

## The Legacy of Gangsterism in Present Day Springtown

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**ABSTRACT** Whilst a wide range of factors influences the shaping of a community, a history of gangsterism could be said to be a major contributor to ongoing crime. Springtown in the precinct of Sydenham, in the province of Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa, is a poor socio-economic community buried amongst affluent suburbs like Asherville and Overport. Gangsters ruled it in the 3 decades from the 60s to the 90s. Its legacy of gangsterism and ongoing violent crime, both domestic and public, has given Springtown a reputation of violence and lawlessness. The authors used semi-structured interviews with members of gangs and community leaders both past and present, to provide insights into the impact that decades of being ruled by gangsters has had on the community. They argue that within a context of poverty and unemployment, present day Springtonians show gangster proclivities and that unless some radical social engineering is undertaken, gangsterism will be the inheritance of the future.