know, a couple of dollars I could clean up a whole wall.

Male: Yeah. I was going to say that what got me out of it was that I got tired of seeing death in the community. And that's all that I know that graffiti did. It destroyed peoples lives. And so now I am all for life. Because I have a new life.

Male: Well for the first time....to show you how naive that I am. The first time that I connected graffiti with death is tonight. It is through this group and this group made that connection for me. I didn't know that there was a connection. But there definitely is.

Jewel: Tony would you like to know how to reach these people?

Male: Yes. I sure would.

Jewel: Would you write down your names.

Male: Mine, Me? How did I stop?

Male: Yes.

Group:

Male: Could I just give you my card.

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Jewel: If you all have cards, that would be even better.

Male: Actually for me it was like a whole realization thing. You know like I said before I didn't equate it with damage, I didn't equate it with harming anybody. I equating it with everybody else was doing it and justifying it to me and like Danny said it was my expression. To all of us, the graffiti on the wall is like the newspaper you know. So you know, I have my name on here five times and I get out of jail again, I want to have it on six times cause I'm back. But what happened I started growing up and learning things, you know I became involved in these kind of programs and work and working, and as I was learning it I was saying...maybe I would go and meet somebody and people are up in arms about writing and I there with somebody that took me and I'm asking them how come they are all mad all it is, is writing all over the wall, you know, and then when they started explaining to me, you know the job that we are trying to do, right, and I knew that's what kind of stuff gang violence was, and he was saying we are tired of seeing people killed and dying and we are trying to stop crime and all that.. And I said, so what, you just put your block on the sign it is not a big thing, but he says, it was explained to me that, how that impacted the whole community. And all the businessmen and how the county, the city, the schools, how ever, you know, RTD and everybody got affected by it...and then ...what turned on the light for me he said those are all of the people we are out there asking to give us the money to help us to do those thing. And yet we are out there affecting them all that way. And I said so you mean they are the ones that are giving us the money to do this work and our programs and I think about it. And you know, it just grew and I said yeah...well we have to find another way to do this. And then it started just getting reinforcement.

Female: So it is an educational process. You just had to get more information to find out how other

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people felt about it. Because you didn't realize it yourself.

Male: Yeah that was a big part of it. But the other thing was like I said earlier. Was an addictive kind of thing.

Male: It is?

Female: That was an interesting kind of a thing.

Male: Real addictive.

Male: I used spray into the night. I used to have all my spray cans with me. It is fun. It is fun. Because it gets real fun you know...

Group:

Male: I'll tell you one thing. One thing happened to me one time like that. Like what he is saying. Impact on me made me look at it a different way. I was younger you know. Then my girlfriend you know. I went over near her house, and I knew that she passed by in the bus. She would pass by in the bus on the way to school in the morning. So on a big old wall I put Arlene, my name, her name, and all kinds of fancy stuff. And then I asked her if she went to school, and I asked her did you come on the bus to school? And she said yes. And I go did you see anything you know. And she said yeah. And I go did you like it. And she goes, you know, I had an appointment today, at the dentist, this morning I had to go in there first. I said yeah. And she goes, well my mother went with me on the bus. And she saw the wall and said, _____ who is this. She put it all together, you know, she said my mother seen all that. And I wanted to go hide. And go somewhere real deep and hide. That's the way some parents find out their kids are doing graffiti. That's the way sometimesthat is part of another reason that they use another name. I don't put Johnny Rodriguez. I put you know Pepper.

Group:

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Male: Well it is rush you know the idea of getting caught you know. It is a challenge.

Male: A rush you know.

Male: Okay. I am going to do this and I am.....

Male: You know they plan it out too like they say the cops come I'll run this way and you know let them chase us....you know it is all fun you know...when your young you want them to chase you.

Male: I remember those things.

Group:

Male: I used to run pretty fast.

Male: I don't know how you use that because you have to get older to do that. I remember doing that alot and one time being older, nineteen doing this eighteen or nineteen and I was all mad because there was three people with me. There was supposed to be watching out real good. And the cops still drove up and caught us and I even had to go through some clean up papers and stuff for the week-end. But I went to jail and came out the next day. But when you are older and your going to jail, and they ask you what are you in here for, and you know..... you know it is just not the same anymore. I don't know how to use that equator but it is an impact. You see even like a little kid, man, he is still writing on the walls. And I said.....that is why I say awareness for people relating that it _____ and thee is something in there in the posters or the media or something. Things that we are identifying with those kids are identifying with.

Male: Well yeah. We will have to do some of that. Does anyone here have any questions, that you would like to ask about the RTD?

Male: Do we get a free bus pass.

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Jewel: I would like to thank you all very much.

Male: What do you do with those billboard signs on the bus after you take them off? I would love to get me a Raider one you know. That say commitment to excellence real big for my garage.

Group:

Female: We don't usually make alot of extras. Once they are taken down they are destroyed. I mean once they are pealed off they are no good. They are pealed.

Male: There is a new program coming up for the Raiders this year. And it is in production right now in facts. And I will see if I can get them to print a few extra copies.

Group:

Male: I wanted to ask what you think of this...that if this was here to write on and you told us all come in and don't write on no where else but this you could write on. And what if they had that on the bus.

Male: If we had that on the bus.

Male: That kind of a thing.

Male: Even like a certain part to write on.

Male: You could just peal it off the next day.

Male: I don't know. I don't know.

Female: But eventually that would filter off of that little space.

Male: Well like I said earlier you know you are not going to stop it. You want to slow it down and that will slow it down. So seventy people come and write on it. But two write on the sign. Look what you stopped.

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Male: But then again we ain't' stopped the people craping out each other either. You know like giving them the opportunity to.....

Male: Yeah, but they are going to do it on the regular busses and cause alot of.....

Male: But it is not good to give them the opportunity you know to crap each other out and keep on killing each other.

Female: I think some of your ideas about competition and I am familiar with the New York magazine and now they have had some international competitions too. Recently they had one in London and we have been in contact with alot of aerosol artists and I think the competition is probably a real good idea. We working up a proposal right now we haven't given it to a company yet. But we think that it has some merit. And we think that a lot of it is a show of pride, and some artistic ability and maybe we could challenge the possitevily to show that we are part of the community too.

Male: I am sure that you have, but if you haven't have you thought about subliminal messages you know inside the busses you know with some kind of music. Write on the walls.....

Group:

Male: Almost any department store you go into they play the music you know with the subliminal messages you know. I am a good person, I am going to have a nice day, I am not going to steal nothing, I am going to spend alot of money.

Male: Actually, I don't think that anyone has ever come up with this suggestion.

Female: No. Of course we don't have, you know the equipment at this point. We would have to install equipment in our busses that would allow that level of acoustics.

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Male: Yeah you would have to hook up a speaker system
.....

Male: Okay, well thanks a million.

Male: Well of course the other thing that we are
talking alot about in this room is gang graffiti
in gangs. There is alot of graffiti that goes
on and it is traced back through history. You
know from other cultures and _____
society and all that.

Female: And we it is not necessarily gang related some
of it is just destructive people and.....

Male: The thing about the artsy thing their signs are
everywhere and it looks like a swastika.

Group:

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GROUP # 3 - PROFESSIONALS

Jewel: Thank you all for coming this evening. My name is Jewel_____ and this company is Facts Consolidated. We are a research company and that's what we do. We invited you here tonight because the things that you know, the work that you do, the insights that you can give us will be very valuable to us and to our client, Southern California Rapid Transit District.

They are tremendously concerned with the problems that vandalism and graffiti cause to the district and, as part of an overall research project, to help them understand the problems a little bit better and to come up with constructive ways of dealing with it; solutions, methods of apprehension, etc. etc. We're conducting a two-part research project and these informal focus group discussions are a part of it.

Before we get started on our discussion, I would like for you to introduce yourselves. Tell us who you are and as much about what you do as you are able to tell us. Can we start with you, Louie?

Group:

Male: _____my name is Louie Perez, parole agent for the California Youth Authority.

Male: Danny_____, work L.A.P.D. I work prison gangs.

Male: _____Martinez, parole agent, Youth Authority.

Male: Gil _____, I'm Director of the Gang_____ Department of Youth Program.

Male: Ramona_____, I work the L.A.P.D street gangs.

Female: Marie_____, I'm a parole agent with Gang Violence Protection Plan.

Male: Tony_____, I'm with the Sheriffs Department, East L.A.

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Male: Warren_____. I'm with the County Juvenile Court Community Schools and I'm a teacher.

Male: Raymond_____, Los Angeles Police Department,_____ Gangs_____.

Female: Debby Delgado, L.A.P.D.

Male: Jack Goldman, _____ for Commissioner and I work at East Lake Juvenile Court.

Male: I'm Sherman_____, Superior Court Judge, Supervisor Judge of East Lake Juvenile Court.

Jewel: OK. Before we get started on discussion, we're going to show you a video tape which can explain the problem a lot more graphically and a lot better than I can.

Can everyone see it from where you are?

Group:

VIDEO

Narrator: Vandalism. It's one of the most serious and fastest growing problems facing RTD today. We've all seen the residue...a torn seat, an exterior marred by graffiti, windows destroyed by scratches. But just how serious is the problem?

Male: Basically, the vandalism and graffiti has been accelerating at an alarming rate and the net effect is that it is vastly exceeding our ability and maintenance to keep up with it. As a result we are finding that the fleet condition is deteriorating and that the interiors, especially, of our buses are largely being destroyed.

Male: Traditionally, we've spent about \$100,000 a month; fixing seats, replacing glass and removing graffiti. Ah, the situation is so bad now that we're probably in the \$600,000 to \$700,000 a month... damage. That doesn't mean

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that we are repairing at a rate to \$600,000 and \$700,000.

Male: I don't have the people to do that, I don't have the funds to do that.

Narrator: Intimately familiar with the problem is RTD's Anti-Graffiti Undercover Police Unit.

Male: _____

Male: I guess what's the best way to do it _____ drivers in all the graffiti areas. This is the easier way to find out where our active and inactive areas are. What I did was, all your red pins, that's your.. or all your active areas and we're going from South Gate, we're going to downtown, Alhambra is our active areas right now.

Our blue pin, that's our areas where we are getting calls but we go from day to day.

Narrator: To the casual on-looker, all graffiti may appear to be illegible scribbling, but to the graffitist, there are several distinctions.

The majority of the graffiti written on stationary objects, such as shops and buildings, is gang related. Gangs mark their turf by writing their names on walls in the area. Another form of graffiti, known as "tagging", is costing RTD millions of dollars in seat and window replacement and exterior refurbishment. In this case, the graffitist has designed his or her own special "tag" name: "Rapid", "Coke" and "Mist" are but a few of the adopted nicknames. The challenge is to mark a bus with your own personal "tag" name so that it will be seen across L.A. wherever the bus goes. For the "tagger" this is status.

Male: It's just the feeling of a bus taking your name through the city...

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Male: Back and forth.

Male: ...yeah....back and forth..that's just one part about it.

Male: ..yeah..

Male: So many risks you have to go through just to hit a bus and it gets cleaned anyway, but...

Male: We don't care long as it's, you know, traveled...

Male: Yeah

Male: ...and somebody sees it, that's_____

Male: It looks like they were going to hit that bus and just went_____.

Radio: _____on Pacifica_____

Male: Negative

Male: I thought you guys were talking _____

Narrator: Each day the officers do an additional sweep, but they rely heavily on driver's reports to locate the current hot areas.

Male: All this was parked here when_____ the back door's open and my hands are tied.

Male: Oh, like 3:00, that's the heaviest. I think about it's school-kids, and ah, that's where it starts. They get into groups and they do their messes and all this and they get off the same way, in groups.

Male: The basic "tagger", they all look alike _____ maybe colors and styles on their hats and stuff. They all wear ball-caps, it can be from black, white or blue with Raiders, emblems...

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Male: They're called "crews". They're a bunch of guys and they're going out and they're just vandalizing the buses. They're called "crews", they use nicknames as NTS which is, ah, "Next To Serve".

Male: Until we get out to different schools and make our presence known at junior high schools, high schools. It's gonna be almost impossible to stop.

Narrator: The "crews" travel from bus stop to bus stop, waiting for the right moment to strike. These "crews" are very street-wise. One of the major problems for the undercover squad is not being spotted. Once the car or the officers are known to the "crews", their effectiveness decreases. This is known as a "burn".

Female: _____ RTD _____

Narrator: However, sooner or later the "taggers" make their move. When busted for "tagging", the juveniles will either be booked or cited to appear in court with their parents. "Tagging" can carry a maximum fine of \$250 or twenty hours of community service. A shake-down of the area shows that the "taggers" store their tools above the bus shelters. Here, you can see several types of markers, spray paint and an etcher for carving "tag" names into windows.

Male: Because I can see _____ giving an example as of January 1 of this year we cited over fifty juveniles and we arrested over twenty-five. Now, ah, that's from January...that's just the first month of the year.

Narrator: "Tagging" may seem like a harmless prank but the fad is on the rise and there isn't enough manpower to keep up with the current rate of vandalism. One trip to an RTD bus yard dramatically demonstrates the size of the problem.

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RTD officials are candid. They say they cannot combat this problem on their own. They need funds from Proposition A Transit Tax Revenues to hire additional staff to do the refurbishing. They need help from school officials to assist undermanned transit police staff at problem school stops. They need help from the courts to increase the penalties given to offenders. The district believes its riders are entitled to "first class" service and the agency cannot deliver "first class" service in a "third class" vehicle.

RTD officials pledge their efforts to refurbish the fleet to its original "A-1" status.

Jewel:

That's the problem. I would like for you to tell me about your specific experience or experiences with these types of vandalism or graffiti, what kinds of insights you can give us as to why these acts are perpetrated, the different kinds of graffiti and the motivations behind them, ways of dealing with the perpetrators, what's appropriate, what works, what doesn't work, how do you catch them, what's effective, methods of prevention, what do you know about that's been tried, what's been successful, what doesn't work, things like that.

This will be an informal discussion, I do hope that you all have something to contribute. We only have one rule, so to speak, and that's because we are tape recording this, we can't record voices over voices so I would ask that you speak one at a time and...have at it, guys!

Well, Gil?

Male:

Personally, I've been with my department for twenty years and I don't think... I think maybe one other time I've only been around when someone has actually graffitied property, about two months ago. I was sitting, having a hamburger during lunch in Huntington Park when

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I noticed a group of kids graffitng an RTD bus on Slauson. The problem is...is that, you know... I got on the phone, I called the local Maywood Police Department they came down and you have four kids and as soon as they know that you've spotted them they go four different directions so it's very difficult to deal with the problem. But by the same token they were able to apprehend two of the kids. The only thing the police did was to take the spray-can away from them and allow them to go home. I guess its hard to track what bus it was _____. I think it's just a problem as far as trying to just do something with the individuals apprehended or getting the police to acknowledge that it's a problem... it's a surprise to me that it's \$100,000 or \$300,000 a month of damage done to the buses. I think if law-enforcement knew that or had that information...

Jewel: It's nine billion dollar a year problem for RTD.

Male: ...and it's kind of mind boggling that it's that big of problem. But...

Male: In the San Fernando Valley, about five years ago we started a program, an anti-graffiti program called "Project _____". I was instrumental in starting it. What the juvenile court did, and most of your "taggers" are juveniles, most of your gang graffitiers are juveniles, where obviously the adults selling dope are not writing their gang territories down. And what we would do is we made it known to the police, we made it known to the school officials, that if a kid was brought in and convicted on vandalism, we would make that kid perform a minimum of 100 hours community service, that's cleaning up graffiti. We established a "hot-line" and victims could call up the "hot-line" and _____ would go out and check the place out and bring the kids out there. Now this started before "tagging", "B.T."-"Before Tagging". Tagging created a whole different problem because a

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lot of...most of your "taggers" are not gang members unless you want to call a "crew" a gang. Getting together for the purpose of putting their "tags" up. What happened in the Valley and a lot of places with a lot of schools is that the Dean of Boys and the school officials, school police officer knew the kids, many of the kids by their "tag" names, so they were able to communicate with the crash officers in the Valley. The kids who "tag" buses, they'll "tag" houses and "tag" telephone poles and they'll "tag" anything they can "tag". Also they would "tag" their own books, shoes, everything else. I mean that's a way for the transit police to get to some of these "taggers" but one of the things that I notice is that never before, up until now, has the RTD people come to the juvenile court and they talk to us saying: "What can you...can we do to help you?" Yeah, if we have a kid, we can make that kid perform service because if he doesn't, he goes in the Hall and then he has to perform the service anyhow. The RTD has never contacted the juvenile court as a whole or the probation department. See this is the first time...that's a very well done film...pointing out the problem, but it takes, I think that what it takes is.... I know what it takes, it takes a getting together of all of the forces that are involved: law-enforcement, the courts and probation and the transit police are consider _____ to communicate with each other.....and the school people....the problems, and then you might be able to cut down on some of those things.

Male:

Let me just follow-up a little bit on RTD. One of the things that concerns me is that when I get probation reports, when kids are coming back after _____ graffiti, there is a form that the probation department sends out to RTD asking for the amount of damages so the kid can be ordered to make restitution. Invariably, when it comes back there is no response from RTD as to the amount of restitution to be made or what the damage is.

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That's something you need to know. If we don't have that, we can't order the kid to do anything unless we know what the amount of the damages are.

Male:

You know, I think one of the problems with the graffiti, being that it's a misdemeanor, a lot of times what people would do, see it happen, are reluctant to notify police officers or anybody because the fear for 1) going to court and the fear of retaliation. That was a problem we had quite a bit was you see citizens, like, right there was evidence citizens saw when these kids were writing on the bus, we get, instead of trying to do something, they look the other way and it's understandable because you go to court and you sit there for eight, ten hours and the case doesn't go or does eventually go and these kids will come back and start "tagging" them again. We're real fortunate, I worked a case down in the Harbor where there was a "tagger" and all he had was his moniker that he used, or his "tag" name and we're real fortunate to a point where we found out who this kid was and we took pictures of all eight locations and we brought him in and we kind of ran a little bluff on him and we just told him: "Hey, look, we have pictures of you from outside the locations, we've watched you do it, we know you're the only one who uses this "tag" name..." and lo and behold, the kid cops out to eight counts. Not saying it's gonna happen every time, but that's kind of a useful tool, we start finding out who these kids are by their "tag" name and if there was something that can be done to help implement that into the court system where, you know, this kid is going _____ "tag" name, you get up there on the stand and you can testify as a graffiti expert to where I have testified for almost three and a half hours as graffiti expert up on the stand and that was actually almost harder than testifying in a homicide. But the kid got convicted of all eight counts.

Male:

Are there signs on buses saying there's an

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award for anyone who turns in somebody for doing that ____ to a bus.

Jewel: Do you think there should be?

Male: Oh yes.

Group:

Male: I use to work for the RTD part-time and I started a 1980 _____ hiring off-duty officers to work with them and the first big problem they had with the RTD was 1) that to rear of the bus that was their own turf; gang areas. They were dealing dope, they were smoking dope, they were assaulting people back there. That was their own turf. Then they started putting officers inside the bus. Well, when they started doing putting officers inside the bus and putting signs up, just like Sherman was saying, up on top there, they started taking heed to what was going on inside the buses, looking more, being more aware of possible...there could be an officer inside the bus. Now I don't know now, it's been a few years since I worked with them off duty, if they still put in officers, undercover, actually inside the bus. Outside, like it showed in the video, they get _____ right off the bat. They see a car following them for the last three miles, stopping when they stop, they're no dummies, they know what's going on. Not only that, but also, the problem is not also that occurs actually on the streets. Don't forget, you've got many divisions, that's what they call the RTD, those stations where the buses are actually housed, those places are wide open areas, they can go right in there and they can take their sweet time going and actually putting their graffiti on the buses. Actually, some of them will not even call it graffiti, it's called "bombing". They have a tape out, it's called "Bombing L.A." where they'll actually put an actual mural on the bus as you see in New York on the subways. That is another big problem. It's the

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manpower to try to get in there to supervise, to actually observe to see where they're actually doing this and the RTD has got a lot of open spaces for those buses and at night time there was many a time we'd get a call inside there and we'd go in there and there you got 200 buses! A kid could go wild inside there, doing it. I mean, he could take his sweet time and really get artistic. But also with this other thing of "tagging", in this one video that we observed, the "tagging" was done more as a challenge. "Let's go do it and see if we can do it right now" and in this video, which is like I said, called "Bombing L.A.", it shows this one guy, he goes out there and he really goes out there and shows his stuff and he's proud of what he's doing and it's now a point to where it doesn't become so much, well, you could actually say "gang graffiti", but also now it becomes a challenge, can you do it while the bus is going at thirty miles an hour, put your signature on that.

Jewel: Do you know who puts that video out?

Male: I don't remember. We probably have it in the office there, the name. But, again, in that particular movie, I believe one of the answers to this here was in that movie. A guy talks about he got his Mother to go out and "tag" one of those buses!

Group:

Male: He got his Mother to do that?

Male: And she was in a wheel chair!

Group:

Male: She was on the video, wasn't she?

Group:

Male: Along with the courts, the community service, that you say they have had to do or in the

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past, I don't know if anybody's ever thought about it, maybe having part of the community service mean actually getting these kids to go out there and clean the buses themselves.

Female: Exactly...

Male: Once they have done that, get them to paint the inside of the buses again so that....

Group:

Male: ...part of the community service. It would be a type of program where you'd take the officers, instead of having them out following the buses, have them there supervising these kids so that the kids aren't in there vandalizing the buses anymore.

Female: Sure!

Male: So they could actually watch them and make sure that they do the job right. They may be able to save a lot of money in the long-run instead of having to have these people employed there doing this for eight hours a day, not to take a job away from anybody, but to make the kids realize, hey this isn't is fun as it really appears to be. So, "I got caught, I have to go and do community service, I have to go out and pick-up papers along the freeway", or whatever they're going to make them do.....

Male: Have them scrub the buses..

Male: I've seen them do that. They spend half their time sitting under a tree or something.

Male: We have plenty of kids for you to clean the buses.

Group:

Male: You're never going to run out of kids.

Male: What you want to do is obviously you're gonna

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have hardcore people doing it already, they can't be saved, they have to go through the system. However, what you have to develop is a media blitz. A scare tactic type thing to the people that are just on the borderline, in other words, and you tie it to the idea that the other Ramone had, and it goes hand-in-hand. For example, if you do a lock-up thing, they find these guys, they sentence them to do RTD work, you video that and you combine that to a media blitz and say, "Hey this is what could happen to you". I don't know how legal it can get, but at least what your doing is your end up with the hardcore and the affiliates will _____ kind of shy away from it, knowing what the sentence is. Usually what happens is,, once it is put on the media, then, that's half your battle.

