

## GANG INITIATION BLAMED IN BEATING DEATH

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Thursday, September 14, 1989

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Harold Stevenson didn't even want to join the P.A. Boys, his friends told police, but three reputed **gang** members grabbed him anyway.

"Just **initiation** , mom, just **initiation** ," a battered Stevenson later tried to reassure his mother, Ruby, as he lay near **death** after an apparent ritual **beating** he took on a west-side Detroit playground.

When Stevenson, 21, died hours after the August incident, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office decided it was murder.

Alleged **gang** member Sean Paul -- who also uses the names Sean Anderson and Sean Richards - faces a preliminary examination **in** 36th District Court on Friday on a second- degree murder charge. Two other Detroit men, Charles Anderson, 21, and Eric Gooden, 20, are sought by police on second-degree murder warrants.

According to court records, Stevenson and friends went out drinking the night of Aug. 24. They tried to cap the night with a stop at the Body Rock bar on 8 Mile Road, but Stevenson was turned away because he forgot identification.

About 2:30 a.m., the group wound up at a playground at Cherrylawn and Puritan avenues. Also at the playground were alleged members of the P.A. Boys, the abbreviation for the Puritan Avenue turf the members called theirs, according to police statements **in** court records.

Witnesses told police that at the cry, " **initiation** ," Stevenson was grabbed and held **in** the air by two alleged P.A. Boys while a third delivered repeated body blows.

Stripped to his underwear, Stevenson then was kicked and beaten with a leather belt as part of the ordeal to see how much pain he could endure without crying out, the witnesses said.

Stevenson's friends recovered him and put him **in** the back of a pickup truck just as police, summoned by neighbors, arrived. Asked who had beaten him, Stevenson answered, "No one."

His friends took him to a vacant house across from his home on Lilac Street, but toward dawn, Stevenson staggered home to his mother and died.

An autopsy found that Stevenson died from multiple blunt force injuries. Police recovered a leather belt believed used **in** the **beating** .

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Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

Page: 10C;

Index Terms: BEATING; HOMICIDE ; DETROIT ; DEATH

Record Number: 8902070062

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