Since its creation in 1993, the Illinois gang database has grown to nearly 18,000 names. Two other databases within the state have also raised racial justice concerns: the Chicago City Police list, and the Cook County Sheriff’s List. The names on the list are not public information, but metadata concerning the database was made available to ProPublica via FOIA request. The public metadata distinguished among 5 racial identifiers: White or Latinx (W), African-American (B), Asian (A), (I), and Unknown (U).

**A.**

Initially, a majority of the names in the database were coded African-American, although African-Americans made up less than 15% of the state’s population. After the first decade, African-Americans continued to be over-represented in the database, but the White & Latino category began to grow more quickly and soon became the largest racial category in the database. Because the state did not make information distinguishing between White versus Latinx entrants public, it cannot be verified whether the acceleration may have reflected increased surveillance of the Latinx population.

**B.**

Compared to their demographic prevalence, African-Americans have been disproportionately represented in the database. For each year of data collection, an expectation for fair representation was computed based on the total number of entrants and the 2010 Census data on Illinois racial demographics (1990 Census data yielded similar predictions). For each year, the true number of African-American entrants were compared to the predicted number based on racial equity. Over the life of the database so far, African-Americans have been three times more prevalent in new entries than expected based on state racial demographics.

**C.**

The state gang database grew quickly in its early years, and again in the late 2000s. Since then, the database has grown more slowly, while other databases of potential gang members have ballooned.

**D.**

However, while the database is growing more slowly, it is not becoming more racially equitable. A dashed line marks the prevalence of African-Americans in Illinois based on 2010 Census data. A solid line marks the actual fraction of African-Americans within new entries to the database. Since 2010, African-Americans have accounted for an increasingly large share of new entries. The fractional representation of African-Americans now appears to be nearly as skewed as the earliest, dramatically biased years of the list.