Male: To advertise is good because I'll tell you what, when were riding those buses, inside there, after a while, going through the areas where you would have all the problems, they'd sit there like good little angels, because they were just looking, I mean they'd be looking back and forth. They didn't even think about taking out the spray can. At the beginning it started that we were just knocking them off left and right, arresting them and then they finally got the idea and then especially with the advertisement that's up on the top.

Jewel: What advertisement?

Male: Well, it said that.."beware, you could be riding with an RTD policeman" I mean just that, I mean, they're not that dumb that they can't read, you know.

Group:

Male: I think _____ with what Ramone was saying is that if you could embarrass them, if some of these facts are, indeed, correct about \$100,000 to \$300,000 a month of damage on RTD, I was surprised, I've never seen anybody

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graffiti a bus and I was having lunch here and I noticed these individuals, and I thought they were doing it from the inside, out, hanging out, spraying the bus, but I didn't realize they would hide behind cars, that these individuals were hiding behinds cars_____running up and spray painting. But there was a couple individuals I was noticing the look on the passengers face, there were a couple of elderly men, elderly woman and they were just kind of looking..."well, so what", you know, I think that they' have kind of a change of heart if some of this information was made public to them as to how much it costs to correct the problem.

Jewel: Warren?

Male: After you guys catch them, I'm supposed to teach them and one of the things I did when I was teaching composition, is I used graffiti as a subject and I get a lot of feedback in terms of what motivates them. They talk in terms of...they don't talk in terms of____we might, but they don't. They talk in terms of self-expression, neighborhood pride, personal pride, habits, "something I just gotta go out and do", artistic expression and based on all of this, listing to you, what I see, what the RTD is fighting is a "gorilla war" and there's no way you can come up with enough men...we don't have enough manpower to clean it, you sure don't have enough manpower to catch them. There's gotta be... I understand the need for enforcement and punishment, but I don't think it's going to solve the problem because if you announce well, "Well we're gonna have a war on graffiti and were gonna stop all of this stuff", I think it's a clear, outright challenge to these kids and they're gonna take you up on it.

Male: What do you suggest?

Male: Well, I'm gonna suggest... I'll tell you, you may laugh at it but, if RTD is losing \$900,000

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bucks a year, I think what RTD needs to do is rather than to declare war on graffiti, become involved in community service for kids. Give them...somehow find them some diversionary projects to get them involved so that something else becomes more appealing than graffiti.

Jewel: Like what?

Male: Off the top of my head, right now I'll tell you that I'm involved in Boy Scouts. Scouting is not the most expensive project available, but if you get kids involved in camping and the outdoors and really push the project, then they've got something else to do, because once you've got them involved in that then there are a whole variety of ethical things that go along with being a Scout, that go along with the advancement, that go along with more purposeful behavior. Kids join Scouting because they want to have fun. These kids are hanging out on the street really aren't having fun and from what I've seen, what we would generally consider fun, is something they would shy away from unless it's given to them, unless they can see it. One of the things that Girl Scouts of America does when they sell their cookies is that most of the cookie proceeds go towards paying leaders in intercity situations to provide the leadership services, that the girl need and it seems to be that there is a possibility here for some kind of organization here along that line. Looking at....just the other day, there was an article about an activity center that was on the "skids" that's staffed by some police officers and about nine other people and they get 10,000 applications a year to get into their boxing program. They can't possibly meet the entire need there. If the RTD was taking some of that _____ investing into that, into something like that, there may be a solution in that neighbor...in that area.

Jewel: How do the rest of you feel?

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Male: My observation is that the type of kid that would be amenable towards the Scouting program, aren't the type of kids that are going to get involved in graffiti.

Male: Not necessarily. We've got some kids in our troop right now who, I think, are borderline, real borderline what keeps them there is the opportunity of going camping every month because they really get-off on that. The initial...I think what you've got in mind is the Norman Rockwell picture of Boy Scouts, and I've been told by Boy Scout leaders that that's the worst thing that they ever did, because what it creates is an image of kids who come in being initially being clean-cut. The kids that I'm dealing with right now are essentially...most of them are middle class kids, but I'll tell you, they're only this far away from falling into what could be considered criminal behavior. They're not perfect. They've got a lot of rough edges. When we look at kids, we generally see two kinds of images: 1) is the most negative image as expressed by "Colors" on the other side of the coin, you've got the "Musketeers" and I don't think that either one of those images really reflects what kids are like all the time. You can take your most dangerous gang member and, alright, not the most dangerous, but you can take your most involved gang member and even they'll go and pay respects at a funeral. A mother may say; "Please, don't wear your colors", and they may not wear their colors. You can take the best kid in the world, I've got one of the best kids in the world and let me tell you, sometimes he gets into trouble. I think that the most accurate picture is closer to the middle. Kids are amenable to this kind of thing. Somewhere along the line we've got to find something else other than just saying we're going to arrest you, we're going to throw you in jail, because there isn't enough room in all the jails and there aren't enough cops to arrest them.

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Male: So, you're trying to say that with a program like that to vent their frustrations you vent it out by going Scouting and doing different...other activities other than going and doing graffiti?

Male: I'm saying that you've got to find some kind of diversion.

Male: But also, I never thought of the idea that when you're talking with inner-city kids, you're talking about kids that...are you gonna have these funds to give them the equipment and take them out there? Don't forget that some of these kids they come from really...

Male: I know that, I understand that...

Male: ...depressed homes that the parents haven't got a thing....

Male: But there's \$900,000 a year going down the tubes..

Male: I understand that..

Male: ..and I don't know, I honestly don't know what the financial aspects of an entire program would be.

Jewel: You have to understand that this isn't money that's available. It isn't even money that RTD has to spend. That's what it would cost if they were in a position to keep the buses clean and to replace the windshields and to replace the seats and do all of the things to all of the buses that need to be done.

Male: Well, let me bring out a couple of observations having worked now in, well, all over the county and with all different kinds of kids. Fifty percent of your "taggers" come from fairly affluent, middle-class families, they're not gang members, they're not...they're just plain old vandals and they have all of the amenities of life. You run

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through the San Fernando Valley the "tags" all over the place. Last night I was in Westwood, there were "tags" all over there. The kids _____ would get in at Sylmar facilities who are actually arrested for vandalism, not necessarily a bus but, a shopping center or the mall.

Female: Middle-class kids.

Male: What I found though, and what I wanted to point out is that in our program which the program has pointed out, I think by Dan, where the RTD police supervise community service kids, cleaning up buses. As they spend their 300 hours or 200 hours, whatever there is, every weekend, they talk to each other and we found that our field supervisors in the graffiti program picked up who's "tag" names some of these kids were. These kids tell them and then they go find out. They actually talk. These kids will actually..."taggers", unlike gang members, will actually tell them. Because what you're showing me in that movie there is mostly "tags" and not gang graffiti. I didn't see any....

Group:

Male: ...most buses, on the outside, don't have gang graffiti, it's all basically "tagging", that I have seen. I don't know about the inside.

Group:

Male: Well, then you guys, I mean there's a way to know _____

Male: The program that he was talking about, the officer _____ is a boxing program they're talking about, maybe they could take some of the money that they want to start cleaning the buses again instead of, if they would develop the program where the kids have to do community service, maybe that will allow them some extra money to start some kind of education program in schools just like

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L.A.P.D. did with "D.A.R.E." We sat there and we fought narcotics, for years and years and years, basically myself and Danny worked in a division where we were probably in the threshold of spreading narcotics all over this city because we attacked where the problem was in one particular division and after that it became widespread and the "D.A.R.E." program came into effect, they figured, we're not going to be able to arrest them all, let's start an education program where we take it to the kids in the school and get them at a younger age. The kids that are out there now maybe they're lost, maybe they're not lost, some of them can be saved; however, it is a possibility that you take this education into the schools and catch the kids at a younger age, Boy Scout age, whatever, and try to keep them from doing this as they get older. And they take a training film, show these kids actually out there cleaning up their own mess that they made and make them realize it if I go out and get involved in the same thing, just like "D.A.R.E." does; "if I go out and I start selling drugs, I may end up dead or I may end up in jail" make them realize the same thing, "I may end up in jail or having to clean my graffiti off the buses myself."

Jewel: But how do you catch the kids.

Group:

Male: What we did with kids...if we had a kid who had...if we ordered them into community service to clean-up graffiti, if they were even affiliated with a gang or they had associates in a gang, or if we didn't have enough kids to work in the program, we can send any kids to clean-up that graffiti.

Female: That would save a lot of time.

Jewel: That will what?

Female: That would save a lot of time or even if they had them assigned to...to clean the buses and

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also with that money also have a counseling session with these kids that they have to go to these counseling sessions.

Female: Especially "wannabe"s, because they're right there on the borderline, counseling sessions with them, ok, "How do you kids think we can stop other kids" because kids are....I mean they can educate adults right there. They can educate each other maybe get a Big Brother program going, put the older kid who's already done his time for "tagging" and say, "Hey, we don't want to do this anymore. Look it, you guys are going to have to be cleaning buses, and so on and so on". And that will take care of your money right there because now this kid's going to have to share what he already had to do with his experiences behind "tagging" a bus.

Male: Kids want to help each other. Kids will talk to each other if they know, when they sit down and talk to each other, that we're not going to find out or we're not going....

Female: Exactly..

Male: _____ throw something out while _____ what do you think would happen if RTD developed like where they have on the side of their buses now advertising, if RTD would designate that if anyone wishes to "tag" there's a blank piece of paper there, they can "tag" that. Anywhere else is a crime. Then all you have to do is change it. _____

Group:

Male: We'll try to track it down we were sent to watch that film because they thought it had to do with "Bombing in L.A." it turned out not to be terrorism but it turned out to be....

Group:

Male: These kids talked about, they would actually go and "tag" a wall after they had checked it

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out and saw that it was a good location and they wanted this to be seen from the streets or whatever, they wanted the gang notoriety, so to speak. But they said that they would do it, they would try to find the owner and ask for permission first and if the owner would give them permission, then they would do it legally. Apparently they do have contests where they have these guys go out and spray paint their "tagging" on canvas and this happens once a year and this is all in this... this is a half hour film, something like that, twenty minutes, ten, fifteen...

Male: It's an art festival.

Male: ...it shows all these guys that get together from all over Southern California and do their thing on these canvases.

Group:

Male: That's why we should get a bunch of old buses and these kids come out and "tag", recognize who the "tagger" is, you see it again and you have an identification.

Group:

Female: _____

Male: Let me ask you this. Does RTD still have that inception where they have a built-in cameras in the bus? They have one where they were having so many robberies inside the bus where they put the actual camera inside there and it was actually monitored by somebody at the central radio location and that camera would be whizzing back and forth and they'd have signs; "If you're gonna do it, we're gonna have it on camera" and for the longest time, they put it on some of the toughest lines where they were having a lot of problems with people getting robbed on the bus and all of a sudden, you know, from _____ everybody's sitting there like this on the bus and you can see everybody sitting like this. You know?

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And they put it right there that they tell them if you do it that it's going to be monitored and were going to call on the RTD police right now. And they were doing that. Where they'd actually have them right there and boom, they'd call.

Jewel: Let's go back for a minute to Sherman's suggestion for having a designated place for "tagging" what do the rest of you think of it?

Male: That sounds great, but how are you going to get kids to go there?

Group:

Male: _____ buses themselves, instead of RTD having to advertise where there's a big piece of board they say you can "tag" here if you "tag" anywhere else, you're going to get arrested. _____

Group:

Male: You just change it everyday. A piece of cardboard is costing a lot less than, you know, \$100,000 a month.

Male: Most of these guys are antisocial, right?

Group:

Male: ...bus companies painted their buses with anti-graffiti paint you wash off in the yard?

Jewel: Does anyone know anything about that?

Group:

Male: ...manufacture a whole bunch of anti-graffiti paint.

Male: It's expensive, from what I understand. It's a lot harder to get the graffiti off them, you know, walls and whatever, they use this anti-graffiti paint. They just don't hose-off like....

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Male: There's a brand new one that just came out it's like real easy to wash down, I understand, especially on a surface like a bus surface.

Male: Something else you have to remember about the "tagging" is they want it to be around for a little while so they may avoid the cardboard and go for the windows, just keep going for the windows, you know, they want everyone to see it from Los Angeles to Santa Monica, out to the Valley...

Jewel: They also use etching tools.

Group:

Male: That "Bombing L.A." again, also, it talks to these kids and these kids tell you how they go into the store and how they get those cans of paint out of there.

Jewel: How do they?

Male: Well, _____ booster bags, whatever they have to do and they also talk about that they only choose a particular type of nozzle on the can so what they do is when they go buy the can, that nozzle just sprays wide. They want a nozzle that sprays fine, so what they'll do is they'll get all these cans, take all the nozzles and go back in again and buy a particular nozzle that they have there for sale. Because they just don't want to just spray _____ they want to make it so everybody can see it perfectly. You know, it's like an art to them. And, again, in "Bombing in L.A." they talk about it and they're very free and it's really, you think, they just go buy cans for the hell of it, but they don't. They pick what they want.

Jewel: One of the groups we had last night said a that a very significant percentage of the spray cans are not purchased, they're

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"liberated".

Group:

Male: They'll pay for one can and take six. And they'll walk in and they'll take it...it's the middle of summer....and they'll go in there with shorts on with a tee shirt and you still can't tell they've taken six cans of paint.

Male: I think it shows that in the video, it shows a guy "boosting".

Male: They go in there and take five or six cans of paint in his waist-band.

Jewel: And that's called "boosting"?

Male: Yeah

Male: They don't pay for it.

Female: These particular artists "bombing" in Los Angeles, have been on the radio, they've been on KFI, I've listened to them on the radio talk about, and it was a talk radio show where you have people saying that graffiti is negative and that there was a debate, "No it isn't, it's artistic, you should see what we do". I don't know if anyone happened to hear that on the radio so they've been on a least two occasions and gotten a lot of air-play as to what they're doing and how they want to gain notoriety across Los Angeles and how they have a network they're affiliated with, but these may be more artistic types than the types of kids that we are watching on this video. These are people that really think that they're doing it for people to look up to them because they have a name, they have a style. See, you have a style "tagging". These kids are just being, "wannabe" "taggers", but then you have "taggers" like we saw on freeway as we just came into town, you see it on the freeway, on the Long Beach freeway, on the San Bernardino Freeway where it took a long time to do that type of "tagging" you know, it's

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very large letters and you see graffiti that is eight foot tall then you see graffiti that's just done very quickly. So, if they're about making their particular style of writing and they're very involved. It's not something that you can just say, I bet you can probably put out a message to kids don't use drugs, and elementary school children may be listening to that, but we're talking about an age group that is really hard to reach, it's Junior High and High School, and they're not, a lot of them may not even be in school. You know, the kids that have a lot of time on their hands that could be the best graffiti artist around. We're in an area that it's very blighted with graffiti and you see it not only on the buses but do the bus benches belong to RTD? Is that an area that is taken care of by RTD?

Jewel: Does anybody know?

Male: I think the advertising agencies usually provide most of bus benches.

Male: There's not very many advertisements on the bus benches anymore. _____ covered up with graffiti as soon as _____

Male: Now they have those little coverings over each _____ location so that's where they come up with their etching tools and next to that, that plastic and then next the seats out.

Male: The group that you're talking about, they're a small minority of kids that are "taggers" or whatever you want to call them, but actually are good graffiti artists and I understand from some people that came from New York where graffiti "bomb" graffiti started and some paintings have actually sold in the area between \$500,000 paintings on canvas, of graffiti, so, there are some that are.....

Female: Depends on what kind of artist, you know, pop art, I guess...

Group:

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Male: Whatever you want to call it, it's graffiti and it's "bomb" style and I'm very familiar with it, I mean, I know the style that you are talking about.

Male: You didn't buy it, did you?

Group:

Male: No, I have a few of my own.

Group:

Female: OK. I would like to tell you some things that RTD is doing and some things that they are considering doing in order to deal with some of the problems that are caused by vandals and the graffiti on the buses and I'd like to know what you think about them.

Presently, RTD is taking away student bus passes from a juvenile who is caught vandalizing an RTD bus. What this does in essence is it forces the juvenile, or his family, to purchase a new pass. Another thing that RTD is currently doing is that they are actually revoking student I.D.'s for repeat offenders. The student I.D., as you probably know, allows the student to buy a monthly pass at a discounted rate, so revoking this I.D. causes the student to pay full fare when riding the bus.

One thing RTD is considering is to reduce service, to fund the clean-up activities, now if they do this, it could result in fewer buses that run less often, but the buses that do run would have no graffiti or etched windows.

Another thing RTD could do is to by-pass what they call "hot-spots". If a driver on a particular line runs into acts of vandalism, he can notify the radio dispatch center and all buses on that line would be instructed to by-pass that particular stop. What this would

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do is it would cause riders who are waiting at that stop to be passed by and it could also prevent passengers on the bus from getting off the bus at that stop. But it would prevent vandals from vandalizing that particular bus.

Also, what RTD could consider is to examine locations where a great deal of vandalism takes place and they could do several things; they could eliminate a bus-stop in that location or they could eliminate several stops or they could discontinue service to that area or they could eliminate an entire bus line. How do you feel about these things?

Male: _____ all fine and well but the bad thing about that is a lot of the areas where there are problems you've got to realize that maybe if you have an handful of people out there doing this and what you're doing is punishing all the good people out there that have to go out to work and have to, you know that's their livelihood, the bus is the only way they've got as a means of transportation and by cutting it off for a few kids who are out there "tagging" something, that would be really detrimental to them.

Male: That's, you know, the easy way out, the easy way out by the RTD _____ didn't want to deal with the problem.

Male: If the RTD were going to do that, I could see them, you know, I could see them doing that on a random basis, taking away the service, putting it back in, taking it away, putting it back in, depending upon the situation _____ could be that as a result of doing that, people, the other people that ride the bus, may end up saying, "Hey, put down that spray can". Who knows. Or turning somebody in. If it's done on a random basis.

Female: You know, some days you would be late to work.

Group:

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Male: Or taking away their bus passes is just another means of them saying, "I have no way to go to school".

Group:

Male: _____ get another spray can and the next bus I see _____

Male: You have to remember, if they eliminate a line, or something like that, just like I mentioned earlier, originally I worked in a division where we had a narcotic problem on one street and we attacked that problem. We shut that street down for a week. The only people that were allowed on that street, and we manned that street twenty-four hours a day, were the residents and they had to show us proof that they lived on the street. And after that, that started to spread like cancer of narcotics sales all over that division and it didn't solve the problem. It solved the problem on that street, but it didn't solve the problem. It's you... you, have "hot-spots" and you eliminate buses to those particular areas, then all these guys are gonna do is they are gonna move to a different area where the buses are. Eventually, if RTD is gonna do that, they're gonna have to just shut-down. It wouldn't work that well.

Male: One of the things that RTD doesn't do is ...in the civil code is a statute, I think it's 14.15 or 15.14., one or the other, that _____ liability of the vandal, kids spray-painting & defacing property with paint or other liquid, to the parent in an amount up to \$10,000. Alright? Now, if every kid who's caught vandalizing the bus, if that kid's parents were sued in small claims court by the legal department of RTD, well you'd start seeing some parents that were getting on those kids asses pretty heavy. Parents apparently are not paying attention to them right now, or as much as they should be, but the parents are not being dragged into court unless, of

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course, the kid's brought to juvenile court, and that might not happen. He might be let go at the police station. He might just go to the probation department and never be brought before us, but there is a section in the civil code that allows for strict liability against the parent for a kid vandalizing property. We just told that to a couple of groups that we talked to and I don't know if they've ever done anything. The RTD certainly has the resources to do it.

Group:

Female: A lot of these _____ cannot afford to eat let alone, they're not going to go to court.

Male: They can afford to whup their kids, can't they?

Group:

Female: _____ and I'm not going to _____

Male: Well, I'm just, we're here to just throw-out all these little ideas, that's one of them.

Male: I think that parent-pressure thing is right because a lot of them, they'll just dummy-up when you say, "Well, what can I do". I mean, all they're going to say is....but if you put the pressure on them and tell them, "Now you've got to come to court" or they're going to come down and pick you up and come down here, we're going to talk about this mess with your kid, you're right, a little tap on the behind never hurt anybody.

Male: Also too, if you apply pressure on the parents and you hit them where it hurts the most, right in the pocketbook, I'll tell you, it'll change some of their behavior along with peer pressure. What we do at our project is we utilize a lot of the former gang members and we turn them around and they go back into the gang areas and deal with some of these guys. If we could identify some of these guys who

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are actually "tagging", put the fear of G-d into them and the law, turn them around and get them back on those buses as some kind of consultants, that's almost a remedy too.

Male: Your "taggers" are not your hardcore rock coke sales.

Group:

Male: Didn't you just say that they are middle-class?

Male: A lot of them are. If you take one of those middle-class kids and through them in the Hall for a weekend and.....

Group:

Male: I think there's...you have to make a distinction of "taggers" I mean, I can see "taggers" in the Valley area go to East Los Angeles. I don't think you can call these guys "taggers".

Group:

Male: You know what gang graffiti looks like and I know what gang graffiti looks like and you got the names and the top name is usually the guy who writes it, you know, "LVS" or _____ or whatever it is, but the "taggers" they're little names, those are usually the little guys in junior high school, mostly.

Male: Some of the gangs, the one kid that I spoke of earlier, wasn't gang bangers, so to speak, but what happened was the gangs saw his style of writing and what they did is they brought him in, not as a fullfleged gang member, they brought him in as their "art director".

Group:

_____ and tag that particular groups name in the big, bold bond letters and this kid was

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great. He was so good that he is since done a video for Michael Jackson, he has done several of Custom Car magazines, I'm still in contact with the kid all the time.

Group:

Male: This kid is really a good kid. The guy is just an excellent artist. Have you ever thought about bringing in somebody of that caliber along with several of the other ones and have them sit on a panel some of the discussions we're talking about, the cardboard on the side of the bus, the different ideas, what they think about it and they give you their opinion; "Hey, this is what I think", and believe it or not, you can probably utilize a lot of what they have to say, probably more so than what were telling you because were looking at our point of view. Look from their point of view and you probably would be a lot better off.

Female: Is it a pride in "taggers", I mean kind of a "taggers" contest, or something?

Female: I wanted to go back to having the parents be responsible. There's a court case going through right now on a Mother that's being held responsible for her son being a gang member.

Male: Dismissed.

Female: Well, it shook up for a while, it shook up some parents, parents were talking about it. Do you know the case?

Male: Williams, Gloria Williams.

Female: And we're in contact with a lot of parents that their children are gang members and they were talking, they were discussing the case because it really hit the media, so the parents are concerned that maybe the courts will hold me responsible for my child and even though it was dismissed, it got a lot of air-

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play, it got a lot of newspaper print and a lot of parents are concerned, well, ok, maybe I need to know where my child is after curfew hours, maybe I need to know where my kid is and who he is associating with. Parents may not even know, "Oh, that's just a marking pen, Oh, that's just spray paint, I mean what's it for? What are you going to do with it?"

Male: Ozone, ozone, the famous ozone _____ that vandalized, "tagged", Ventura Boulevard, Studio City down to Malibu, and it caused about \$80,000 to \$100,000 worth of damage, was brought into the probation department, South San Fernando Valley. None of us knew about it. Ran through on what they call an informal probation, 654 probation, had to do thirty hours of community work, community went up in an outrage, ok, it was already over and done with before any of us found out about it and a month after that, Ozone's picture appeared in People magazine. People magazine, as being an artist. Ozone got fame in People magazine, thirty hours of community service, caused over \$100,000 worth of damage and things like that just are things that you have to watch out for.

Male: I think you should use the media, RTD should use the media to their advantage. They didn't do it. The public would know _____ that this Ozone, or whatever his name is, caused that much damage and now he's in People magazine, I think that'd be great.

Group:

Male: It depends on how much cooperation _____ Gloria Williams case. You read the article about it being dismissed and the way they make it sound, law-enforcement overreacted and tried to make the Mother out to be something she really wasn't. When, supposedly, they had found her posing with her kids with their colors, holding weapons along with them and yet, supposedly, law-enforcement overreacted. So they go out and print this now people are

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going to look and say, "See, _____"

Male: And she had a birthday cake that said "Happy C-Day".

Male: She was just playing around!

Group:

Jewel: What does that mean?

Male: Well, "Crypts" hate to say the word "B". Because it's the first letter of "Bloods".

Group:

Male: You're also going to have to remember, we're talking about "tagging" here. That takes care of the outside of the bus, look at the inside. How do they solve the problem on the inside? The inside is where all the gang members are. You see gang graffiti on the inside where on the outside _____ "tagging". We've given ideas about the outside now we should think about some of the inside, maybe going back and having the officers ride the buses again. Making a combined effort to try and solve the problem on the outside and the inside because the graffiti you're going to find, if they start looking at it, the graffiti they find inside the bus, is not going to match at all with what's on the outside; in very few cases, if any, because these "taggers".... in this movie they talk about one of these guys putting up the graffiti like they were talking about along the freeway, in big, bold letters, Ozone, it takes them one night. They'll do it in one night. They'll do it in about three or four hours. There will be a bunch of guys go out there, they size it up, everyone knows what their job is and they do this by flashlight. They don't go out there and do it with a big light that sort of lights up the wall, they do it by flashlight. They have it

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all spaced out. Everybody goes out and does their thing and then the guy goes out and puts the finishing touches.

Male: They call that "bombing". That's "bombing", that's not just graffiti.

Male: In New York, they call it art.

Group:

Male: They do, they call it art in New York and here we call it graffiti.

Jewel: There are several other things that have been suggested that could possibly help with the problems of graffiti and vandalism. I'd like to throw them out to you and know what you think about them.

Group:

Jewel: For one thing, some of these things would take a lobbying after it, but local cities could be require to pay for the costs of repairing vandalism that occurs within that city on the buses.

Male: So you need more taxes!

Group:

Male: How would you know? I mean, what would you do, have a session and have that city put their officers on that bus until they get to the city limits, get off, and have another set of officers get on? Because how are you going to hook that city

Male: How do you know which city.....

Jewel: Radar

Group:

Male: ...run all the buses through Beverly Hills and then you can.....

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Jewel: Ok, a tax could be placed on spray paint with the money to be used for repair of vandalism.

Group:

Male: Most of it's being stolen.

Jewel: Additional police protection of transit services could be provided by the county and by the local cities.

Male: The county was funding that, that's what I told you, for five years they used to have extra officers working that thing and they use to flood them, heavily, and all of a sudden, goodbye, no more.

Male: The only thing that's really cost effective that doesn't cost anybody anything is having L.A.P.D. or L.A. County Sheriffs or any police department that you want, ride those buses for free! What happened to that? That doesn't cost anybody anything! Absolutely nothing. It doesn't cost anybody one cent and you've got police protection on that bus for free.

Jewel: There are police officers that are _____

Group:

Male: _____ from Ontario, those people _____ riding El Monte, run in on the freeway _____ L.A., all the time.

Male: No, Tony's correct. They use to do that all the time.

Male: They took that away. They took away the officers and policemen, I could tell you right now, the County Sheriffs Department _____ doing to donate anything to you for free. Absolutely nothing. You can tax all you want we don't have enough policemen. Now, whoever came up with that idea, it's a grandiose idea. It ain't gonna fly. You could pay them off-

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duty, and I don't know why they stopped that one, either. Because you guys were knocking them dead, I mean, you don't have to put policemen on every bus, just the idea that they might be on every bus. That's it.

Male: The idea was really _____ especially again with that advertisement on there.

Group:

Female: Plus the fact that your conducting arrests on the bus.

Male: Exactly, well they didn't think they were arrestable and they thought, well, they were on the bus and they could do anything they want to.

Male: _____ and the next thing you know there's 300 people instead of three, _____ 300 people because everyone's talking and it's just _____

Group:

Male: There you go.

Male: _____ let policemen ride for free and it's a gratuity and everything else but you're getting protection out of it.

Group:

Female: Do you know who's sitting next to you?

Jewel: Ok, suppose it was your responsibility to develop a program for RTD of prevention, apprehension and penalization of vandalism and graffiti. What would you recommend? I'd like to just go around the table one at a time, just spend a couple of minutes and tell me.

Male: My suggestion would be, first of all,

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formulate some kind of a program where you get guys who have had that history before, who have been apprehended, turn them around as consultants, or something. Ok, like peer pressure. Have some kind of RTD fund this, so these guys can ride the buses or even hire them part-time. Ride the buses, tag these guys, identify them and turn them into local enforcement and deal with them from that.

Also, the idea of parents being called on the carpet for these guys doing this. This is another thing that I think is a good suggestion. They may not have the money because they come from a poor family, but when you put Mom and Dad on _____ street, well...

Male: Not all of them...

Male: Well, most cases, it'll have some type of effect.

Jewel: Ok, Dan?

Male: Well, _____ the advertising on there, policemen maybe on the bus, maybe sitting next to you, actually having policemen ride back again on the buses. Again, probably on the lines where it's skittish with graffiti, to hook up cameras on the inside there so people can actually see the camera or in the different divisions that they have that are wide open spaces where anyone can walk on, a better security system to stop people to be going on there. Now, some of those places, anyone can walk into any of those locations you'd never know they were in an actual RTD property where the buses are housed.

Male: Everything that Dan said, but adding on one more thing would be a "Scared Straight" blitz of targeted junior high schools, elementary schools and dealing it with also the juvenile justice system in terms of the actual videos. Saying, "This kid did whatever he did, you know, he did _____ 300 hours", and you see him doing that, "This could be you". And

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another one for adults saying, "Your kid did this or this person's kid did this and it cost them X number of dollars plus, _____".

Jewel: Gil:

Male: I kinda go along with everybody, but one thing that I want that I think need to be, is to allow the public to know how much we spend to repair the damages as far as _____ the RTD is concerned and I feel that the public shouldn't be punished, nor should the parents? _____
Scrub the buses on Saturdays and Sundays. _____

JeweL: Ramone?

Male: Basically again, the same thing, just if they were to develop a program where they do have the kids cleaning up, make sure the kids are properly supervised where they will actually work and not play around, but paint the inside of the bus, paint the outside. I worked in the county jail and I've talked to some of the inmates and I've gotten some drawings from some of the inmates there and both younger eighteen year-olds on up to thirty-five, forty year olds, and they're good artists. They have a lot of talent and stuff like that. It's just basically going to waste because the _____ direction they've taken in their life. But if they're given the opportunity, maybe you can do something with that. Given the opportunity to develop their skills a little further _____ along with the boxing program that we talked about a little earlier, giving them an opportunity to express themselves, if that's the way they do it. Not just _____ being punished, but also maybe adding on a little recreation for them along those lines.

Jewel: Marie?

Female: I think I'd have to vote for prevention programs. I think that communities where you see an abundance of graffiti take an ownership

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of that particular bus. There's people that use those buses and that's their only way of transportation and somehow have a beautification program in that community so that people feel like the bus is part of the community; this is a service that we need to take ownership of. We need to see leaders in that particular community, to see what their ideas are, see how they can incorporate, even a reward system, turn in a "tagger", turn in a graffiti artist; "We don't want our buses to look like this. Let's take some pride in this particular community." Get young people behind it, just like you have program like "S.A.D.D." Students Against Drunk Driving, saying no, this is bad, have positive role models so that you have teens that can say, "Look, let's do something better for our community". And reward those kids for being involved in that because if they're doing something that's positive, other kids want to join up. Where now it's...our office_____ tee-shirts wearing but you might see them later shell out drug city programs against drugs, gangs and suicide and kids are identifying, they want to identify with something really bad so if they're going to find something that's good, your filling that void. That would be my prevention program, in terms of intervention, you need all the law enforcement that we possibly can, we need to make sure that people know that if they are caught, that they are going to be prosecuted and that they are going to use all the other services everyone else talked about, community services, but maybe have some of the people that are within their own individual communities whether it be people who have done this, committed this offense in the past, or just people that tell them not only...because vandalism is like a step, one of the stepping stones to other crimes. It's not that they're just going to be "taggers" forever, so maybe it's costing RTD but the next time around it's going to cost our society as a whole so I think we need to look at it as vandalism isn't OK and have a wide media campaign of "Do you know what your

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kid's up to?" and that it doesn't just stop. Maybe for some of the kids, it stops, maybe if your a middle class kid and you're a "tagger", it's OK, because you're going to out grow it or your going to go in a different direction but the communities that most of us work in, it's a lot more serious than that.

Jewel: Tony?

Male: Just what I said about community police, we need more men, catch these guys, 1) present prosecution and make then take the graffiti off immedeiatly, it's gotta come off and if that means increase costs so much, that's the way it goes.

Jewel: Warren?

Male: I can't disagree with anything that anybody said. I think _____ look at one of the primary motivations and that is the desire for recognition. You're going to have to find someway to give that to those kids or they're going to keep on doing it. Unless you're going to send them all up the river for five years and that's really not going to send the message to them. Thirty hours of cleaning graffiti off the buses, that can be a great party. Hey, let's all get together, tell some good jokes and have a good time. Yeah, we may have to work _____.

Jewel: Raymond?

Male: I think one of the best ideas is probably the one Dan had about bringing in the off-duty officers, I think what can be added to that is utilize them and have a task force that can be used on a different periods, maybe once a month, or once every two months, catch these guys off-guard, go in there, do a huge sweep luckily, if you come up with twenty, thirty, forty bodies, utilize the media, as L.A.P.D. has done in the past, bring them in, show them these guys going in. If you've got twenty or thirty of them going in being arrested and use

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that on T.V. to show, "Hey, here's what can happen". In reality, show that RTD is sort of striking back against what's going on out there. That would probably be one of the best things.

Jewel: Debby?

Female: As far as using the media and everything, we have to use it and show the positive things that RTD is doing with these kids. You know, the positive programs and everything that RTD is doing for our kids. Because these kids, just like they see this on the news every night, you see a killing so of course every week there's more drive-bys and more gun_____ well, as far as publicizing that, as far as, the kids are again writing on the wall and everything, you have to find some positive way of showing them that what you can do for them instead of I don't know what, exactly, but some positive things.

Jewel: Jack?

Male: Besides doing what everybody has suggested, in addition to that I would ...as part of a task force, increase the courts and the probation department's awareness, the importance of bringing these kids through the court system and the importance of telling us, all the judges in the juvenile system what damage is being done by maybe showing them that film and also creating a liaison with all the schools keep that as an on-going open line of communication; probation, courts, schools, for their task force, police department. You don't have that now. You really don't have that at all. So we see a bus with graffiti, we don't know that your guys that we saw on televisions arrested them, they were never brought to us. Somebody in the the probation department will let them go. You have to have complete circle here or it's not going to work.

Jewel: Sherman?

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Male: This is not fair.

Group:

Male: Commenting on something that Marie said, for several years I was involved in a poster contest that RTD had, they used to have a dinner down at USC and we use to have kids come. This is a Community Affairs Department of RTD and each year they use to give kids awards for making posters. "Why", you know, "you should do certain things on RTD." I think that was a good project and I think if kids can be made aware of what important service a bus is for their particular community and maybe have some type of awards to be given out, even monetary, in junior high and elementary schools, for posters or essays, on "Why I think RTD buses should be free of graffiti and why they are necessary for the community." I think kids will then learn to appreciate buses more. And also I think there needs to be more public service announcements by RTD. And most of the T.V. stations would do this free and I don't care how poor any family is in the city, everyone has a television and everyone watches the television. And if people were made aware that the costs and that this is going to be passed on to the rider, I think people will be more concerned about seeing that graffiti and "tagging" doesn't occur. So they'll bring it to the bus drivers attention, the police and things of that nature. Basically, the bus fare is going to go up another fifty cents. It's going to come out of their pocket. They're going to want to do something about it.

Male: You know, another thing too is, what RTD should formulate is a graffiti "hot-line" where they can turn these suckers in, man, and not be identified who had turned them in and give them a reward. Almost like the "We Tip" program.

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Male: The reward could be a monthly pass...

Male: Yeah!

Male: Or some monetary gain.

Male: Which really wouldn't come out of your pocket.

Male: How are you going to get a conviction?

Group:

Jewel: Before we call it an evening, I would like to introduce you to someone. We have at least one representative here from RTD.

Group:

Male: This ain't the guy on T.V., is it?

Jewel: This is Sherry_____ with the_____

Group: Hi!

Female: How are you? I really glad that you all could come down because it's been very revealing. I think we tend to see at RTD that everyone's aware of how expensive the problem is. That's been the most revealing thing to find out that people aren't aware of it. We live with it day in and day out. It's real interesting to find out that even though you see the buses drive by with_____ You know, by the way, we now have "We Tip"_____ on the inside of the buses that offers a \$1,000 reward

Group:

Male: A lot of us weren't aware of that, you start putting these suckers on billboards. People are in need of \$1,000.

Group:

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Male: That's fine on the inside. People who ride on the inside know about it, but people who don't ride the bus.... I can't remember the last time I was on a bus.

Female: _____

Female: _____

Group:

Female: I wasn't aware that they had discontinued.

Male: _____ a long time ago. _____ At least that.

Jewel: Do any of you have any questions that you'd like to ask?

Group:

Male: _____ in the process of trying to give some of the 1 1/2 % of the tax that comes out of transportation funds or _____

Female: Well, we're looking to do that. The city had L.A. Pride Program.

Male: Right, OK. So you wouldn't get _____

Female: ...some of it would go towards cleaning buses and I believe _____

Male: OK _____

Female: _____

Female: I believe that we are going reconstitute at Costa Mesa _____

Male: That's a good program. I think it's being expanded.

Female: _____ and this _____ was sponsored by _____ we're not allowed to award _____ We're about to start our

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annual _____ anit-graffiti campagne. We do
this every year _____ statistics

Male: I'll keep you posted.

Female: We are planning on doing some more work based
on _____

Male: How about the hiring of off-duty policemen?

Female: _____

Male: Are we on film?

Group:

Jewel: Some of you expressed a concerned of _____
about being on film, so we didn't video tape
this. The reason that we do tape record is
that I have to write an analysis of all of
this and I'm not smart enough to remember
everything you say. We also have them
transcribed. _

Group:

Jewel: We do have... we are starting a real
serious _____ I did _____ ten target
schools _____

Male: _____ you've got them all right there.
The question is, _____ is that cost
effective?

Female: I don't have the answer to that. I imagine it
must be very expensive to _____ extensive
_____ and I know it must be expensive and
certainly it is very, very _____

Male: I just have a concern, I mean I _____ law
enforcement about this, this is the Raiders
Anti-Graffiti campaign, involved with RTD,
there are a lot of gangs out there, they wear
Raider's jackets and hats as a badge of
identification.

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Female: Really?

Male: Yes. And I don't know if _____ this type of program, if the Raiders is a good thing or a bad thing. You might, I don't know how many gangs are doing it now, but we see them in court all the time.

Group:

Male: Sherman, have you ever been to the football games?

Male: Yeah.

Group:

Female: You go down the streets down there afterwards

Male: Kids are coming to court and they are just kids out in the street who identify with the Raiders and that's something, a badge of courage or identity. And this, I don't know how those two things go hand-in-hand.

Female: If we were to concentrate a media blitz on the Raiders_____

Male: I don't know_____

Female: Well maybe.....

Male: I think a law enforcement would know more about it than I do.

Female: Maybe not so much a poster or something, they're more into the caps and jackets, as far as a poster, that might not be too.....

Female: ...public announcements on the radio and T.V. _____ There's people who _____

Group:

Male: I think most of the Raider's posters are

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written on.

Group:

Male: Well, we're just all central

Group:

Male:they want to be the toughest around. My
personal feelings_____

Male: _____

Female: ___with ramps or___

Groups:

Male: Clippers...

Female: ...or the Clippers...

Group:

Female: Raiders_____ are the real prime_____

Male: _____

Female: _____ Very rowdy_____

Group:

Female: _____

Group:

Male: _____ further that hard image.

Female: _____

Group:

Male: Don't have all of the answers_____ it's a
complicated job.

Female: And we really are looking_____ have these

Female: Are you sponsoring any prevention programs?

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_____ are there any kind of positive activities that RTD sponsors.

Group:

Female: Also I think a lot of times people don't see what kind of jobs are available with RTD so that the community people will know that, "Maybe this is a company where I can look for a job? Why would I want to work for RTD? What can I do?" It might be a good idea to have a personnel_____

Group:

Female: You can have parents, older sibling, so they can say, " I can be a part" why do I have to attack_____ a lot of it's aggression. Why can't I be a bus driver, why can't I be an officer, why can't I be a marketing representative.

Group:

Jewel: Before we go, some of participants in our second group have already arrived and some of them are former gang members. Some of them are participants from last night and have asked not to be put in a position where they have to come face-to-face with anyone, I don't think anyone here has expressed that concern but has anybody here have that concern?

Male: Do you have a back door?

Group:

Female: There are no concerns_____

Male: As long as I don't have too many parolees out there, I don't mind.

Group:

Female: Thank you very much for your help.

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Jewel: Thank you for coming this evening. My name is Jewel. This is a research company and this is what we do, we do survey, marketing and opinion research. What we've invited you here for tonight is sort of a round-table discussion. What we're interested in getting from you are your opinions, the benefit of your knowledge and your experience. You were invited because you have specific areas of experience and knowledge and can probably provide insights in the areas of graffiti and vandalism and that's what we're here to talk about tonight. Not just any kind of graffiti and vandalism, but graffiti and vandalism on the RTD bus lines. Southern California Rapid Transit District are our clients. They hired us to help them to provide insights into this problem so that they can learn why these acts are perpetrated, how to deal with them in terms of apprehending and penalizing the perpetrators, what they can do to prevent these acts from occurring and things of that nature. We have it on very good authority that you people are knowledgeable about this, that you...I hope that you will be very generous with your thoughts, your ideas and your experience. Before we get started I would like to go around the table. I would like you to tell me who you are, give me some sort of an idea of the extent of your experience in dealing with youth gangs, vandalism and/or graffiti. I always start on my left, Alfred, I'm sorry.

Male: My name is Alfred Rodriguez, I'm a consultant with gang violence reduction project. I work for my neighborhood, where I grew up, which is Little Valley...

Jewel: Which is what?

Male: Little Valley. And what I do there is work with the community and the youths that are growing up and try to prevent the youths from as they grow, to get involved in gangs and street gangs and the type of dude that gets involved with a gang, that's my job that I do now.

Male: My name is Steve _____. Basically, I do the

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same thing as Alfred, I was born and raised in East L.A. Work with the Lopez neighborhood and that's a _____ area down there and that is about it. I don't know what else I can say.

Female: My name is Nadine Chris and I work for the Alhambra School District. I work mainly with the kids, so I kind of work around helping them out also and getting them out of gangs and also I am a concerned parent. I also have children of my own that.....

Female: I'm Olivia _____, and I'm one of the concerned parents. I go with the kids when they have trips to help supervise and things like that.

Male: I'm _____ and I'm a consultant for _____ working with the youth, taking them on trips, field trips, keeping them away from home. _____.

Jewel: Could you turn your card so I can see...Thank you Margie.

Female: I'm Margie Raul and I'm a consultant for _____ and right now what I'm trying to do is ask the youngsters that are getting involved in the neighborhoods to connect with the other neighborhoods in the project. That way they could all help each other in stopping the gang violence.

Female: My name is Sylvia _____ and I work for the Youth Authority and I'm working with the drug and alcohol and training on suicide, right now with the program. But I also work for the community with the kids. Basically I'm doing the same thing that everybody else here does.

Female: My name is Helen Sanchez, I'm a concerned parent and I work for the California Youth Authority. What we, what the mothers do, we have a program, we call it Concerned Parents, we get the mothers together and try to help them and their kids that are not in school to try to get those kids back in school and try to get them into a

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program too with alcohol and try to get the mothers that lost kids with how to cope with it too. So thats what we do in our neighborhood.

Male: My name is Richard Rodriguez and I've also worked nine years with Gang Violence _____ project, and I've had a graffiti program for the last nine years. I work right there at the Parks and Recreation, I was one of the four speakers that spoke at the '84 Olympics Dodger Stadium on graffiti and I have a little packet right here if you want, you know, get copies....

Jewel: Yes, I would like you to leave me some, thank you.

Richard: I have that. Also, I work with the youth and the gangs and our neighborhood was one of the ones that started, the very first, that started the graffiti program in our neighborhood, to take all the graffiti off the walls. And, you know, we were successful.

Jewel: Greg.

Male: Greg _____, consultant. _____

Jewel: With what?

Male: White Fence. I do basically the same as everyone else.

Jewel: Okay, before we get started, I'd like to show you a video, because it can explain to you the subjects that we want to discuss tonight a lot better than I can. So, I hope you are all sitting where you can see the T.V., if not please move to a more visible place.

Male: Can everybody see?

Jewel: That's the problem. That's what we'd like to talk about. I'd like to know from you, what your specific experiences are with these types of vandalism and graffiti. I would like any insights you can give us on as to why these acts

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are committed, the different kinds of graffiti and the motivations behind the acts. I'd like to know if you know of any ways of dealing with the perpetrators in the ways of penalties, what's appropriate, what works, what doesn't work. How do you catch the kids that are doing this and again, you know, what is effective. And then how do you prevent it? Do you know of anything that's been tried? Do you know what's been successful? Do you know what's not been successful?

Male: I have been on the Montebello bus, and what I've noticed on their bus line, one time when I was riding, they had an under-cover cop aboard and this one youngster had pulled out a marker attempting to scribble on a seat and the guy saw him, came back, flashed a badge and had him give up the marker, he took it away from him. This is what I've seen on the Montebello bus line, I haven't seen anything like that on RTD.

Jewel: Have you ever noticed an RTD bus that was vandalized...

Male: Oh, I see them all the time, I see them all the time. I've ridden quite a few that had markings on the bus and on the windows and, you know, torn seats, and like ..I see, like I said, I see them all the time and as far as, like you ask us if we knew of any type, like punishing someone for doing it, what they should do is some type of arrest, when you catch someone doing it, hold them in a detention center, till that bus comes off the line, so that they can clean it up.

Female: Yeah, make them clean up their mess.

Female: Make them stay there all day and clean it, make...

Male: Like arrest them, and take them to a detention center and hold them there till that bus is off the line, comes in at night. Then pull them out of that detention center and have them clean the whole bus. Until its completely clean, then you

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can release them.

Male: Not even that bus...

Male: With a probation behind them, because you know, they'll do it and they'd probably do it again.

Male: There has to be some type of stiff penalty for that type of action cause this is, like they said on the radio, it is a big problem and it's costing quite a bit of money.

Male: Like the RTD, you know, you say that they have their own police, you know, taking care of that. Like he was saying, but not just so that the bus that's being.. you know, after its off, just have them out there, cleaning the buses that are coming in. Like they give them community service, okay, twenty hours of community service, is nothing. I know before in 1984 when they were saying let's clean up and beautify Los Angeles for the Olympics, you know, they were just saying 'for the Olympics' you know, and the thing is, the problem was how about after the Olympics. Now, they said that they'll catch someone marking up the walls or whatever, they'll charge them up to \$2,000.00. And the families and all that, but, you know it wasn't that the courts, I think the courts, you know, got lenient on that, you know, and the thing is that if the RTD has something, they gotta get involved also with the schools, also with the community...

Jewel: How would they get involved with the schools and the community?

Male: They have meetings, you know, if you have representatives, you know, especially you have here, what are they called? The ones that go out there. Yeah, well a representative from the RTD going into the schools, letting them be aware, the kids, giving a presentation, letting the teachers have the awareness that markers, you know, spray cans, commercials also on T.V. You know letting the parents of what....do have kids with alot of spray cans? What are they

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using them for? Some kind of awareness to the public, you know, and what could happen to them if their caught. Because the parents, eventually, they know that their kids have markers, if they have graffiti in their own books, taking them to school. You know, you have all that. If my kid comes over, and I've seen him with graffiti, I mean graffiti as far as names and all that, right on his book, you know and I'm letting him know who's marking these names are, you. Because I know that he's going to be out there, probably doing the same. The whole thing is I've been working with that nine years, and in nine years, I mean, without stopping or whatever because if you want it completely taken care of, I mean, you have to do that for another generation to come up and like I said, if you keep the control, because every neighborhood here, we have a graffiti program out there, and every neighborhood works in their own neighborhood, to try to keep the graffiti down. We have meetings with the gang members themselves.

Jewel: Do you do anything about the graffiti on and in the buses?

Male: Oh, well no. This is one of the things that, say for instance, in my neighborhood, most of them are not even doing graffiti anymore, because we have been, like I said, nine years at it. With kids that I've worked with that live in the neighborhood, they even got used to having their community clean, their few blocks of, you know, the neighborhood, which is the gang in there clean, that they would come to me and ask me for paint. Even the grown ups, the parents and all that. If they see something marked, they have been used to having it clean, because I would go down there and try to take it off as soon as possible. This is what the whole thing is and I've been doing it for nine years. This is the whole thing that we have the little kids that are coming up now that have been used to seeing the neighborhood clean and their helping out also.

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Jewel: How does this relate to the buses? The graffiti on the buses and in the buses?

Male: Okay, well if their not doing it in their neighborhood, more or less, their minds to put it in the bus.

Female: They probably find it easier, inside the bus, because nobody looking at them, their doing it so fast. They need more security inside the bus. They need like, summers coming out now. A good idea might be that RTD could hire some kids to take off the graffiti, or sit in the bus and see if someone going to come out with something tell them something. Or even part-time, after school jobs. That would be something for the kids to keep them busy. It's probably just that they don't have anything else to do, so they pull out markers.

Male: Like Richard was saying like when we get out there on the streets and we work in our neighborhoods talking to the kids and everything telling them not to be writing on the walls and you know we paint it when they write on the walls. I think maybe RTD should look at something like that too. In hiring some kind of consultants to work in certain neighborhoods where, like they said they have their high rate of graffiti at and try to hire someone from those communities to get in there and talk to the kids and then communicate to stop the vandalism and writing on the buses and stuff. So thats another thing RTD can look at. Hiring somebody from those communities to do that type of work. To get in there and talk to them, where those kids can relate to that person.

Male: And also giving them something, like taking them camping or whatever. RTD doing something for that community, for that place, so the kids are knowing - 'Hey man, their helping us, let's keep their buses clean!'

Male: You know, alot of times the kids ain't got nothing better to do, but to stand at a bus stop and wait for a bus to come by, it gives them

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something to do, some kind of excitement for their day. If RTD maybe starts providing some kind of activities for them, they'll start looking at that and say "well hey, RTD is helping us, so we'll just help them."

Male: And like Richard said, the awareness. Put it in the T.V., they have little show, commercials. Show awareness on graffiti, on the buses, what it does to the community, how it destroys the community, makes it look even, you know people live in poor poverty and poor areas, it just make it look worse. Make them feel proud of where they live.

Male: With, with some famous role model...

Male: Say, say, Cheech Marin, he comes from East L.A., right? And he can work, put out a commercial with a few of the kids on the east side and maybe for the black sides, getting someone like Eddie Murphy, on that side. Someone to talk to the blacks. Tell them not to writing on our buses, you know you're making our neighborhoods look bad and our people look bad by doing this.

Male: I know you'll save more money...

Male: Like the man was saying on the tube, that its costing them so many thousands of dollars just to clean that stuff off the buses, I think RTD would save alot more money, if they ...

Male: If they hire some of these kids...

Male: start some kind of program and hire people from the community. They would save alot more money that way and get results.

Female: Show awareness of T.V., to parents. Why do your kids carry so many markers. They can only use them in school for, you know...Have the parents aware of what the kids are doing also. With more police and cars. You know undercover, to keep an eye on them.

Male: Do they have police on the buses, or just out

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on patrols?

Jewel: You mean the transit police, the RTD police?

Male: Yes.

Jewel: They have them in both places, but they don't have enough people to put someone on every bus.

Male: Oh me, myself, I was thinking all that passing of new laws to stop graffiti, or to punish them in certain ways...and in a way I think that makes it more of a challenge to that kid. To get away with the crime. There's already laws out on graffiti and they are still doing it anyway. So I really don't think that that would even phase them. You know somebody has to get out there and work with these kids and talk to them on the streets about this issue.

Male: I have a couple of posters that the RTD brought out with the Los Angeles Raiders. And it says "Stop Vandals Cold", and the other one says about "You don't have to be tough to trash your community.." or something like that. I have two of them and it has RTD on it. The billboards, you know I was always saying, cause I was out there always painting, and I was saying, hey if a billboard, if we're going to have a billboard saying about graffiti up here, it would be good, an idea that it's there all the time, it's looking at you. A lot of times the kids, and some of the guys, even when they would get drunk, they'll feel guilty to even mark up a wall. Because we've had it clean for so long. And sometimes they'll get drunk and leave it, but I'll take it off the next day. But see, it keeps them with a little guilt to, because we would have meetings. And like I said, you have to have, the best idea I've heard today, is when Steve said "If you even hire some of them in the community" and then some... like I said, in schools, you gotta let them go and the teachers. That attitude that a lot of people have that we'll always have graffiti, and we'll always have gangs, you see that all over..you know and people have that kind of attitude. I say we've

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been successful and I kept it up, and even though I'm keeping it up and there might be another ten years, but then somebody else is going to take over because these kids are coming to me now to keep the neighborhood clean. This is what I'm saying, if the RTD wants to save money, hire a few of them that are within the community. And then like the commercials he said. You know, you can have some famous role models coming out with commercials, having them up there, each ethnic group having their...

Jewel: You mentioned the Raiders Posters. How effective do you think RTD's campaign is with the Raiders. Is it something that could be effective in preventing acts of vandalism and graffiti? I'd like to know how you feel about that.

Male: It's a step, it is effective in certain areas but then you have kids are immune to all of that you know...it is a step but they have to go about it other ways also.

Male: Not just one way see.

Male: You gotta put in, you gotta go to...Like Richard was saying, you have to go with people working in the community, advertisement, commercials, you gotta hit it from all sides to get some kind of results.

Male: It would take time but...

Male: Yeah, its gonna take time. Like Richard was saying, we had the graffiti program already nine years, and its barely now it is starting to affect the neighborhoods where their not writing on the walls anymore. But it took us nine years before we got results.

Jewel: Tell me what you know about the type of graffiti and vandalism that occurs on the inside and the outside of RTD buses.

Female: They rip the seats, they scratch the windows.

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Jewel: What about, who does it?

Female: The kids.

Jewel: Why do they do it?

Female: They like doing it. I ask my kids, "Why do you write on walls?"

Male: It is advertisement.

Male: It is advertisement for their neighborhood.

Jewel: Let me tell you one thing, we are tape recording this and if you talk all at once, we don't get anything. We can't record voices over voices. So lets talk one at a time.

Female: Well, I ask my kids why you do it. "I don't know we just like to write our names, what little club we belong to". I get alot of my kids with markers and I throw them away. But they come back for more, and I continue throwing them away. And they don't get tired of it. And I will them "you want to write on something? Write on a piece of paper." And they'll get mad and they'll walk out the door, but still I continue throwing their markers away and throwing them.

Female: Maybe their doing it because the other kids are doing it.

Female: Yeah, they want to be like the IN CROWD.

Male: Yeah, it's when somebody else is doing it, we'll do it too, its really happening.

Male: They think is in a sense that its going to make them a little bit more famous. More recognition, you know, for writing their names here and there, everybody gonna say "Oh I see this name here, there and everywhere", so he thinks it's going to make him popular or something.

Male: And spray cans selling two to a _____ a

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sixteen year old come in and they will sell him a spray can. They should increase the age on that too, selling spray cans to kids that are sixteen years old, they can come in and want two or three spray cans and we don't have to sell them. But sixteen years and up...

Jewel: Do you think that the kids that use spray cans for graffiti, buy those spray cans?

Male: Yeah.

Male: Sure.

Female: Yes.

Male: If you go to a hardware store you can buy a spray can, they'll sell it to a sixteen year and up. A spray can. You gotta be sixteen years and up to buy a spray can, in a hardware store. That's why you see alot of kids going to the hardware stores.

Male: They'll even go into a hobby shop, you know what I mean, and buy those little cans, where they can hide them more easy into their pockets and stuff. Then ride on buses with those. A hobby shop sells them to any kid, really, because they figure the kids going to go build a model or do something with this spray can.

Female: Or shoe polish, cause thats even smaller, the black shoe polish.

Male: Thats even harder to take off. Remember?

Male: You know what? At one time, everybody was sniffing glue with _____ testers. And then they put that a law that the only way that you could buy one, you had to be a certain age.

Male: Eighteen and older.

Male: And you know what, alot of that stopped, alot of people couldn't get to it, couldn't buy it, they'd have to get older people to buy it for them and that was hard. That was one was that

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the glue sniffing stopped. Then they started using spray cans too, to sniff.

Male: Well, what about the markers? The markers

Male: Yeah, you could be any age to buy a marker just about.

Female: They'll say that they have to use it for homework, or school.

Male: Yeah, you can walk into any store and buy colored markers.

Male: You know every program that's out there, like our program, The Gang Violence Reduction Project Community Youth Gang Services, they also have up Graffiti Busters, out there, all of us are doing that job too. That's helping the communities out there. Like I said, we're not all over, we're just in a small section of East Los Angeles, but I know one thing that alot of times I have had busses coming them names are coming from the West-Side and the South-Central, and all that, that are doing the writing. Like I said, alot of people that we've worked with, their not vandalizing or writing on any kind of RTD bus right now.

Male: Alot of the graffiti now is alot different than when we were growing up. Cause the graffiti when we were growing up were the neighborhood's name and the name of the guys who were in the neighborhood. Now what it is, is just a bunch of scribbling and certain signs and logos.

Male: That's the new generation.

Male: That's the new generation that's coming up now, that's doing alot of that type of graffiti.

Male: You can't even understand it.

Male: That's the stoners and rockers...

Male: I know..

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Male: Can't even

Jewel: I beg your pardon?

Male: Can't even read what it says on the busses.

Male: It's scribbling, that's all it is. Where you see graffiti you could stand there and read this guy and that guy. Nowadays you can't understand what its saying on the bus.

Female: That part on the video, where they had it by the _____train tracks. That looked like it was all done by the _____.

Female: People go from all over to go there, but they draw murals and its more artistic than just graffiti.....

Group:

Female: They go there just to see what... everybody goes around from all over just to put their picture right there. And you go down there, their talented, alot of them they go right there and write the pictures.

Male: You know like the business men right there, by where we live. They got together in a group, and they put out so much money for five months, so their buildings could be painted. I worked with them and I hire a couple of little kids to go do that. So you know, they all have something to do with helping out, keeping the graffiti off the walls.

Jewel: How can you relate this to RTD's problem?

Male: Okay, well that's what we're saying, we were all saying, about RTD should get involved in the community, in the communities because RTD goes through all of Los Angeles. Say for instance, like Steve was saying, you have people that you could even hire from there, from the community. Say that your giving him a camping trip this summer, the RTD bus. Stopping vandalism, stopping graffiti in their buses, whatever. You

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make a presentation to the schools. You go in there because we also make presentations to all the schools. We're out there trying to help keep the walls clean, keep the buses clean, keep everything clean. And the whole thing is that you have to put first...you know...you just can't stop, you have to put money and it'll grow, but you can't stop. It's not one of these things... like I said, it keeps, you have to keep the control on it until the new generation starts seeing that if they start getting used to seeing it clean, it'll stay clean. We have always been brought up in a neighborhood where, even before we were born, it was always graffiti. And every, that's all.. going from school, coming from school, the books, the old books all of it had graffiti. So, what did we used to do, just write in our books too, start writing graffiti, small being young. We walked out of our house, graffiti. We were used to seeing graffiti. So our names were gonna be up there too. And that's the way it was. And now, you go out in the streets, them little kids look at the walls and they see it clean. And you know they feel pride, you know, in their neighborhood and they keep it clean. You'll always have the little few that don't care. You'll always have that little few that always starts something. But it could be controlled to where the RTD could save money and like I said, you'll have just a few marking it, which at the end of the day they'll have these people take it off. The RTD shouldn't let a bus come out the next day with double graffiti there and graffiti on top of graffiti because then it even gets even better. You should always have a control on that, always try to keep them busses clean so they could see it. First of all it is gonna be alot of work...like I said, but you can't quit.

Male: Eventually, in the long run, it'll be cheaper than what he said that they don't have the money to clean them....

Male: Another thing RTD can look at is summer camps, right. If RTD put money into the neighborhoods, I would think, if they would put some money,

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say, into a summer camp for kids and RTD sponsors all these kids to go to a summer camp and during their time in this camp, they can talk about graffiti, about writing on walls to these kids. And then as these kids, after they leave the camp and their back on the streets and they see somebody write on the wall, or something, their going to remember, "Hey, RTD sent me to camp and we talked about that. That's no good, we shouldn't be doing that."

Female: Even in sports like baseball.

Male: You know but something for the kids to remember that RTD Sponsored them in something or helped them out in some way and you know that RTD stay in their minds that hey RTD did something for me.

Female: To help respect them.

Male: Now I can do something for them, you know. And I can help keep their busses clean. Most of the kids around the neighborhood they see the bus come by they know about RTD but what has RTD done for them.

Group:

Male: It is an investment that at the end it comes out RTD you know, coming out winning. RTD would save thousands and thousands of dollars in the millions.

Male: Like that kid. Like he said. They will even stop other kids. They will even stop writing on that bus. They will even say something. Because it happens. It has happened. Like I said, we have been successful. And we started in 1980 and there wasn't even a thought. Because of this project there wasn't even a thought in neighborhoods to say hey, like for me, for instance, I will go and say, you know why don't we stop marking up our walls, to the guys, and you see about 50-60 guys right there and they are looking at you as if you are crazy or something, you know. But we started it. And

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you know, like I said, it has worked. But I put alot of work into it. And everybody that is right here has put work into stopping graffiti. And if you go to East L.A. everybody thinks of it as all graffiti. It is very clean now. Some places there are markings of course, but it's kept controlled. And you have to put in the time.

Jewel: How do you apprehend the kids that are doing this? How do you find them, how do you.....

Male: Oh there is two that I am trying for find right now. There is two. And their names are around from the East L.A. College to over there at the park where I work and I asking around and some of the guys have gone and told them, you know to stop writing, and they stop for a couple of months, and then all of a sudden they start up again, so I have to put out the word, because I tell them to tell them to come speak...because I want to talk to them, you know...and they are scared to come and talk to me.

Jewel: Well how do you know who they are?

Male: Their name is right there on the wall. You know. They will put their name flat on the wall.

Male: See the names are up there, and us coming from the streets ourselves you know, yeah we are consultants for youth authority and everything. But we also come from the streets ourselves. So we can read the names on them walls. And we can identify to it. And we can go back into the neighborhood and find that individual.

Jewel: Can you read the names on the busses?

Male: Yeah. Well I am pretty sure you know, some of us can read some of that stuff. I know I can. Some of that stuff we could read and some of that stuff like you say is scribbling and just a mark.

Female: But the youngsters will know.

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Male: Right.

Male: We call them vets from the neighborhood. We still have that respect from some of the youngsters down there. We can go tell the youngsters hey what is this. And they will tell us what it is. And then we can take it from there.

Male: If we don't know,...some of us have kids teenagers and they know what it is all about.

Female: I think like Steve was saying earlier about hiring people, I think that they should hire people that they know the way they write in each neighborhood. Hire those people they know the ways those kids scribble. I can't even tell what is it anymore. And get those ...you can hire them as consultants to go in and to talk to those neighborhoods and going clean the busses because they know what they are writing. I don'tlike I have to ask my kids what does that word mean. They know, we don't. We have to get those people that know, and from there, you identify the names, plus the gang or whatever they belong to. That is how you identify them. And each neighborhood has their own...identifies themselves and this way they go to those neighborhoods and they talk to the guys...Hey you better stop writing on the bus or whatever, and then get some other workers that you have to go and talk to the other consultants who say some of your home-boys came down and they wrote on the bus and let's get together and talk about it. And let's have the both groups and start cleaning the busses. That is the only way that you can get them. It has to be in the neighborhood. _____ Like Richard said they go to one place to all over. You are going to find them because I see it all over the place too when I get onto the bus. It is disgusting to tell you the truth to see it like that. People go on the busses and say my god. Like when I was going to school ...you didn't see. It is worse, it is fact. it is bad. And I think what Steve said is a good idea.

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Jewel: What would act as an incentive to stop doing this? If kids are caught doing this what should be done to them?

Female: Well like Steve said earlier....

Male: He said have them wash it at the end for about a couple of weeks out there.

Group:

Male: That one the detention center you know holding them kids there until those busses come in you know and then as a punishment they have to clean them busses. You know and then next time before they ride on the bus they are going to say hey I don't want to clean all them busses again.

Group:

Male: I am pretty sure that they will get tired of cleaning all them busses. It is not only their graffiti but all the graffiti that is on the bus. Every time that they get caught all of them. Instead of having them do community service or pay a fine is take them to the center and when the busses come in alright those five busses are yours! Clean them up.

Group:

Female: Don't be writing on those busses. I had to clean all them busses.....

Male: I am pretty sure they would. I mean the thought of cleaning five busses is....their hands are going to be sore. They are going to say...I am not going to write my name that big so I will have to clean five busses.

Male: And we usually find that the ones that are writing if their names....you know they will put their names first and then everybody else name..right away you know who it is. Who is the one who is writing. You know right away. If you have them cleaning the busses you have a

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little card on them and you tell them you are caught this time you are going to do so many hours. You will come after school or every Saturday and you will be cleaning busses. The courts have to go along with that too. Because we have to work in conjunction with the court.

Male: You have to work in conjunction with the court.

Jewel: But before you can do that you have to catch them.

Male: Sure.

Female: Start with the ones that you catch. Make them clean all of them. And they are probably riding on the busses all the time and then if they see

Male: They belong to the crews that are doing it. They belong to the little gangs that are marking the busses.

Jewel: Those are called crews?

Male:

Female: Crews. Yes.

Male: Those are the guys that are hanging around the bus stops and that are writing on the busses. They are watching for the busses to come by and mark them.

Female: And then when they mark that bus he is going to tell his friend hey stop doing that because you are going to have to clean busses too. You know the word will get around.

Male: Yeah. It might even come down to a ...hey don't write on that bus because they are going to come around and pick me up and make me clean up that bus so you ain't going to write on that bus buddy. Hey the kid is going to get scared they are going to come back and think that it was him who wrote on that bus. I know if I got caught and then one of my home-boys wanted to write on

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the bus I'm going to tell him.....

Jewel: You use the term home-boy? What is....

Male: From the same neighborhood. We came from the same turf. The same territory.

Male: Like he is from White Fence he is from Lopez, he is from Little Valley, I am from Arizona. You know each one has a neighborhood and they will write their neighborhood. And that is their hommies you know. You see alot of White Fence all over and different names you know.....

Jewel: Let me tell you about some of the things that RTD is thinking of doing. Some of the things that they are already doing to try to prevent acts of vandalism and graffiti. One thing that they are doing right now is that they are taking away student bus passes from juveniles who are caught vandalizing RTD busses. Now what this does is that it forces the juvenile or his family to purchase a new bus pass. This is one thing that they are doing now. Another thing that they are doing right now is that they are taking away student I.D.'s from repeat offenders. Now a student I.D. allows the student to buy a monthly bus pass at a discounted rate. If the I.D. is taken away from the student it causes the student to pay full fare when they ride the busses. One thing that RTD could do, they are not doing this now, but they could do, is that they could reduce service in order to fund clean-up activities. This could mean that there would be fewer busses and the busses would run less often.

Male: I think that would put more anger in certain people. If a bus route was taken from their neighborhood then you are going to put anger in them towards RTD. And then when they do get on a bus then they will be destructive on the bus. It is a way of getting back at RTD.

Group:

Jewel: Another thought that has been give to. And

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again this is not being done, is that RTD could by-pass what is called hot-spots. For example if a driver on a particular line runs into acts of vandalism then the regular dispatch center would be notified and all the busses on that line would be instructed to by-pass.

Group:

Jewel: What this would do.....excuse me a minute I have to return this.....

Group:

Jewel: What this would do is that it would cause bus drivers and people who are waiting at that stop to pass by and it would also prevent passengers from getting off the bus at that stop. Plus it would also prevent the vandals from vandalizing that particular bus. Another thing that RTD could consider is _____ or they could even discontinue service to the area or they could even eliminate an entire bus line.

Female: They will find another bus to write on anyway if they do that.

Male: You mean RTD really wants to get out of it?

Jewel: No I am not saying that. I am just saying that these are things that I am throwing to you. Because this is a tremendous problem for RTD and they are looking for ways to deal with it. This would be one way of dealing with it. But would it be an effective way to deal with it?

Female: But if they do that you are going to stop alot of people from going to work. Or not getting to the bus. If they see....say if I am waiting for the bus and I am going to see a bunch of guys right here waiting to write on the bus...he is not going to stop for me. Because these guys are sitting right next to me....I am going to miss going to work. Because he didn't pick me up because these guys are sitting right here next to me.

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Group:

Female: I would get mad at the bus driver.

Group:

Female: It does happen. Because I have seen you know alot of bus drivers do stop, but they like stop and then they take off. You know and you are over here like hey....you over there, you didn't pick me up. You know, I don't know if the bus driver was mad or in a bad mood and didn't want to pick up anybody. But I have seen that happen too. Because bus drivers do get into grouchy moods when they drive the bus too. And then they take it out on everybody. You know if they are mad a people riding the busses the bus driver is going to take it out on everybody else. He is not going to pick anybody up. And those people are going to late.

Jewel: What about these things that I have thrown out to you. Are they effective ways of dealing with the problems?

Male: Well you know what. I think the first one like what they are doing now like taking away the bus passes and the ID's. That would put something to think about in their minds. See they are going to have to fork up that much more money for them to ride that bus. I think that would put pressure on the parents which after that the parents would put pressure on the kids.

Female: They could even do that and you know go to the school and make a presentation and tell the kids about the bustaking away their ID's and their bus cards....and then let them.....

Male: You know I have seen kids that if..you know if something was done like that they would even take it out on the bus even more. I have seen people who say..you know what they took my ID card well now they are going to pay for it even more. Now I am going to be breaking their windows and you know flattening their tires and all that because they would take it personal and

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I think that they would....I think that way because I used to think that way when I was young. Because they would be taking something from me, you know, these kinds of

Female: Okay these kinds of ideas.....they are talking about the kids they catch doing it?

Jewel: Yes.

Female: Okay that is not affecting the other kids that are not doing it that have to get on the bus.

Female: The ones that they do catch writing on the bus and they do get their pass taken away...can they go buy another one. Is there any way that RTD knows that this person has had their passes taken away before? Do they have any way of knowing.

Jewel: Well if they repeat the offense then they would revoke their ID. So then they wouldn't be able to buy a student pass. So they would have a way naturally ofonce the kid has been identifiedof...

Female: Like maybe when they take that pass away they should contact the school to have the youth bring his parents and having them talk to their parents. And then if they are caught again, you know, _____ getting them a different fine. Instead of taking their pass and making them pay again. You know and having their parents sign a consent saying that whatever happens if they vandalize again then let them be responsible for not_____

Group:

Male: Well I know I grounded my son upside down because he was out there putting a face on the wall. And he know what I have been doing. He knows that it is wrong. And half threw him across the room all left and right. And I punished him for a couple of months. And you know, the thing is that sometimes kids go bruised up to school or whatever, and right away

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they want to take the kids away whatever because you are an abuser. But the whole thing is, is that we need the RTD. People out there need it. And alot of innocent people, just for these few that are really....I have seen one name all over the place like I don't know how that guy gets around...but he has his name all over every place that I could think of. And there is only a few. It is not like the whole neighborhood is doing it to the RTD.

Jewel: What is his name?

Male: What?

Jewel: What is his name?

Male: McForce. MC Force.

Jewel: On the busses?

Male: On the bus. One the walls. All the way down. MC Force. MC Force. MC Force.

Jewel: Do you know who he is?

Male: No I don't but.....

Group:

Male: That is a whole neighborhood. That is a whole little gang.

Male: MCFORCE MCFORCE MCFORCE. And then I said what are these. We just had a thing with a TWA. Now we didn't know...we knew where TWA was and where they hang out but we didn't know where they lived. It was crew without an attitude you know. And then another one.

Jewel: How did you find that out?

Male: By where the neighborhood. Where the neighborhood we have one of the consultants that lives right there. It is his neighborhood and he went over there and found out. That was Steve right here. And he went and found out

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because they were doing a lot of writing and they were even jumping on some of the businessmen that were right there, that had their stores. And they were doing all that. And he went over there and talked to them and even offered to even take them camping and different things and all that and so sometimes they needed a little talk, a little rough talk and then they stopped it.

Male: A couple of _____ club them up side the head.

Male: Yeah. They were writing on the walls too much and you know they were just making the neighborhood look bad, right. And then we went and told them straight out you know, you are making us look bad by doing this and they countered with youryour just making our neighborhood look bad and you are terrorizing _
_____

Jewel: Don't you think it makes your neighborhood look bad if busses get vandalized and

Male: Sure. We are out there helping RTD like I said. RTD is not getting all hit by East L.A. you know. We only a little section.

Group:

Male: Buses come in and it has AT Street West Side. It is all of these people.

Group:

Male: It is not only the West Side. It comes up from South Side. You know other areas in L.A.

Jewel: Let me ask you something. If you knew when who was vandalizing specific busses would you tell on people?

Male: No. We would go take care of it ourselves. We deal with it ourselves and it has been done where...like I said...he went over there and they talked it over that the TWA's they are not

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in existence anymore. I am talking about that they broke up. They are not even writing on walls anymore. They are now a group of kids that are now from nowhere. They are not TWA's anymore. So it was with them they kept it under control and they stopped everything right there.

Jewel: Why would you handle it yourself instead of.....

Male: Oh because of.....

Female: I think that mostly they will handle it themselves because we know...they will know how to control that person.

Male: We just know that we are more effective that way. And we handle it ourselves. We go and we deal with that problem because to us we are more effective than telling someone else and then you know they are going to take it as an authority figure coming at them and telling them don't do it or we are going to punish you or whatever and once that authority figure leaves they are going to do it again. But with us. They know we are from that community and we deal with it and then they say we are going to have to stop this shit because if I do it again this guy is going to find out again. And he lives there and we are from there so they don't want.....

Group:

Male: That's what _____ talking about for RTD to hire somebody from those communities to work within that community. Within that community work with that problem. Because then those kids in that neighborhood know that hey this guy lives in my neighborhood and if I write on the busses or whatever they are going to hear about it and then I am going to have this guy on my back. And they don't want to have that. Their parents are going to get tired and they are going to start telling their kids you know I am getting tired of this guy coming around the house talking about your writing on the bus. And then the parents get involved. You know...that's where we get into the communities.

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RTD has got to put out some money into the communities.

Male: Once you get the parents involved they you got it coming from all sides.

Male: Those other ways, the ones that you mentioned you know, that just brings more wood into the fire.

Male: Yeah. That is just adding to the fire.

Male: More hatredin those individuals where they are going to want to retaliate against RTD. Because it is just the few that I say. We could have a neighborhood of about 100 guys right here and out of the whole hundred there is about ten are the ones that start up everything. So we just want to keep that nine whatever..... And like I said out of those ten the other 90% is now aware to what's happening when that 10% and then that other 90% starts to act on it and then they start to tell that 10% you are going to have to show out on that. You are going to have to stop doing what you are doing. And that will eliminate it even more. And that is where presentations and stuff like that come in.

Female: Well you know RTD is the main _____ for everything. That is what they should do is ...once they catch that person _____ what areas like Alhambra _____ everything is have somebody go and talk to them, hire.....

Jewel: Talk to who?

Group:

Female: Whoever they caught. Say it is one of these kids

Male: If you notice in the film it is mainly young kids that are getting caught doing that. That is all you are seeing there is young kids getting caught writing on the buses. So if they start getting consultants to go into the schools

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and start targeting that age group of kids that are writing on the busses. And then set up a presentation with them. I mean you know you are going to be talking to some kids who don't even do it, but I am pretty sure that there will be some kids at that presentation there that are writing on the busses and stuff and they are going to have to sit there and listen to what you have to say. You know.

Jewel: I want you to think about something. If it was your responsibility to develop a program for RTD. A program of prevention apprehension and penalization of vandalism and graffiti what would you recommend? I just want to go around the table and I want you each to spend two to three minutes telling me what you would recommend. Alfred?

Alfred: Prevention and like you said earlier possibly to have undercover police in the buses. And observing people boarding the busses where they sit and just keeping an eye on the bus any activity that might be occurring to right away check it out and see what is happening and marking the seats or windows or walls or even you know dropping trash on the floor. What were the other?..

Jewel: Apprehension.

Alfred: Apprehension I guess well to apprehend to have some type of I believe RTD has some type of switches that they can hit for a patrol to come behind them or something I am not sure how they work that. But to whatever they do in order to have a car to come up when a bus is pulling over to a stop and board the bus and apprehend the person who is scribbling on those seats or walls.

Jewel: And then what should be done to vandals who are caught.

Alfred: Well like I said before to take them to a detention center and wait for busses to arrive to be cleaned. As far as how many times to

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clean a bus or how many busses that would depend upon them on howhow much they would want to have them clean up work. Possibly a fine to go along with it and probation.

Jewel: Steve?

Steve: If it were me I would try to start a program something like the reduction project where I would hire consultants from different parts of the communities to out there and talk to the kids and work with them, you know and have monitors on this. Then as far as apprehension have RTD hire their own police and sit in on the meetings with these consultants on certain days out of the week where we can all get together and talk about what is happening, who has found something out there, who is doing something out there and once they are caught take them down to the RTD bus station and have them wash them busses you know, and that is their punishment alone. I mean after they get _____ so many busses they are going to get tired of them. And time after time if they keep on getting caught and taken back to wash them busses they aren't going to write on them busses any more. And if they get caught from somebody else writing their neighborhood on that bus and they just busted three days ago for writing on a bus and you put a neighborhood up there and then another youngster comes along and writes on a bus and then you come back and get the first kid and say well we just busted you for doing this. Well it wasn't me. He is from hood and you are going to clean it. You better go talk to you...

Jewel: He is from you what?

Male: Neighborhood.

Jewel: Oh.

Male: Hood.

Group:

Jewel: You have to translate these thing for me.....

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Group:

Male: That is punishment alone right there. You know, washing all them busses. And after that, that kid is going to go back to his neighborhood and tell all his other friends that you know what...I went back and washed five more busses because one of you guys wrote on the bus and whoever is doing it has better stop because I am getting tired of being picked up and I am getting tired of washing all these busses.

Male: Like _____ was saying they have to get somebody with them. That crew. That is how this project was built up. They have to get somebody from within the neighborhood you know that has juice with the guys and can talk with the guys and relates with them.

Male: Is it alright if I smoke?

Jewel: No you can't. Go on.

Male: I think that it is a good idea what you were saying about you know if they get caught for them to wash the busses themselves because you know after they have to clean it up themselves I don't think that they are going to want to write on it. Just like the graffiti. Some of the guys that do the writing as soon as we make them do the painting and take the painting off the wall.....

Jewel: How can you make them do that?

Group: They will do it.

Male: Okay alot of us are older guys from our neighborhoods right. And we got more word than they do. So they have to do what we say. We have been around alot longer than they have.

Female: What does RTD do when they catch the kids for writing on the wall. and then they took them in. What do they do to them? Just take them in and call their parents to come

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in and pick them up? Or do they give them a fine or put them in juvenile hall for

Jewel: Do you know anything...what do you think that they do?

Female: No I didn't mean you!

Jewel: What do you think they should do?

Female: I think that they should give them a punishment. Just like if they did a crime out on the streets. Arrest them and give them a punishment. Either clean five busses kid riding the bus again, or give them a big fine. If this kid is coming from a poor family he can't pay that fine. So his parents are going to say go clean those busses.

Male: That to him is the crimes.....

Female: If a kid is going to get busted for six months for writing on a bus and RTD is not going to do nothing to him. No I am sure they do something to him.

Male: I mean after them six months of being incarcerated you know he is in there with other jail birds and believe me he is going to learn more in thereand more in there...and he is going to say, I am not going to write on the bus this time, this time I am going to ride on the bus and rob the bus driver. You know what I mean. Because this dude told me well if I got in jail I might as well have robbed the dude.

Female: Yeah. Have them clean them busses and see what it felt like.

Group:

Male: Puts some blisters on his hands washing them busses you don't want to write on the bus anymore. You don't want to do anything to that bus you are going to respect that bus. You know.

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Jewel: _____

Female: Well I guess working with RTD and then I would like it says right there you know about working with the police _____ involved the courts and everybody. Then if you catch once they pick them up if they have somebody working on the bus like they do now, then they catch somebody writing on the bus take their bus pass away right there and tell...you know whatever and you know have their parents go pick it up with them. Get their bus pass back and also talk to them about doing community service working with cleaning the busses you know. You know like they are out there you know, you know what there is more or less where the people are asking us where do we catch these ...or who do we know who is writing. You know. They have the area, you know where they are at. Have somebody like, you know they already have somebody working picking them up different fines. Alot of times they get away with it and they think oh they catch me again they will let me go...they will give me ...or have me doing this or that, but I will just go say to the court that I have to go to school and I have to do that...and sometimes they don't go....but make them pay for what they did. You know make them do community service _____ in the area. Or having them talk to their friends about you know....because.....you know there are alot of kids that are not aware of how much money it is costing even the tax payers to pay for this vandalism. Just like those schools, when there is vandalism.....

Jewel: And if you make them aware, would that make a difference?

Female: I am sure. I think so. _____, kid pushing them and pushing them instead of like your here a representative for RTD talking with us you can get into the schools in the areas like Central down....I am not too familiar with the gangs out there. But having somebody work in the schools out there. You know, the people that are familiar with gangs out there and that are

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riding the RTD. How many people are riding RTD? How many kids. You know..... I think that it is more or less the smaller, the younger kids. You rarely see adults you know.younger ones....and if you don't get their parents involved. Alot of them the parents probably know alot of what their kids do right. And they think alot well if they don't hear about it so they are not going to worry about it. But if you have somebody coming and saying hey...we caught your kid writing you know and it is not the first time, you know, the next time we are going to...you know you are going to have to come in, you are going to have to pay, you know a fine, you know make these parents aware of what you know...

Jewel: Vivian?

Vivian: If you catch them I think you should have them clean their..... they don't want to do it...put them in juvenile hall. And have them talk to their parents.

Male: I agree with her. Same thing. Also if you get caught they are coming down to the courts you know, they are going to go along with it. If they refuse to clean up the buses a fine or _____ you know but I'm sure they aren't going to want to write on the busses.
.....

Jewel: Margie?

Margie: I agree with what Alfred and Steve were saying. You know about having them clean up the busses themselves. To prevent it like to have somebody in the bus like a security guard an undercover living at there and they don't even know if they are a copy you know....right there waiting. Because they have the targeted areas already where they know where it is happening. Somebody could like be standing on a corner or across the street right were the schools are or something and see them doing it. Catch them in the act. And then hold them in detention for a few hours and making them

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probably one bus to start with so that is big enough and then from there work out to two like Steve said they will get tired. And then if they get them for because they know what sort of neighborhood they come from they know that guy is doing it and they are picking him up because he knows his home-boys are doing it eventually that neighborhood wouldn't be writing on those busses anymore because they are going to be getting on each others case. Cleaning up after what the other ones are doing, you know.

Jewel: Sylvia?

Sylvia: Well the first one was how to prevent it or ...

Jewel: How to prevent it.

Sylvia: To prevent it I think we need awareness. You know more awareness. Presentations at some schools or commercials. They spend money to raise the bus fares. They can spend a little bit of money to show commercials of awareness. Either have the parents aware whether the kids use markers or pens. Or even the kids, let them know that RTD has somebody watching them, what they are doing, like security, you know. First one was awareness the second one was?

Jewel: Apprehension.

Sylvia: Apprehension. They need more security. Either in the busses or at the bus stops where it is happening more. You know where they could catch them in the act. And to punish them for what they do if the kid comes from a poor family the family can't pay for the fine. Right. Some kids family's can't. Some family's will pay. But the kid gets away with it. So the kid figures well oh my mom and dad paid for it so I will do it again. And some kids come from poor families and there are parents that don't care and there are parents that do care. You know have them clean that bus do that detention thing and have them work their hands off and you know

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have them realize how hard it is for them do that. You know it was easy for them to do it a second was all. How long is it going to take them to clean the bus. You know they don't know what the labor is.

Jewel: Helen?

Helen: Well everybody said mostly everything what I was going to say. I think that cleaning the busses is a good idea. They...you know, not only the outside but the inside. You know maybe they were just cleaning the outside but I think even the inside. I mean both of them. And to have the parents...you know the parents should get involved alot with their kids to see what their kids are doing. And sometimes like Sylvia said some of the parents don't have no money to pay you know what the kid does and you know it is hard ...you know how an I going to pay...you are out there doing your thing and what do you expect me to do you know, and the kid will say they will take me to jail instead of me paying the you know the fine, I don't have no money, I have to feed your other brothers and sisters if there is more than one in the family, you know, it is hard. But maybe if that kid or if it is a girl, sometimes, we haven't talked about girls, you know, girls sometimes they write on the busses not only the boys. If they catch a girl doing that do the same thing to the girl. Make her clean the busses. You know and maybe that way they will learn and if they go back to their own neighborhoods they won't , you know like Steve was saying ...they won't be caught again. They are not going to go out there and clean busses all the time somebody else writes you know writes on the bus because you know I am not going down if somebody writes my name. Well I ...you name is on it I'm not going to be cleaning up somebody else's mess. I am going to go after that person who is writing my name. You know, and I am going to tell him you are going with me to clean up the bus. you wrote my name.

Jewel: Richard?

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Richard: Okay. You really want RTD to get all of the graffiti and control it....You gotta hire me.

Group:

Richard: I like what Steve said because consultants that are in that community like I said...if they are in there and they know the people that are doing it out there and they catch each one every time they are going to be right there getting caught. That individual is in there working in that area could handle those problems with the parents take them kids and be on their backs but like I said I put ...you have to put it up on billboards commercials with famous role models, posters, RTD Graffiti busters. You have to have somebody over there taking it off. Community involvement where Sylvia was saying. There has to be an awareness of the tax payers money that is going into it. What they are doing out there, the kids. The parents have to know, you know, the schools have to get involved in this. You know, even though we see alot of teachers that are....they don't care about alot of different things because I have gone to schools and done presentations, and they are worse than kids themselves, you know, but the thing is, is that we all got to get involved. Now that you told us a little bit of awareness of the RTD now I am going to start mentioning it out there. I am going to be out there and I am going to say are you writing on the busses too and everything you know. Because I am going to be bringing it up too now. Now I am aware of it more. If the RTD wants to say a limit their busses going through the area and say stop going on hot-spots alot of people, you know, innocent people are out there just behind a few that are doing it in that area you know. I think that if all of the community got involved, like I said, RTD has to get involved too. Because the businessmen got involved. RTD get involved with that too. And they have to have a consultant that will be doing all that. You know a consultant that will go out there and if they have to hire about four or five different people how much is it that RTD

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is losing every month? A hundred thousand dollars!

Jewel: It is about a nine million dollar problem a year.

Male: Oh give me even half of that.

Group:

Male: I think that if RTD would put a couple of million alone. Just say two million alone into a project something like GDRP.

Group:

Male: Four hundred thousand that is for all of us. Four hundred thousand in this program. Right in our little area. I am talking about a little area and working all together, RTD is going to benefit alot. I think that if RTD would start a program

Group:

Female: I would like to open up a statement right now with what Richard and Steve were saying. If they decide like Steve was saying hire a consultants from different neighborhoods, okay, if you get consultants from different neighborhoods, I think the RTD bus, the one who drives them should get, knowing the consultants from each neighborhood, this way, if anything is written in the bus, that bus driver knows the consultant from that neighborhood, and tells that consultant that somebody wrote on the bus, can you take care of it. You know, then it comes up and has to go back and talk to your home-boys and say you guys wrote on this bus, you know, this way the RTD and the men that are working on it knows these consultants from different barrios. Instead of saying, I don't know, I know this one works for this barrio, and this one but I don't know who is who. This way if the bus drivers know the consultants from different neighborhoods, the bus driver would have more communication with that consultant and

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the consultant would have communications with the bus drivers. Not only in their neighborhoods, but all the bus drivers, to know all different neighborhoods and consultants and then if they decide to get them.

Male: Your map. You would have a map of each section and have, you know, here is where the CWA is coming from over here, you know here is White...over here doing it here, they are hitting us hard over here. You know these are the sections that are getting hit. And being aware, a little map knowing these sections, and what graffiti is coming from that section, you the awareness of that too. You know.

Jewel: Okay, before we close the evening, I want you people to meet someone. Probably someone who knows you by now, because they have been sitting back there watching you.

Group:

Jewel: I'm Sherri Wagner-Fernando from RTD she is with the marketing department.

Male: All right.

Sherri: I am grateful to be here tonight. doing this research is that we really don't know what is the most effective thing to do and we needed to talk to somebody who did. As I understand that all we do is hire you and

Group:

Sherri: Well I guess that would save us alot of time. We are really curious as to what kind of marketing efforts we can make what kind of community relations efforts we can make. all over the district. has been really interesting. You made some interesting suggestions tonight. Especially about making communities more involved. Our communities affairs department is starting a programs with the schools. They picked ten target schools where there is really alot of

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graffiti problems and they are making contact on an on-going basis with other schools and they are also going out to the schools that those schools, the lower grads.

Male: Are you taking the

Sherri: It is not really appropriate for elementary, and junior high school kids you know.

Male: You know I have a teacher like this that the businessmen got and it has graffiti with a line across also. And it has in the back some graffiti busters taking off the graffiti off the wall and it says. If your not going to me....

Male: Don't be destructive.

Sherri: Yeah that is interesting.

Male: I was going to bring it too so that you could see it...but I didn't.

Group:

Sherri: that is one of our programs.

Male: Oh good. Yeah.

Sherri: One of the things that we do is we go out on the week-ends and we do shows with entertainment. With young performers and they talk about the graffiti and what a problem it is. And how they are spending time pursuing careers instead doing destructive things.We really need to get started on something alot bigger. This is helping us know what to do.

Male: We are out there helping you too! We are out there. We have been out there.

Male: Do you know if RTD ever has any kind of presentation or something where they need our help from _____ reduction project they are more than free to call us. We will be more than happy to help you people out.

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Sherri: Aren't you I guess you have worked with youth gang services before.

Male: Yeah. Youth gang services. Yeah they started out there. We were out there way before. But either way, the job is being done and hopefully, like I said we have gone out there and thrown presentations and why we started a graffiti program is because out of it guys were getting killed over it. And that stopped gang violence. That was about 75 to 80% of gang violence starts with graffiti. From cross offs to all that. So that's why we started it. So that was way back in 1980 when nobody was even thinking of anything like that see cause all out lives that is all that we have seen is graffiti.

Sherri: Yes. Our community affairs department goes out and speaks with community groups. If somebody here has a card that I can get to our community affairs department.

Male: Yes. We sure do. Did everybody bring one?

Group:

Jewel: Do any of you have any questions?

Male: We still want the RTD so..

Group:

Sherri: Some of the things that were mentioned were just various solutions by various people.

Group:

Sherri: And then one of the reasons for having this group was to find out what you really think.

Jewel: Do you want anybody's card or....

Sherri: A couple of them.

Male: You know what...I ran out of cards.

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Group:

Sherri: Anybody have any questions that I can answer?

Jewel: Thank you all very much for coming and for....

Female: Thank you for having us.

Male: If there is any way that we can find out say in the long run the results of all this.

Sherri: Would there be a problem with that?

Jewel: No. RTD would be very happy to consider....

Male: Are you taping it.

Sherri: Audio.

Male: What.

Sherri: Just Audio.

Male: Oh...

Sherri: Some people would have an objection...

Group:

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Jewel: Thank you all for coming tonight, my name is Jewel _____ and I'm President/Director of Research of this Company, which is Facts Consolidated and we invited you all here this evening because we feel that you have an area of expertise and a great deal of experience when it comes to Vandalism and Graffiti and Gang Activity and things of that nature. We're conducting this research for the Southern California Rapid Transit District. They have a tremendous problem with vandalism and graffiti on the buses, on the outside and insides of the buses and this is part of a research project that they have commissioned to help them understand the problem and gain insights into methods that can be used as incentives to not do this sort of thing as the needs of penalizing those that get caught and in just generally understanding the problem in the things that they can do to prevent it. Before we get started, I would like to go around the table and have you fully introduce yourselves to me and to each other. Tell me who you are, a brief Bio, the extent of experience that you have in dealing with youth gangs, vandalism and/or graffiti. We told each of you when you came in, we asked, had your permission to video tape this evening. I want to assure you that the video tape this not going to be used for any purpose other than to observe and re-hash the proceedings. You do understand that your here in a capacity, as an individual and don't necessarily represent your organizations or the groups in which you are associated with, and that is just fine. These tapes are not going to be used for any purpose other than just to show those who could not be here to observe what transpired this evening. This is the 5th of five groups that we conducted this week. So let's go.

Male: My name is Jean Salmone and I am program coordinator for a local elementary school in the inter city. I do teaching at that same school system since, 1972 and we do have vandalism and graffiti and all these kinds of crazies. We have tried a few things that seem to work and I would like to share them.

Male: My name is _____ Valesquez and I work for Community Gang Services and I have been in the program 8 years and the area that I work is the San Fernando Valley. So, we deal with gangs, graffiti,

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vandalism.

- Male: My name is Paul Mason with the L.A. Unified School District, Youth Relations. I have been with Youth Relations for 16 years. Prior to that I was a youth advisor for the Bald City Pupils Program. I have plenty of experience dealing with gangs and dealings with vandalism and working in the community and the schools we dealt with vandalism and gangs. Whatever I have to offer, would be the things that I have experienced.
- Male: My name is Jerome, Los Angeles Police Department. This year it will be 20 years. 18 of which I have been working with street gangs. I have been assigned to the OSS Lennox crew station.
- Jewel: Which crew:
- Jerome: Lennox;
- Jewel: No. Oh, OSS
- Jerome: OSS, which stands for Operation Safety. Which the Sheriff's gang detail, OK.
- Male: I have Earl Presley, and I am from the Los Angeles Unified School District, Operation Crime Prevention. I have been in Crime Prevention for 10 years, with youth relations for 16 years. I have dealt with youth gangs, vandalism, graffiti, gang banging and all that stuff, so whatever expertise that I might call would come from my experience with that.
- Male: My name is Tony Mars. I am a Deputy District Attorney with the County of Los Angeles. I have been with the office of District Attorneys since the summer of 1984 and I have most recently been assigned to the gang area of the District Attorneys office and the assignment started in January of this year. We deal exclusively with the gang related problems.
- Male: My name is John Estrada I work with the Los Angeles Unified School District. I have been working with the Youth Division Unit. I have been working in this Division, the Youth Division for the past 10 years. I work with gangs and give people material on gang

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awareness. I also work part time for the Department of Recreational Park over in West Los Angeles, so I have some experience in dealing with gang members, drawing graffiti and vandalism.

Female: _____ also a Deputy District Attorney and I have worked with East Lake Juvenile Court which is primarily all of the East L.A. and any East of Mid Wilshire on down to East L.A.. Eight percent of our crime does involve gang related crime and we do prosecute for RTD all the graffiti cases and the misdemeanor vandalism cases and things like that.

Male: I am Walt Arnold, I am a Deputy District Attorney with the Hard Core Gang Division. I have been a Deputy D.A. since 1985. Prior to that I was a Deputy Sheriff with the Los Angeles County for 13 years.

Male: My name is Lloyd Namen, I am a Deputy District Attorney. I have been a D.A. since 1978. I work for about 3 years in exclusive juvenile crime and up to recently, I was in hard core gang unit and had been there for about 4 years prosecuting primarily murders. I was the assistant head of the unit. I am also responsible for some anti-gang legislation.

Jewel: We have a short video we would like to show you. This can explain the problem a lot better than I can and a lot more rapidly. So, I hope you are sitting were you can see the T.V. and if not, would you like to move, you are more than welcome.

VIDEO COMMENCED:

Jewel: O.K., that is the problem. I would like to discuss it from your stand point. I would like to know about your specific experiences with this type of vandalism and graffiti. I would like to have your ideas and your thoughts on why these acts or perpetrated. The different kinds of graffiti and the motivations behind the acts. I would like to know of ways of dealing with the perpetrators, methods of apprehension, what is effective, what's not. Methods of Prevention, do you know about anything that has been tried. Has it been successful. Things like that!! So, you know, have at it. The only thing I ask is, don't everyone talk at once because if you do

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we cannot pick up any on the recorder.

Male: The narrator said one thing that is incorrect. He mentioned that the citing for tagging carries with it fine, a maximum fine and \$250.00 dollars. That is wrong. That is incorrect. The maximum is a \$500.00 or a \$1,000.00 fine and 6 months in county jail. The problem is that there is not a Judge in the county of Los Angeles that will give anybody anything close to that.

Male: And most of these guys are doing graffiti under the age of 18 anyway.

Male: Right, they are going to be juveniles and the juvenile hall is so full that they are not going to send a juvenile tagger to Juvenile Hall for any of these kind of things. They will be place on probation.

Male: I agree with your decision. The problem we have up in the Valley this that, this that most of the taggers that we dealt with, and gang members who are involved, they think it is a joke. Once they get caught, you know, the words out that it's only going to be slight slap on the wrist and it is over. I think the thing is by increasing the fine and jail time and the community service, 20 hours, that is a couple of weekends and it's over. There has been cases under Commissioner/Judge, _____ who have been increasing the 20 hours to 60, 80 and 100 hours per kid. And when it gets back, they end up with community groups who are doing clean up efforts. Project Heavy is one and our agency is an other. Then you have smaller group like, some are Graffiti Busters who end up taking most of these kids. Because a lot of times, between the two agencies, we cannot handle all the kids that we get to do the community service. And then you have community groups who are out there cleaning graffiti off of bus benches and private property and this and that. We need the man power. And that is were it benefits when these kids do get a lot of community service. You know the fine, sometimes they won't pay, because they can't afford it. You know, spending the time juvenile hall is not, favor for the community in general because again, that one kid is going to take

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faith to commit assault or murder or something. That is it take up room. So you know what we have seen is what would help more would be a more community service, again under these types of agencies again, because the counseling is provided. You working with the kid and letting them know. And that he is on probation, you deal with a probation officer. Because they comply, you know, you turn them and he ends up back in front of the Judge again and the same thing would help, so what make it easy is two or three of these agencies that we deal with parent. You know, we let the parent know that they are responsible for your kids under the age of 18. No matter what. And when they say, No. No., well it is not my kid there just picking on him, we have the right as counselors and community people to say, "Hey, No, your wrong" this is it. This is why, you know, they are charging you more to rent that place. Because that got to pay for this mess. So again when you have some more graffiti groups like that, again, a year ago, there was one sand blaster in the Valley. Today, there are 8. And it has all been community effort. You cannot rely on your politicians and law enforcement to come and do it for you. The thing is that you gotta to instill there community pride. And what has helped out with Commissioner Golden and Judge _____ have been that they have been able, they are sensitive to the community needs of that mad fashion where again, 20 hours is not enough. You know, it has to be more and putting them in places like, you know, project Heavy and Community gang services, Sylmar Graffiti Busters, Panorama Graffiti Busters, _____ sand blasters, The Sun Valley Graffiti Busters. I know North Hollywood Division has a Sand Busters, all these Van Nuys, West Valley have them. The thing is that you have the machines sitting there, due to the lack of man power. What good it that? So by using these kids, and removing graffiti and working somehow with RTD. You are sponsoring things like that. Again the man power is free.

Female: This there knowledge that the RTD has been involved in projects like these?

Male: I know of some Graffiti Busters have been dealing with the RTD buses, because of there signs. They are

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constantly being vandalized. But there is this project call, S_____ that they have been using on a lot of there signs as remover. I mean to squirt it on, wait for a few seconds and the thing starts to run and you wipe it off. A lot of the kids have been caught doing tagging on buses that ended up with this _____. And again, we are just going to end up cleaning just bus signs. Until they are surprised that they are removing graffiti, you know, picking up dirt, anything. Anything in and around bus stops; that type of thing. So again, the kid goes in thinking. Well, I got caught writing on a bus bench or on the bus, so then they figure that they are going to be doing that stuff. Then they find out, you know, that they are pulling weeds and all kinds of other clean up efforts. Just as a result of because they did vandalism on the bus. So again, the thing is that these people are working hand and hand. The kid reminding them that they made a serious mistake. And the thing is that a lot of these kids, most of there clean up effort are right in there own backyard. So again, if there in a corner of a certain, you know, were there is a lot of traffic with kids. There own friends are going to say, Ha Ha, you/he got arrested. Again, another thing to, most of these kids cannot do community service during the week because of school. You know, a lot of these people, you know, a lot of us work from 8 to 5 and after that, where can these kids go. But, then on weekends, 20 hours, they can sacrifice two or three weekends. But when you up the, you know, the more hours they have to do for community service, then you are talking about a lot of weekends and that messes with there, with there time. And again, it is just reinforcing that, and again, the damage to them is nothing. But, we as taxpayers are the people who ride the bus, pay for it. So again, it is you reminding them constantly. And I see it work. You know, I see the whole thing. Again, we end up with the kids afterwards. You know, dealing with them, talking to them, you know, they tell us. " You know, tell us, alot of them think it is funny".

Male: Well, you know, to go even further with that, you know, I have talked to gang members who have committed manneristic acts, you know, like graffiti. You know to them, like he says, big joke. They even

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go further then that, you know, they love to write graffiti over other gangs. Because it is nothing. To them there is nothing to do in the community work. But, I think there needs to be a stiffer penalty. A stiffer penalty because then they begin to realize, that you know, writing on someone's property, you know, is, it's not, maybe should not be a misdemeanor, maybe a Felony. This is a feeling that I have been getting from working with kids and parks. You know, they write graffiti on the park every weekend. That is, that is part of there activity and they do it all the time. But when they are convicted of a crime, you know, such as writing graffiti, or whatever. They have the community work. Oh, they love. They love to go on those little graffiti busters and write a big graffiti off of other gangs. You know, they enjoy that.

Male: You are talking about a misdemeanor here right?

Male: Yes.

Male: And a..., So, here we go. How do or Who do you arrest? How do you arrest a guy for committing a misdemeanor? There is only one way? Well, you know, if I see the gang members writing or his writing on the wall. Then I might know who he is..... But, I cannot arrest him. You know, do you understand. Besides the gang guys writing on walls and buses. That really not a joke. I mean they do it for a particular reason. And there is a specific reason why these people are written on walls. OK. So, you should move from that point. OK. So maybe he is dopey. I don't know, people are suggesting, holding parents responsible. Well, I do think that is not going to get anywhere.

Female: Why not?

Male: Because a lot of these kids are beyond there parents control, anyway.

Female: Parents don't want there kids.

Male: The parents don't have the money to pay for it either. When you tell the parent, you are going to pay \$20,000.00 dollars for the damage your kid did.

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The parents are going to look at you and go file and declare bankruptcy tomorrow.

Male: Then again if you increase the penalty or you keep it as a misdemeanor, what you have is these kids have right to more safe guards in terms of there judicial process. If you lower the threshold and like a more summary proceeding. We can just say, "O.K., we have caught you, your rights are not questioned". These are the rights you have against a misdemeanor. Therefore, all we are going to do is send you community service and we are going to make you clean buses. We want, the idea is to lower the cost of processing these kids and lower the cost of keeping the buses clean. Because I think that is what we are is to find out how we can keep the graffiti to a minimum on the bus. You are not going to stop kids from writing graffiti. What you can do is minimize the cost of the Rapid Transit District of getting that graffiti cleaned up. Which means expediting the court process and focusing the attention on getting the buses clean and not preventing. Because, you are not going to prevent buses from being graffitied. That is not going to happen!! But you can lower the costs of getting them cleaned and that is what the focus should be.

Male: You know, one of the things I worked. I worked in East Los Angeles and I have worked in the Echo Park area. And every summer they have some summer youth programs. And some of the summer youth programs they have, they go off and maybe paint a mural. That is part of there summer group. And you have gang members who are doing murals. My experience with murals, there nice. They stand up there for about 4 months and after a while there get graffitied either by the same gang or by other gangs. And I kind of find it to be just a waste. It's just a waste. And I know of agencies. And I am not going to say there names that are gang members to do that type of work. And what happens is either the same guys who are tagging the walls or who are tagging RTD buses. Just like the gentlemen said, I believe in giving them more time to clean up, to do more work. Not only during the weekends but during the week. The only thing that you need right now, is to have supervision. Which means a person to work with the

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particular groups in a particular community. For example, Echo Park, Silver Lake, Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles. Those areas, were they can take the kids, maybe 2 hours after school and go do community time. Not only does weak it. Because if we start doing that, you start taking there time. It's there time, Hey, man I can't hang around with the home-boys. Hey, man. Hey man, I gotta be cleaning RTD buses. And that, and that really has an effect. And once you know who this guy, with his tag is, if you see his tag, up on the bus again, you can hit him up again. Say Hey, we found your tag up again.

Female: Yes, but how do you find out. How do you apprehend them?

Male: You see the thing this. Like what he was saying right here. What a... For example, some of our graffiti busses in Sylmar, either you have two ladies who started this program almost a year ago and everybody said, "Well, you're going to peter out after 6 months because they're gonna do graffiti and the whole thing, they've gone more than what people expected; they've learned through our program, we've taught them the whole gang history, gang awareness, and the whole thing, we've made them experts at this, so when they're out there removing graffiti, they begin to learn how to read graffiti, to distinguish whether it's a traditional gang, whether it's new gangs, whether it's the ----- gangs, punk gangs, skinhead gangs, and the tagging. The thing is, now with the taggers, they've become more familiar with the taggers because of getting the style of writing. When you use traditional gang writing, it's basically the same, just the names are different and a different neighborhood, but with tagging, its personalized. You're personalizing your name, and what happens is that they become used to that, and what's helped them out is that they have been able to identify who these taggers are. And they've sponsored within the elementary schools, and some of the junior high schools, graffiti contests, or any graffiti poster things. They did this a year ago with about 6 elementary school kids. And just the effect of kids of looking up at this taggers, the posters that came out were unbelievable; they had gang tagging and the whole thing; but what happens is

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that a lot of the brothers or sisters who are into the tagging thing ----- I'll put tag on you, on your thing. And after while these posters started coming around, so we had to judge all these posters; what we noticed was that the taggers names were everywhere, kids saw it on their walls so they put it on their -----; after awhile the kids themselves started turning it their own brothers and sisters, because the thing was their own peer pressure, because graffiti is a bad thing. And after awhile the ones who were being picked up and doing community service work were coming in, you know you would see it on their shoes when they would come in, you know the tag that they're cleaning is the one that's on their tennis shoe, or on their clothes, or whatever way they come in; these ladies started putting two and two together, and what they realized is that "hey, I know who you are - you're ----- or you're the one guy who is having problems in Sylmar, who is called Prism, or it's Orio, and after awhile, they make a mistake. And what we've done with this group is that they learn to catch these mistakes, and they match a real name with a tag name. And they'll go through the high school year book, or the junior high yearbook, they'll knock on their principals desk, I know this kid comes to this school. They let the teachers know, watch out for this. A lot of times its that teacher phoning that turns that kid in, because they'll tag it all up, where a lot of these dummies, the insider says write your name, and dummies will write their real name. So a lot of times you'll still --- a lot of this stuff, and you'll look at the tagging and say, "Oh, this belongs to so and so." You make this distinction. Then you have these groups going out their and talking about what they have to do to keep Sylmar clean, and they say it to elementary school kids and high school kids, and then they'll bring in the D.A.'s and everybody else and say, "Hey, you guys keep it up and you're going to have to deal with these people here." You let them know exactly what's going to go on. So it does have an effect, the thing is, learning to identify who's a tagger and whose a gang member. The community in general needs to know that.

Jewel: Earl, you wanted to say something?

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Male: Yeah. One of the things about all graffiti and it runs very consistent with what he's saying is that the one basic element to all graffiti is some form of identification. And what we have had to start trying to learn is to take that the vandals give us and use it against them, because as Tony said you're not going to actually stop graffiti, ever. But you can take certain elements of it and start using it against the graffiti writers. The basic thing is that you must learn how to read graffiti. Then, as he was talking to you, you must learn how to distinguish which is just normal, gang banging graffiti, to tagging. Once you start doing that then you can start identifying. What we do at the elementary schools that I've worked out is we'll see graffiti, and we'll make an identification, and we'll say, let me see your notebook, and invariably, this kid, no trouble identifying him. The other thing you have to do, is also, you have to start networking with all the various agencies that you are going to come in contact with, because until you do, we're fragmentizing, and the kid is going to slip all through the cracks. We've been able to work closely with OSS, LAPD Crash. The thing that I have come to learn and to be very disappointed in, is the penalty phase, and I know a lot of it goes into overcrowded, but I'm going to disagree, to some degree, about making parents responsible. I know the parents can declare bankruptcy and all of that but somewhere, somehow, we've got to take a moral stand to say what is right and what is wrong. And this is extremely important, because for those parents who can pay, if you make an example out of them, I know if I came to Mark's house and said Mark, we got Mark Junior, and it's gonna cost you \$10,000, now I'm not going to have to worry about Mark Junior, because Mark Senior is going to take care of Mark Junior.

Male: Earl, none of us disagree with you.

Male: What I'm saying is, that simply because the reality of it doesn't come out that way, somewhere somebody has to stand firm on the principal and that's what nobody's hearing. Everybody is using the reality, because we do it in the schools. They went into a school a couple of years back, 93rd St. School, and they ripped it off for close to something like

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\$30,000; easily identified who did it, parents came up, "Oh, we can't do anything about it.." School District says, "Well, we've got a slush fund, we'll pay for it." You know, nothing happened to the kids, nothing happened to the parents, so they're still vandalizing all the schools. Vandalism in the L.A. Unified School District costs the district over \$10 million dollars annually, on vandalism. It costs over \$300 to repair one window. People say why? A, you're paying a glazier \$30 an hour to come out and stand around for 10 hours. See, so what I'm saying, is that somebody's got to make the moral stand, and stand firm on it.

Male: That's a good example of what Sylmar Graffiti Busters is all about because it's community people taking care of the job, parents, retired folks, that whole thing, the only thing the tape didn't show, I mean they only showed black and hispanic, and in the Valley we're dealing with black, hispanic, white and asian. Okay, everybody's involved in tagging.

Male: We used to work very closely with RTD; in fact is that when I first came on board with the district and we didn't have all of the contract busses that we have now, we used to have specifically assigned RTD busses to pick up kids at school, and crowd the kids in like cattle going into a cattle car, and they'd stick one person like myself on the bus, and you're jammed up against the door, and you can't move one way or the other, because of so many kids, and they expect you to control it. This is ridiculous. Hell is they want to kill you, what are you going to do, you're going to die, that's all. Because there is nothing you can do, they're packed in. So there had to be a better method, so then they went to another thing, they started contract bussing, and it's funny because school kids don't usually do a lot of damage to the yellow bus. Have you noticed that? It's always the RTD bus. But the yellow bus coming by is just as plain..you know no graffiti on it whatsoever.

Jewel: Why is that?

Male: I don't know.

Male: Let me comment on that. Because there are some

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things we didn't talk about. There are two motivations here. When you see gang graffiti, gang graffiti is the gang marking its turf, and when you have your first layer of gang graffiti, you're always going to get a second layer which is, gang member from across the street saying, this is my turf, not his turf, you're going to see "puta marks" or cross outs. So one thing that RTD should be watching very carefully for is that they get the gang graffiti off right the first thing off, and you tell the difference between the gang graffiti and the sport the tagging. It's completely different. And if you get that off of there, that will at least take care of the second layer. Okay. The other motivation for the tagging is just recognition. Casper wants everybody in the city to know about Casper. And the reason it's on the RTD busses is not on the yellow, is because, that's the sporting. The sport is not tagging the yellow busses, the sport is tagging the RTD busses. And now we've created our own history, our own mentality, that's the thing to do, and that's why you're getting it all over your RTD busses. And I guarantee you that if you get them off your RTD busses they'll go tag something else. One of the things that I think you ought to do is set up an anti-graffiti service within RTD, so that when Jack Gold, or any of these judges up there say, "You're going to go do community service" if you have a community service program set up with your RTD police, so where there's a program where these little idiots come in and they take the graffiti off of your busses, then at least the penalty meets the crime. Now they're doing something that makes them say, "Oh boy, that's right, this is hard taking it off of these busses." Earl, you probably know this better than anybody, and we've heard it from OSS, there are two programs, DARE and SANE, in the city schools, and you're not going to get a 16 year old tagger to say, "oh, I'm going to be educated, and not do this graffiti." But if you start with the next generation, you may be able to stop it 5 or 6 years from now.

Male: Loren, in addition to that in the Unified, we ourselves have our own program where we go into the elementary schools. The fact is, we do an anti-vandalism and child safety program, it's a 45 minute

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assembly, and we try to put strong emphasis on the damage graffiti can cause, the fact of broken windows, again, and trying to point out to them in terms that they can relate to, that they're paying for this, because it's taxpayers money, and when they get their little spending money from mom and dad, and they want to spend it, they have to pay taxes on the stuff, and part of the tax money comes out of their pocket, because that's how we pay for schools.

Male: One of the ways to drive the point home as Loren was mentioning, this of course, is brainstorming at a small rate; you could bring the bus to the school and have them clean the bus at the school, in other words demean them in front of the other students, to show the consequence of their action. That bus that is tagged or grafittied is brought to the school as we said before, these students only have so much time that they can use to clean the bus. Well, sometime it's weekends, but I remember also occasionally I had to stay after school for whatever act I might have done. These people could be made to stay after school, stay on the school grounds, the busses could be rolled in, and these people could be brought out in front of their peers while everybody's leaving to go home, these people are staying after school cleaning busses.

Male: You gotta be real careful because you'll increase the sport. If you make harder to do it, they're going to be more likely to do it - if there's more sport in it, then you are going to increase the reason for doing it. Manual was talking about some of the graffiti busters going out there. There were some plans originally to pay kids to go out and paint over graffiti. So that was fine, they're started getting money and this was great, when suddenly the kids were getting money for doing something good. Well, at night they were going out and painting graffiti again, so that they had graffiti to paint over, and you have to be very very careful what you're doing not to increase the potential.

Male: That's the same thing that they're doing to murals. The guys that are doing the murals are the same guys that are doing the graffiti.

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Male: You know, one of the things you talked about was why the school busses are not marked, thought you notice the bus drivers are always the same drivers driving the same bus, and the bus driver takes a little pride in keeping his bus clean, keeping it quiet, and if anybody creates a problem on his bus or gets it dirty, that person is eliminated from the bus.

Male: That's part of it. When I mentioned that I didn't carry it far enough. The school bus drivers have great authority. They can get you suspended, they can have little slips and things that they fill out, and based upon what their recommendations are and what they write, you can be suspended you can lose your bus riding privileges, the whole bit. The other reason why they don't necessarily deal with school busses is because school busses have a locked starting point and a locked ending point, and that same bus is going to go the same place each day and back. So that's a know factor, whereas an RTD bus, they might be on this route today, and tomorrow because of whatever schedule, go on this route, and as Loren was saying, there's a recognition if Casper knows his name is going, he really doesn't care where it goes as long as it goes, and so it's weird type of thing because the quest for recognition far outweighs the knowledge that somebody's going to recognize who he is or the other thing is, there are 1,000 Caspers, you know. Your little set over here has a Casper but every other set out there has a Casper. But he never thinks this way, he just knows Casper is riding across town. And so, we have to do networking, when you're talking about bringing the bus to have it cleaned. That would probably work and I would not necessarily think in terms of after school. Take his recess privileges, take his lunch time, and make him clean the bus while everybody else is out there munching, so when the bus is clean, the bus leaves, you got the bus clean, good, you go sit down, you know, and whatever. You don't have to do it too often.

Male: You know, just to add along to that, between the school and the RTD, maybe the possibility of having someone from the RTD Company to come and do in-service to the kids, bus riding.

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Male: The other thing that I would like to see done that I would think could help, and this does not necessarily involve cleaning the bus, but since we have the programs in the schools which involve children with anti-vandalism and anti-graffiti, if we could arrange for a bus that has been vandalized with this writing to come to the school and basically just hold an outdoor assembly and let them visibly see what we're talking about, the damage to property.

Male: Show them with video tape. Show them what \$600,000 in damages is.

Male: I'm averaging about 4 or 5 presentations a week to parents, to schools, to all kinds of groups, and that tape will work wonders in our presentations because again it's something that we relate to because of vandalism and..

Male: That tape was good. I have a movie and it was put out by the Santa Barbara police dept. and we had to stop using it because, first of all, the title of the movie was wrong. Vandalism is fun. That sends the wrong message. From word go. And yet the same movie with a change in the narration could have worked wonders. This movie went so far even as to have a guy standing over one of the overpasses on the freeway, and throwing rocks through the windshield of a car in the movie, which we've had happen here. And I'm trying to clean it up in my narration -----, you know when you see the rock with the guy, cause it shows the guy bloody and you know -----the car. So that actually happened. If you see the twelve foot fences on the walk ramp over the freeways, well that's why they were put there, because we had people throwing rocks onto the freeways.

Male: I've got something RTD can do tomorrow and help some of us. I just finished a shooting of 4 or 5 people on the bus. Okay. Some kid went nuts with a 45 automatic, shot people on the bus. Nobody from RTD ever contacted me, ever showed up, the bus driver didn't come in as a witness, never heard anything about RTD, except that it happened on an RTD bus. The sentencing on that case is going to be in a few days. RTD ought to be there. Okay? If a kid gets sentenced for graffiti-ing on an RTD bus, RTD ought

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to be there. RTD ought to write a letter to that judge, they ought to have a representative there, they ought to make an example of that kid. The way things work in the District Attorney's office is that you only pay attention to the files you have to pay attention to, and a graffiti case on the scale of what happens in the D.A.'s office is as low as you can get, because we're dealing with murders more than anything else.

Male: But, Loren, let me ask you a question, because I want to be careful because this is not an indictment against anybody, but how much interest really, other than what we're doing here, and believe me I've known about graffiti and the destruction of city busses for many many years, what I have not heard (I've known people on the RTD bus police department) I've not seen any concentrated emphasis from RTD, as you say, making court appearances, making their voice heard in the penalty phase, going to the judge and saying look, your honor, I know you've got a crowded jail but damn it, put him in there also. Maybe the judge will say, no I can't do it, but at least you've let your feelings be known.

Female: Can I respond to that Earl? Working at Juvenile Court, I think that Juvenile Hall for a few days, a boys camp which are being eliminated by the Probation Dept., and the California Youth Authority which only occurs when the kid has a huge record and commits one of the most serious crimes. The bottom line is that this state of our juvenile justice process, there is no way that I see judges are going to give incarceration as a penalty for graffiti. Because in the spectrum of crimes they deal with within the system, they view this view this as one of the least important crimes, and I think that one thing RTD should do is set up meetings with your CEO or your general manager, with all the judges who deal with juvenile courts, and let them know the emphasis that RTD places on these crimes, because I don't think its taken very seriously by the judges. And let them know the expense, show the judges the videotapes. I also think there has to be more emphasis on alternative, to humiliation for kids as a form of punishment. As an example, we have a big problem with truancy that our office is now involved with.

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One thing that has worked is that when the kid is truant consistently, you make the parent go to school with the kid. The parent goes to every class with the kid. Very little actually works. But having parents involved seems to be very humiliating for these kids, and one idea is to have parents involved in the community service programs, because most of the families in East LA have no money, they have public lawyers, they have zilch. You're not going to get fines from them, or you're not going them to pay for fixing the bus. But you can tell the parent, ok, you show up here with the kid and you do the community service along with your kid. Because I do think parents need to be more accountable. Most of these parents say, I can't do anything about my kid, you handle it, let the police handle it, let the teachers worry about it, I can't deal with it. I think for most parents where kids are under the age of 18 and they live at home, they have to be more responsible and more involved in the penalty phase. Most of the punishment goes toward the kids and not the parents.

Male: How are you going to force the parents to do it? Suppose the parent says, no I'm not going to do it? I'm not going to get involved.

Female: We pass laws like the one trying to effect that hasn't worked yet about holding parents for kids who are involved with gangs.

Male: Let's talk a little bit about parental responsibility. There are a couple things. In the juvenile law the judge can make an order both to the kid and to the parent. It's rarely done but it can be done, and that's something we may want to look into. As far as making the parent pay, there is about one case in California jurisprudence on it, and it involves one of the Marks brothers children who threw caustic chemicals into somebody's face and the parents were held responsible because they knew that their kid was dangerous. Well, you almost can never hold the parent responsible monetarily because the parent will always say, well I didn't know what he was doing. So that's really not an out. And the last law that Zohave is talking about holding a parent responsible is really nothing more than

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prosecuting a mother under contributing to the delinquency of a minor child. You can almost never prove that a mother has anything to do with this graffiti writing. What I'm trying to say, is I don't think that's the out. You gotta get to the kid, and I think that having the kid do hours and hours of community service is probably the best that we can ever hope for. And if it is directed correctly, and if there's an educational aspect to it as well as punishment aspect, you may get some of these kids out of this, and then you keep them on probation and you make sure that you watch them.

Male: I think one of the other follow through's, as far as the kid who gets caught doing graffiti, I think the school should be notified about this kid, that he was caught doing graffiti, and if they know his tag, or his gang, it would be good because maybe he's done graffiti at the school. I know that when I worked at King Junior High School we had a program where, rather than suspend the kid, we would keep him after school. I was in charge of the after school program, so rather than just keep them in the room looking at each other for an hour, I said ok, you guys have to go clean walls in the school, and wash walls. I gave them each a spot. When you finish you can go home. Well could see those guys working so hard and saying, I'm finished. In twenty minutes they were done. I said ok, but if you come back again, you're going to do double. Normally I would never find that kid back again washing walls, because he knew that he could be suspended and sent to me. Again, if it got to be more serious he could be suspended, but for little things, but the thing about it is you've got to keep on top of the kids. If they're using their time, when they go out with their friends and hang out, you're killing their time, they say, hey man, I've got to wash walls again because I've been tagging. After awhile they're going to feel a little frustrated themselves. Again, I don't see any problem getting involved and helping out also. There are still some parents that have to be accountable. I've had parents say to me, you know, I can't do nothing with my kid. I even had parents in elementary school, parents that don't have control of maybe their 8 or 9 year old kid. They are starting already at that age, where they can't even control

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their kid at that age. But they are going to have to be held accountable even if they're 8 or 9 years old. Like I told parents, who runs your house, your child or you? And the woman looks at me, like she's got to think about it. Well, I guess I do. Well start acting like you do. Again, we have to have the parents in control.

Male: We need to have some education for the parents.

Male: But how's the RTD going to do that?

Male: Again, you go to your networking process. Schools are a very common place that can be used by almost anybody for a lot of things. We have what we call a civic center. If the RTD wants to start holding classes, they can work through the school system and starting getting parent advisory groups together for specific purposes, and come in and make presentations. Again, this is a good place to show the video, start educating the parents as to who Misty is, you find out who he is and then give them a name, and ask is his mom and dad here, well that's Misty. One of the things Mom and Dad want to harp on is "well I didn't know my kid was in a gang, I didn't know he was doing this." Well you wiped that out. And once you've wiped out this facade, then you can start getting down to some real nitty gritty. That's the thing about the School District, in some cases they've been very successful, but they have not done nearly enough towards the part of parent education. Because all that we do here, we're secondary agencies, the first agency in society is gone. We don't give children values, we enhance the values that are symptoms. The child doesn't obey his parents. If Sam calls his Mamma a real bad name, I'm nothing to him. You're nothing to him. If he has no respect for the house that's feeding and clothing him, we've got a hell of a job facing us. So what we have to do, we have gotten a generation of children from parents who were children when they had kids. So they've never learned how to really be mature parents. We've got to try all of these things, but it has to be in a concerted effort, so this child is not fragmentize.

Jewel: What can RTD do to prevent these things from

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happening?

Male: One other thing they can do when the kid is caught, especially a school kid, kids have RTD passes, and that can be taken away from him. Oh, sure he can pay money, but whose got \$1.35?

Jewel: Well, let's keep a head on this for a few minutes and let me tell you some of the things that RTD is doing now, some of things they probably won't do but have been suggested to do. They are taking away student bus passes from students who are caught vandalizing RTD busses. Now in essence what this does is it forces the juvenile owner's family to purchase a new pass. They are currently revoking student I.D.'s for repeat offenders. As you know, the student I.D. allows the student to buy a monthly pass at a discounted rate. Revoking the I.D. causes the student to pay full fare when riding an RTD bus. Some of the things that they're thinking about doing have been suggested; they could reduce service in order to fund cleanup activities. What this would do is that it would result in fewer busses, running less often, but the busses that do run would not have graffiti or etched windows.

Male: No you wouldn't That wouldn't do that. What you would do is you would have less busses with more graffiti.

Male: Yeah.

Male: They'll vandalize whatever busses they can get their hands on. All that does is solve the monetary problem.

Jewel: Okay, another thing they could do is bypass what they call hot-spots. If a driver was in a particular line prone to being vandalized, kids congregated and vandalizing the bus, the radio dispatch center is notified and all busses on that line would bypass that stop.

Male: Once again, you penalize the community that needs it most.

Jewel: What would happen then is that the riders waiting at

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that stop would be passed by and those who wanted to get off won't be able to. Now, if a particular bus is vandalized, they could give the bus driver the authority to order all passengers to leave the bus, and the driver could then take the bus to the nearest division for cleanup and repair.

Male: It won't work.

Male: What would your liability be if leaving those kids on the corner of Santa Barbara, one gets shot. You've dumped them out in the worst neighborhood in Los Angeles. That doesn't strike me as being very wise.

Male: I ride the busses and I sure wouldn't like to be dumped off somewhere.

Male: Yeah, suppose some 55 year old man is sitting on the bus and the driver says get off the bus, and he says no I'm not getting off the bus. Then what? That would be causing an awful lot of hostility.

Jewel: 55 is not that old.

Group:

Male: Or, I'm a handicapped person. If there are problems on the bus, and they tried to put me off let's say at Vernon and Main, you got you a rider back to the cleanup because I'm not getting off the bus.

Zohave: Besides, you're punishing the community who is already being punished by having these acts and by having to look at all this graffiti in their neighborhood, and the innocent bus payer who is..

Jewel: Another thing that has been suggested to RTD is to examine these locations where a great deal of vandalism takes place and do one of several things:

1. Eliminate a bus stop at that location.
2. Eliminate several stops.
3. Discontinue service to that particular area, or even eliminate an entire bus line.

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- Male: That's putting the cart before the horse.
- Male: The idea of a bus is to provide transportation, is you know, ideally is to have a clean bus, but transportation is what busses are for, not to have some aesthetically charming vehicle.
- Male: If I understand, aren't there some particular busses that are getting hit harder than others? Or particular lines.
- Male: That is what comes across when you use the term hot-spots.
- Male: Okay. Well what about this. They have the undercover cars following. Well why not use undercover cars and use a marked car. I know that the RTD has regular police cars. Why not for certain particular busses that are getting hit hard, how about having a regular police car with two RTD police in there following it. And if some jerk decides that he is going to spray the bus then he gets arrested. And you were talking about your networking, I think that is a very good idea. While the juvenile court judges right now really don't feel that spray painting is that big a deal, if the higher echelon at RTD met with the presiding judge of the juvenile court who is Paul Bolin and this video was shown to him, maybe he would then see that perhaps the vandalism to the busses should receive a little higher priority than they do now. He then communicates to the rest of the judges and perhaps on a second time offender, he goes to jail. It is my experience that alot of these youngsters while, you know, community service is something that is kind if distasteful, and being embarrassed in front of their friends is kind of distasteful. They don't want to go to jail. They do not want to go to jail. And maybe a couple of week-ends in jail would help have an effect on them.
- Male: Another thing is if you bring to the attention of the judge that this isn't just a tagger. This is a kid that has been tagging alot and you document some of the tags that he has done and show that this is all the same kind of tag. And you tell that judge that this is in a hot-spot area. That will make a

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difference in sentencing. Where if it is an isolated incident that kid is going to get very little. But if you can show that it is in a hot-spot area and something chronic, that kid is very likely to get alot more, and once again, only RTD knows that information. Now we in the DA's office know nothing about that. And so we don't know what to argue when something like this comes up.

Male: There has to be communication between the RTD and the criminal justice system. Including the District Attorneys Office and including the Judges.

Male: One of the things that you might want to take into consideration in conducting what Mark has said and that is to bring together some representatives from the criminal justice system, the D.A.'s Office, School System Personnel, School Police, Sheriff, and really put this thing in focus so that these people...because I know some judges that if they had the full knowledge of it, of what is going on, like Judge Dorn, Judge Dorn does not play. Roosevelt Dorn doesn't not play.

Jewel: What do you mean he does not play?

Male: He gives you one fair chance.

Male: He gives you one fair chance.

Group:

Male: The next time the hammer falls. He doesn't care how much your mama cries, you can hire the best lawyer in town. You come back before Judge Dorn you are going to serve some time.

Male: Is he the exception or the rule?

Male: He is the exception highly the exception. See but the point is most judges I feel well they might not be that way, but they would be much more so than they are if they had more knowledge of what is going on in the RTD System.

Male: Let me tell you...this tape came as quite a shock to the four of us who deal with this. I didn't know it

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was that bad. And if I didn't know it was that bad, I guarantee you the judges don't know that it is that bad.

Male: They don't

Female: Another thing is that every time that a juvenile is convicted there is a probation report prepared and that report comes back to the court three weeks later and the judge reads that report to decide the sentence. I have never seen a probation report in a misdemeanor vandalism case where they called RTD and asked them what they thought about it. Why don't you recommend that probation officers contact RTD whenever one of those cases comes up. So that RTD's voice will then be heard in the report and they can say in the report well, this vandalism cost us \$10,000.00 to clean up and it will give judges a greater sense of the magnitude of the problem.

Male: RTD is simply going to have to learn the politics of justice. They are going to have to start how the system works, how to get their message to those who sentence these people, how to get their message to those who prosecute these people, and how to get their message to those who arrest these people. And they are going to have to acquire some sort of file system where they can keep track of who is doing the tagging, how many times have they been caught, what is their tag, how much does it cost RTD for this one person, how much does one person alone cost RTD, how much does this hot-spot cost RTD, how much is the problem costing RTD, and they have to become aware of how they can interact or interface whichever one you want to use with the Justice System and with those who bring the juveniles to the justice system. That is something that they are just going to have to learn to do. If they want to have effective input and cut down the problem by use of the criminal justice system.

Male: I will give you the bottom line. The real bottom line is that we need more law enforcement. If we see probably one tenth of a percent of all of the graffiti artists. It is so rare that one of these people gets caught that it is just mind boggling.

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Herb: I think that you were alluding that if it were an adult, it has to be done in your presence. Or you can't even make the arrest. That is what Herb was talking about before. When your talking about a juvenile, a juvenile can be arrested

Male:I wasthere is four names on the bus and I say hey I know that guy, I know that guy,

Male: You can't arrest those people. We talked before about identifying him. Don't expect any of the at least the four of us to prosecute a case where you bring me one tag and then you want me to file ten charges on the ten prior tags unless you can also bring me an expert who can also say, I can identify that handwriting and that is the same person. I mean that is not going to happen.

Male: But what is important when you do have the guy apprehended and you say look, these ten tags do belong to him. We got him on this one, this is why this guy deserves to be hammered on.

Male: One of the things graffiti on the bus has done is that they photograph before they remove the graffiti. So if the kid puts his tracks on Foothill and Polk, then most likely he is going to hit Foothill and Hubbard, we found prison from the beginning of where the RTD bus starts in Sylmar to where it ends sometimes.

Male: If your investigators are going to take confessions sometimes from these kids, which I assume that they do sometimes, they have to know how to take confessions and do it right, and then they have to...when the kid says alright they caught me painting this one, but they have to be able to come up with the four or five other polaroids and say did you do this one, and did you do this one, and did you do this one, this one and this one. At that point we can charge six counts and some judge is really going take this thing seriously.

Male: Is that one tag that kid OZO.

Male: OZO

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Male: Los Angeles tracked him. The thing about it is because the kid messed up because he bragged about it.

Male: Oh so he made himself a hero. I don't know if we finally filed it...

Male: Yeah. They did they did.

Male: But the thing is, is that the way he was interviewed the way he came off is that it was no big thing. He got slapped on the wrist. Right after he was picked up again, and it wasn't a slap on the wrist.

Male: They actually used the statement to the L.A. Times of his confession on all his other tags.

Male: Now, not as if there are not enough law already, but the kids don't get airplane glue, kids don't get alcohol, and kids shouldn't have spray paint.

Male: There is a law like that.

Male: Assemblyman Katz passed one. And it has been effective in Sylmar because there is no more graffiti. But.....

Male: Well if that is known to those who are enforcing the law we don't have to wait for the graffiti to be sprayed on the bus. Students have the same rights in their lockers as adults. If there is spray cans of paints in their lockers, there is school enforcement where the kid can be....see once you identify the student or certain tag, you know what his locker is and if you find that spray paint there....you got him.

Male: One of the problems this group has had before again is when we find out we help them identify who the tagger is again, getting that information from the school is unbelievable. Some of the responses we got from some of the principals themselves, oh it is not one of our students, we don't have that kind of problem here. That type of stuff. And that is what makes it difficult. When you got community people saying well we are making a difference we are going to get involved. Okay, and then all of a sudden you

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know where the source is coming from, the other students tell you well that it is him...just don't mention my name, that type of stuff, and then you go in there and say well I know this tagger comes from your school, you got a lot of schools that become real defensive about that. I mean when I go to a school, and they call me in because they have a gang problem, sometimes I am asked to take my ID and ...don't look, just come in and do what you have to do and then just leave. You know that type of stuff. So then again, RTD could do this, I mean educate the administrations of each school in each hot spots, they don't even have to be hot-spots again, you know the Valley, again with that tape, again it is hispanic and black, hispanic and black, hispanic and black. You know you need to show hispanic, black, white and asian. But just the tagging itself goes across the boarder. You know you don't have to be a gang member back there to tag. There is just that thing of tagging. It is that challenge. Again, there is going to be a difference between Ozone who is white, to a tagger who is black or hispanic. There is a lot of difference there. And then again, exposing that to parents, school administrators, everybody, so we can do that for you because we are constantly out there. Cause the thing is that the community needs the changes and that is what they were talking about the community services and the fine.

Jewel: There have been several other things that have been suggested as possibly being able to help with the problems that graffiti and vandalism cause. One thing that has been suggested or brought up is that local cities could be required to pay for the cost of repairing vandalism that occurs on the busses within those cities.

Male: Why in hell.

Jewel: Why what?

Male: Why should they be responsible?

Male: And how are you going to make them responsible. It is not their responsibility.

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- Jewel: Another thing that has been suggested is a tax on spray paint with the money to be used to repair for vandalism.
- Male: That is a good one.
- Male: And magic markers.
- Jewel: And one thing that came up in several of the other groups was said that kids will go in and buy one can but leave with six or eight cans.
- Male: Well this thing with assemblyman's Katz's bill is that you are supposed to have a label saying that it is against the law. Every store is supposed to have one. But the thing is, is that you go to any Chief Auto Parts, and they don't put it up. You know and kids just come in and they will sell it to anybody. And these people again have gone in undercover to see who complies with it and who doesn't. You would be surprised who doesn't.....
- Jewel: I know we have been told by several people in this group that kids don't buy them anyway. They steal them.
- Male: I can understand you statement about a tax on spray paint and a tax on markers even. But the only thing is that most of the kids get their markers from school.
- Male: But the markers at school are water based markers.
- Male: The difference being use a water based marker or go to jail.
- Group:
- Male: I want to hear from Jean. Because she said.....
- Jean: Well all you guys have said such great things.
- Male: No Jean.
- Jean: Well I think the one thing that RTD really needs to do is to paint those busses....I am really not into riding buses and I saw this bus with all the graffiti

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on it...and I thought what happened. You know I just happened to notice it. But I know if you paint it off it is just never going to stop, but eventually then get tired. And they move on to something else. If it is constant painting that the bus company has to do or they have to get the young people that the catch doing it to clean it off, I think that, that is a great idea.

Male: Is there a paint that exists that they can paint the bus that spray paint won't stick to it.

Male: They have that graffiti paint.

Male: I think that is for walls only.

Jewel: They have developed a paint that is supposed to be easier to clean. But kids are very creative, they etch things on they don't

Male: Well one thing this morning...I was coming into work this morning and RTD had a little advertising they are going to get a whole new fleet of busses. In fact they came in last night that they were going to get a whole new fleet of busses. I think 50 new more busses. Plus they are going to hire, I think some people to be cleaning off the busses. Taking off the graffiti. They are going to hire extra help to clean off the busses, they got some money.

Male: So Bradly got them some new busses.

Male: Yeah.

Male: About 100 new people.

Male: What I am saying is that still, you can hire all these people who can be consultants to help get these people who are marking buses to work during the week, working on week-ends for clean-up and have maybe a site where take that bus off the line, clean it off right away because you have the people there working already.

Male: That transition period, you know when the bus reaches the end of the line, there is a few minutes they take before they start back, that is the time we should

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have some of the kids there, real quick.

Female: You might be aware that last year the director of the New York Subway System made a pledge that his goal was to eradicate all the graffiti from the New York Subway System. And I saw an interview on TV recently, very impressive man, and he said that he accomplished that goal by several strict procedures. One is, every night every single sub way train in New York City was washed off. Every single sub way train was repaired every night. I'm sure that cost alot of money, but he says that daily now there is no graffiti, because he took away the motivation, the kids know now that if it gets washed out it is not going to be a block down the street. Their name is not going to be blasted throughout the city. And apparently he has completely controlled the problem.

Jewel: Another thing that has been suggested is that additional police protection of transit services should be provided by the county and by the local cities.

Male: How much it would cost to have a police officer with a bus versus how much it would have someone cleaning the bus after there is graffiti on it. It is cheaper to have someone cleaning the bus after it has been graffitied than have a cop ride with the bus. And it better to have the graffiti cleaned. You are not saving money by having a cop.

Male: How do we serve the public best? Do we serve the public best by watching whether buses are graffitied or whether people are getting killed?

Male: That is where you want to prioritize.

Male: Let's look at that from a slightly different angle and that is...I agree with both of you in fact that it would be totally out of the question to have a policeman riding on the bus. But I was thinking that again it calls for some agency coordination, where you have....you mentioned awhile ago about you have the marked patrol cars from the RTD. Well if you could concentrate, say ask for more visible patrol coordinated with RTD from the LAPD and the LASO at

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certain hot spots that have been identified at certain times and in order to do this RTD must do their homework. RTD must only identify but basically set up some kind of time element as to when is this happening. So that when they as us...and they call LAPD and we can say can you have (x) patrols at this particular at this general area. Because one of the things that we have learned is that high visibility does deter that type of activity. See and your not really taking somebody and putting them on a bus to ride a bus line and you are only utilizing them for a certain amount of time and then they go back to their normal routine in the patrol. That might be...and you might be able to work something out in that instance. If LAPD or LASO can't do it you might also ...if you go close enough to the hot-spots say if you are in that area say _____ gardens, we have housing authority police there are several agencies. And what I am trying to say is that perhaps through coordination you could work something out where you got this type of visibility.

Male: There are already all kinds of gang task forces. Housing Authority, Youth Gang Services, School Police, meet already together with the D.A.'s office and Sheriff's and LAPD. They are already existing task force. Maybe you want to run the task forces and see.....

Male: Run it on their agenda. Definitely.

Jewel: How effective do you think it would be to offer a reward to people who would turn in vandals and graffitists?

Male: I think that rewards are always a good idea. And people do things because there is the incentive to do so. Although people probably like to have nice looking busses, I think that the additional incentive would be nice. I don't think how it could be anything other than a positive thing.

Male: I hate to disagree. It would be positive if again or it could be positive you gotta get...now we are going back to that criminal justice system. The results of your turning them in have to outweigh this person getting caught. Because what your going to have if

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it is not, hey man, I'm going to turn you in and we are going to get the money and we are going to split it because you know you are going to get kicked loose. So I get the money and then we go out and party. That is under the present system and that is what is going to happen to them. Your starting up a little racket really.

Male: Yeah. It becomes just extortion. I mean one of the ideas that I think would be great is to take nice kids and give them free bus passes for cleaning up the busses. But what your going to have crummy kids marking up the busses so that they can clean them off and get their free bus passes and perpetuate the same thing. You may want to look into that and see whether hiring you know decent kids out of the junior high schools.

Male: This was once looked into at Sylmar. But the problem is that nobody is giving them any money to do anything. It is all volunteer. It is all coming out of their own pockets. And donations from people. I mean it is unbelievable what they found out just in Sylmar with normal benches was unbelievable. You had all these benches sitting there and the city was paying for it and half of the bus benches wasn't even on the bus route. But again the idea of a tagger seeing a bus bench...he wants to advertise. So it is this type of thing. So you know again, you know groups like this were willing to do the clean up and removing this graffiti from the RTD you know signs and all that stuff, you know they need the money to keep going.

Male: One of the things that I have learned from what you said reminds me from one of my experiences is that once children...young people get into something positive, and start being recognized for that, that is one of the biggest payments that you can ever give them. It is to let them know, hey, you are good, you are being recognized. And if RTD can set something up to start maybe on a semi-annual basis whatever, twice a year, once a year, really make it worthwhile to try and identify people who...please like your group out there in the Valley who are really doing things positive, and start doing this and use this as a magnet to try and draw others rather than just

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saying that we are going to pay you to do this.

Male: Put their picture on the bus.

Male: Yeah. Yeah. That might get more salt but the point is that is still a positive recognition factor. And children respond to that. I know of schools that have a student of the month and student of the week and they put their pictures up and their names. Eventually that becomes a thing of pride.

Male: That is one way where RTD can help out is to instill in the community pride again. Because there is nobody out there doing it. I mean just when you deal with these groups, well you ask how do you get them started, alot of times you want to have a heart to heart talk to them. You know you need to get involved. Because sometimes we need to reach the people and sometimes instead of dealing with heart to heart you have to go from the heart to their pocketbook and again, Sylmar homes a year ago were going from \$110,000.00 you know because of the graffiti that same home is going for \$210,000.00 because there is no more graffiti. So again, that is another incentive is that you give a bus route going through your streets, you know it is not going to hurt for you to go out and spend five minutes in removing graffiti.

Male: Let me ask you another question about that. As I going back to what Tony is saying because I see where Tony is coming from. Puts kids picture up there and some of the other kids don't like it. What if you put the kids picture up there and also his parents. You know.

Male: You mean the kids that get caught.

Male: No. No.

Group:

Male: No. With his mom and dad. Because kids are faster to respect a parent a family type situation than you as an individual as a kid. And that's what I am saying.

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Male: You know it is funny because I frequent the busses quite a bit. And I saw the Raiders and it said don't tag graffiti and when I looked up there it had some mustaches painted on.

Group:

Male: And everyday...the days that I come on the bus I noticed that from the door this way everything is marked up. Marked up, in fact it was so funny that I was looking down..the guy had to actually be on the floor of the bus doing his graffiti. And he did it really fine.

Jewel: You mean from the door to the back of the bus?

Male: All the graffiti is done back there. Because the bus driver can't look back there as good as he can in the front. One other suggestion maybe at night close off the back. Maybe put a rope across and say with a sign...go out the front door because alot of the tagging goes on at night also. But if you look at the busses if you have been on the busses it is all in the back of the bus. Never where the bus driver can see the people. Even when the bus is crowded. Bus drivers can see all the people there. But when it is real real crowded he can't see all the way in the back.

Male: Maybe the answer is to put up video tape cameras.

Male: They have cameras in the buses. They do have cameras in the busses. There is a camera sitting right there.

Group:

Male: There are busses that have cameras there. I don't know what the cameras are doing but it says for your safety we are filing.

Jewel: Sometimes they can't do anything because they get spray painted over. You mentioned the Raiders. RTD does have an advertising promotion going with the Raiders. It is an anti-graffiti campaign. Do you think that something like this can be effective.

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Male: The only thing that they can do is with community people who are already doing something about it.

Male: Well I will tell you what the Raiders can do. They can give to the schools, Raiders Stickers, whatever like they used to do. I guess graffiti and RTD sponsored so that they can know about it. So I remember years ago they were giving these stickers to the kids at the school from the Raiders which was good. The kids really enjoyed it. Same thing with the Police Officer giving out baseball cards you know.

Male: There are alot of creative people who are volunteering and not getting that credit.

Jewel: I mentioned the Raiders specifically because it came up in a very controversial way. One of the groups that we did here someone mentioned that alot of the gangs, almost revere the Raiders and in fact some of the gang insignias inviting wearing the Raider jackets.

Male: Well usually it is because of the Raiders colors. Black. Black is supposed to be neutral.

Jewel: You have a great deal of problems at Raiders games with violence.

Male: Well the Raiders in a sense they don't encourage it but there whole publicity ...is we are the black and the great you know...from a fight we all walk away you know...they give this super macho tough guy bad boy image. And that is what the kids lock on to and that is why they don't go over there with the Rams. Rams might even be tougher than the Raiders. They don't carry the facade. See and that's why the kids latch onto the Raiders, because the Raiders say publicly hey, whatever it takes to win baby we will rub your nose in it.

Jewel: It was suggested that perhaps because of this association with violence that maybe the Raiders are not the best image.

Male: It could help change the image. If they went into the schools for example and gave a presentation about

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the Raiders and giving some background about the Raiders and reversed the image you know to the kids.

Male: You would have a tough problem trying to find anybody who is a hero to these kids. At least if you start with the Raiders to a lot of them they are heroes.

Male: Yeah.

Male: You know you go into some of these communities and you ask them who is your greatest hero and they can't tell you anybody. So you might as well start with somebody that at least has an image that deserves some respect rather than having them...you know if you brought Bush out here, and had the president tell the kids please don't write graffiti

Male: They might ask you who is Bush.

Male: Well not a person, a group maybe. Another group.

Male: No. No. No. The thing is that the Raiders are good. They do have the image and that is the initial motivation for most gangs tied into them. But the Raiders as individuals do go out to certain schools and they do present a very positive presentation. So it is not...you can take the Raiders image and actually use it to your own advantage. Again it is taking what is given to you and using it in a positive way. You have the Raiders. We have an association with RTD and since kids basically are the problem tie it in with the schools and have RTD and the Raiders come in and say...you know get two or three of the guys to come in and give a presentation on vandalism...because you are going to grab their attention just by being the Raiders.

Male: And of course there is no reason to limit it to the Raiders. You can find out who these kids role models are who these kids heroes are, find these heroes if they exist and use these people to go to the schools, use these people to pass along the message and if the Raiders are some role models that is fine. But there has to be others.

Male: Valenzuela was doing a great job as far as staying in school.

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Male: Another thing too as that again your only focusing in on a certain kid who is into sports. What about the kids who is not into sports.

Male: Well we are just not say sports.

Male: That's what I am saying you have alot of rock stars out there.

Female: Yes another thing is to either involve these people into a community service like just sending the kid off to do his twenty hours, when he goes there have a pep rally with his hero, or whoever it is, a rock star, or Raider, for the first hour saying that I am here washing the bus with you. You know and give this kid a positive role model or somebody that is also participating in the clean up.

Jewel: Okay. We could probably sit here all night doing this. But I am sure you guys don't want to do that, so by way of wrapping everything up, I would like you to think about one thing and then lets spend two to three minutes apiece discussing it. If it was your responsibility to develope a program of prevention, apprehension, and penalization of vandalism and graffiti for RTD what would you recommend? And let's just go one at a time to you...and start with you.

Female: How many minutes? Three minutes did you say?

Jewel: Yes.

Female: I believe that one thing that is important in getting rid of graffiti is that as soon as it happens is to have the graffiti painted out. A very small situation that I was involved in at the school where I work, and before we...and of course you know in the school district you get school principals every five years or every four years...but for quite a few years we had an awful lot of vandalism, just about every week-end breaking into the class rooms and vandalizing and this kind of thing, and then of course the graffiti on the outside walls, and we a new principal and the one thing that he did was it was painted out. It was not allowed to stay 24 hours. Of course this made everybody tired. Because

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we had to have people...there was alot of other things that did not get done, but this had to be done, and eventually, the graffiti disappeared. I guess they moved on. Another thing we did was we let the community know that we were having this problem. We had people who were living right across the street that did not know it. And I think that one thing that RTD needs to do is to let the entire public know. To let some of the TV Stations do news stories on it. I don't think that the public even realizes the amount of money that RTD is losing, the time that is being spent, the problems that they are having. And I think that if the public knew that it might help in some of the legislation and the changes that you want to make. It might put pressure on the judges. Those kinds of things, because RTD is going to have to have the public and I think that the public would back them in anything that they would do. I also think that maybe in those areas that are called hot-spots if RTD could send a flyer to the residents that live in that hot-spot, and even if it says to Occupant, Your Bus Services Is Possible That They Might Be Curtailed Because Our Busses Are Being Painted On By The Students or whatever, could you help us by watching. Because neighborhood watches work. But the neighbors, the people that know, the people that live in the neighborhood, they know the children that are painting the busses.

Jewel: Okay Mantel?

Mantel: It is just basically getting the community educated again what is taking place. Alot of parents are aware that their kids are involved but when it comes down to the nitty gritty well it is not my kid. It is never my kid. And again, with the RTD is just another bill board for gang members and taggers. The only thing is that this bill board has wheels on it. And again, I believe again it is educating and that's what RTD can play a big part in that. There is existing agencies already out there that are doing gang awareness and gang prevention things. Helping those agencies exist a little bit more basically money wise. And the volunteer groups are out there who are cleaning up their communities. Again they need that helping hand financially because again they can only do so much. Most of the money is coming out

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of their own pockets and from donations. And again, educating those and helping those who are out there doing something and educating parents again, because they are responsible, I don't care, I know the frustrations the DA's office has to go through. With this one lady I mean that her scape goat is that she took _____ class. But still they know we know and that everybody else knows that lady had something to do with it, with her kids being the way that they are. I mean we have to crack down and educating parents on what to look out for creates a peer pressure among parents. Say hey, I am not paying for what your kid did. Again talk about their pocketbooks, what they have to pay.

Jewel: Paul.

Paul: I agree with him and also what I would like to add is that RTD needs to advertise as far as what vandalism is costing them and what it is costing the public. Because it is not hurting the driver who drives to work everyday. It hurts the people who get on the busses. They are affected. The drivers have to be aware that people who drive all the time that they are affected too because they are paying taxes. They are also affected. So they have to know, hey it is affecting you even though you don't take the busses. Stiffer penalties. I agree with stiffer penalties. More community time. Not just on week-ends but also during the week. And that any monies that are fined or levied against people doing graffiti should go back to these agencies who are fighting graffiti. They should be getting some of that money so that they can hire some people to monitor the program and oversee the program. And maybe some of that money can also go to RTD for fighting graffiti.

Male: I guess these guys have said everything that has been said so far really, but I want to be a little selfish, I don't want you to get rid of that graffiti too quick because I might want to see it as a gang investigator because it might be important to me. However, I think perhaps that one of the things that I would like to see is something done wherein we can get the street cops a little bit more interested in writing a graffiti report. Because they...I mean they are not going to take a whole lot of time an

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slack say somebody wrote _____ on my wall. Because he knows hey your not going to go any place and that would be the only thing that I would suggest.

Male: I would...I look at it from a very total concept. And I think what I am saying is that I would not only like to tighten up the penalty phase but to develop at the same time an educational end of it, both for parents and for students. I would also like to see some system

Male: Some of the abilities you see displayed through graffiti and I am like _____, I don't like to see it erased too fast because most of the time it is a message and if you interpret it right you can really learn alot from graffiti. Alot of times it tells you who your players are and what's going down and what's going to happen and this type of thing. But now only do children need the educational point of view, we need to have some type of program that will attract children to a positive role. And where they can still use some of their _____ if they are just playing. But I would also like to have a deterrent in them and that comes from the penalty phase and again, we suffer from this tragedy of over crowded jails and all of this and it is a problem that society is going to have to face because we just can't keep saying that we have overcrowded jails and letting people walk the streets and destroy the city. Pretty soon you won't have a city. You will have overcrowded jails but you won't have a city either. So somewhere down the line everybody has to come together with some agreement to try and solve all the problems that we are letting these people run free on. And once we do that bring everybody into one concentrated effort and that is make this important to everybody and it is important to RTD but at the same time I haven't heard RTD with the pain that it should have over this problem and the right response and they have to re-direct themselves to be in a part of the healing process, rather than saying what can other agencies do to solve it for us. And get involved with the grass roots education. Get involved with the networking with other agencies and police departments and see how they can interact and control the problem.

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Male: I think it is always important to recognize the fact that we have scarcity and limited resources we have limited jail space, we have limited personnel of law enforcement officers, we have a limited number of people to clean the busses, we have a limited number of prosecutors to prosecute, we deal with limited resources and it is very important to recognize what would be the most effective way of spending that scarce amount of resources if it costs more to incarcerate somebody than to clean a bus than that's a factor that has to be considered, rather than incarcerated that person should be out there cleaning a bus. There is just more things...more people need to be incarcerated than people who tag busses, however it doesn't mean that you should throw up your hands and say that nothing can be done, it is very important for RTD like I said earlier to know how the criminal justice system works to get messages to the criminal justice system so that once a person is apprehended for tagging or graffiting that person can be dealt with. I am not sold on the idea that incarceration is the right rode to take. I think that the idea would be to have that person spend significant time serving the community by cleaning the busses. Significant time after school or on week-ends or at lunch in front of his or her peer cleaning the busses. I think the bottom line to use cost effectiveness and how best to spend the limited amount of funds that we have.

Male: I think that RTD needs to inform the public about the problems that it has been costing RTD a great sum of money. Through advertising like what Paul said and also through presenting RTD the vandalism bill you had into the schools and making the students aware about vandalism on the bus and providing some kind of a fund for those community agencies that are helping or eradicate graffiti and those hot spots or communities where there is a great amount of graffiti put out by the gang members. You know I think that RTD should come into contact with the community in helping to establish some kind of agency or other agencies that are connecting like Rose said start connecting start developing some kind of connection system where everybody is working together to help solve this problem.

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Female: I think in addition RTD should start by their officials meeting with all of our supervisors meet with Sherman Block and Ira Reiner, and Britten start off by having a head what do they call it a General something or other...General Director. Meet with all these people, because then it will filter down, but emphasize that there is now a unified community, law enforcement and school approach. So that these kids are not exposed to a haphazard type of enforcement which is currently what is happening. Every community like you say has a different program. Every community has different powers of police officers. Some of them do write arrest reports for these, others don't. So that there is a much more unified and strong line approach. In addition, absolutely you have to involve legislatures because it is all going to come down to funding. Maybe they can get some state legislation passed that will give them more funding as a pilot project to eradicate graffiti. Maybe they can get money passed to increase the number of incarceration programs available. Because the existing resources are simply not enough to absorb the additional enforcement of graffiti.

Male: In addition to what has already been said I would only add that I think that the RTD should put two uniformed officers on busses in particularly hot areas at hot times and that they should have a two officer RTD police car follow those busses, through the hot areas at the hot times.

Male: My basic problem with what we are doing is that it is still fun for these people. And you have to make it so that it is not fun. You can only make it not fun if they get caught. I personally have prosecuted alot of malicious mischief. I have never seen a repeat offender. We tend to get their attention if we get them once cause they are then on probation. But I think apprehension is the main thing that we have to do. If you can catch more than a minimal number of people than we are getting right now, and you catch them in a way so that we can prosecute them, and I mean you don't come to us with a sort of iffy case. You come to us with a dead bang case. Alot of people don't understand what the criminal

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justice...the amount of justice you get has a lot to do with how good the case is and not with what you did. And if you bring us a dead bang case on video tape where there is no problem with the case we can start asking for more cause there are no problems with the case. The guy is going to pled guilty and we are going to start asking for more and then the prevention comes in letting the community know what the punishment is for this. And it certainly wouldn't bother me at all to see RTD take out a full page ad in the LA Times saying we caught 300 of the people that are making our city look like garbage las month and here is what they got. And let the community say well that is too little or that is too much or god you guys are really doing a right thing. But at least they will see that RTD is doing something to make Los Angeles a better place. And then as far as penalties, the penalties will take care of themselves once you bring in the right number of people.

Male: In conjunction with what you just said, you know, it brought to mind what the City of Inglewood did in advertising their penalty phases for drugs. For drug use they put up hugh bill boards and newspaper ads and you knowyou know you don't know who you are buying drugs from in the city of Inglewood, it could be the Chief of Police. And the part is it worked. Through that type of advertising it worked it brought a type of awareness to the community. And that was part of the recognition that they got in being named one of the best ten cities in America. But so those kinds of things do work. I agree with you now. It is part of the education process for the community.

Jewel: Well thank you all very much for coming out and sharing your thoughts with us. And I especially that you for letting us video tape this.

OUTLINE FOR DISCUSSION

R.T.D. Groups to be conducted among:

1. Former Gang Members (2 groups).
2. Those who deal with Youth Gangs, Vandalism, Graffiti (from private and public sectors) (3 groups).

I. WARM-UP / INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Names/Brief Bios.
- B. Extent of experience in dealing with youth gangs, vandalism and/or graffiti.

II. SHOW R.T.D. VIDEO - Explain that these are the problems we wish to discuss. Initial discussion to cover:

- A. Specific experience with these types of vandalism/graffiti.
- B. Reasons why these acts are perpetrated/Different kinds of graffiti and motivations behind these acts.
- C. Ways of dealing with perpetrators:
 1. Punishments:
 - What is appropriate?
 - What works? What doesn't?
 2. Methods of Apprehension:
 - How do you "catch" perpetrators of vandalism and graffiti?
 - Again, what is effective?
 3. Methods of Prevention:
 - What has been tried?
 - What has been successful? Why?
 - What doesn't work? Why?

III. DISCUSSION OF HOW R.T.D. DEALS WITH / COULD DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF VANDALISM AND GRAFFITI

- A. Presentation of present and suggested methods of punishment, apprehension and prevention.
- B. Discussion and critique of each. Perceptions regarding:
 - 1. Appropriateness.
 - 2. What is good/effective? Advantages?
 - 3. What is bad/ineffective? Disadvantages?
- C. Suggestions/ideas regarding how the vandals can be caught, punished and prevented or deterred from acts of vandalism and graffiti.

IV. WRAP-UP

If it was your responsibility to develop a program of prevention, apprehension and punishment of vandalism and graffiti, what would you recommend?