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ON THE RELATION BETWEEN GANGS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The present paper goes beyond Monti's (1996) critique of the "social disorganization" hypothesis regarding gangs in the United States and the research and theorizing based on it. Advanced is an alternative hypothesis that finds gang structure and behavior fitting in with established customs and organizational routines in American society. The model for this alternative hypothesis is found in the work of Tilly et al (1975) who looked at the relation between routine and non-routine collective actions in European societies for several hundred years. Our conventional understanding of gang structure and behavior in the United States does not parallel what Tilly et al found in some instances. However, the basic point that groups like gangs do reflect or mimic more conventional customs and organizational routines shows greater promise for helping us to understand U.S. gangs than does the "social disorganization" hypothesis advanced by American social scientists.

Social scientists who write about urban problems sometimes refer to history, but they usually do not make a careful study of it. Changes that have taken place over a long period of time could help them to make better sense of contemporary problems. Too often, though, their frame of reference does not extend beyond the period in which we live. Nor does it typically include places outside of the United States. The parochial & introspective quality of much American social science research really should not surprise us. After all, there are more social scientists today in the United States than at any other time in the past & we produce more research than do scholars from other countries. On the other hand, our preoccupation with contemporary United States history can yield a pretty skewed picture of the social problems we study and what might be done to address them. A historical perspective would bring added depth to our description of modern problems & provide something of a reality check upon the reforms we propose to introduce as a solution to these problems.

Youth gangs are a particularly good example of a modern urban problem whose depiction has been unduly influenced by our narrow attention to recent history and our ignorance of what is happening in other parts of the world (Klein 1995). These groups are dramatic and have been studied for what passes among social scientists as a long time. It is a common practice, for instance, to cite Frederic Thrasher's 1927 study of Chicago gangs. It was the first social scientific study of gangs. Since then gangs have been studied more or less continuously by many persons. Only rarely, however, does one find references to the origin of these groups in nineteenth century American cities.

Social historians who write about the United States have not made gangs a particularly important focus of their research. American social scientists, for their part, are not

likely to step in and fill that gap in our knowledge when there are so many interesting questions to pursue with modern gangs. Furthermore, our training usually does not lead us to use historical materials. However respectful the tone, the obligatory references to early gangs that we drop in our published writings ordinarily are made without any big theoretical point in mind.

In this short paper, I shall take a much different look at gangs in the United States and try to place them into a broader historical context that includes not just this country but the better part of Europe as well. To accomplish this I will draw on the work of sociologist and historian Charles Tilly who made many contributions to the study of unconventional collective activities such as brawls, riots, and strikes in Europe early in his career. The argument I will introduce here in a preliminary way builds on Tilly, Tilly, and Tilly's (1975) central idea that the conditions which lead to any type of unconventional group behavior are "essentially the same as those that lead to other kinds of collective action in pursuit of common interests." Gangs are not the same as church groups, fraternities, or baseball teams, but they spring from the same social forces and sometimes are used to accomplish remarkably similar goals.

This is not the customary view of gangs held by most sociologists who study these groups in modern urban or suburban settings. It usually is the case that gangs are put into a corner of the social world that is reserved for things alien to us. Gang members are supposed to be different from the persons more conventional individuals come into contact with every day.

In this paper, gangs are placed squarely in the midst of routine group life as it is practiced by most persons. Gangs are merely one among many types of groups that persons customarily create and use in order to shape

the world or to make themselves better understood. Hence, there will be no talk here of gangs appearing in places that are "socially disorganized" or of gang members as defective human beings. Our emphasis instead will be on how gangs and gang members fit into the regular world and behave in ways that do not distinguish them from other groups or persons living in it.

I suggest that a fuller accounting of gangs, and a more plausible explanation for their behavior, are to be derived from ideas which are at odds with so-called social disorganization theories (Bursik, Grasmick 1995; Klein 1995). First, *our society may have problems, but it is not fundamentally flawed, irreparably broken, or racist.* Most popular explanations for the appearance and behavior of gangs are predicated on the idea that gangs are a corrupted form of normal group life that is spit up wherever there is a breach in our culture or institutional framework. Attention to the lingering effects of an "urban underclass," for instance, is supposed to help us account for the persistence and spread of youth gangs in our society. Yet there are many gangs that are not composed exclusively of low-income minority teenagers and not all such young persons become members of gangs.

Tilly's key insight was to put the origin of unconventional groups and collective action right in the middle of established rules and social routines. His argument would be that gangs spring from a social world which, however troubled, is a lot stronger than it appears to outsiders and much more likely to rebound or change effectively in the face of harsh conditions than it is to disappear. A society can have gangs without being thoroughly corrupted or disorganized.

Second, we have a common culture that is sound and well articulated, yet supple enough to accommodate a variety of ways for persons to be in the world together. The presence of gangs is less alarming, perhaps, than what they do. In neither case does the republic show any immanent signs of collapsing around us by virtue of being riddled with youth gangs. Nor should the generations of gang members who have found ways of gradually moving into the conventional adult world as they grew up and became older give us anything but hope that our society will be able to embrace more of these young men and women in the future. Scant attention is given to the process of "maturing out" in most gang studies (Klein 1995; Spergel 1995). Yet most gang members do go

on to lead lives that are conventional enough not to draw much attention to themselves as they grow older. If our culture were not sufficiently well articulated or accommodating, these young persons never would find a way to fit into it.

Third, *our civil society works pretty well most of the time.* Gangs fit into the regular world even when they do not reinforce much of the hard work that more conventional persons and groups carry out every day (Monti 1994). That is why they so readily fade into the background in many of the communities where they appear and have been successfully constrained by local adults and community groups when these parties engage young men and women in a clear and consistent way (Spergel 1964; Thrasher 1927).

A world built on the back of these principles has ample room for gangs just as it has room for businesses, clubs, churches, unions, & political parties. Indeed, gangs fundamentally are like any group produced by human beings. They help persons fit into their part of the world better, or at least make it easier for them to be understood by outsiders. This does not mean that the gangs make the world a saner & safer place to live. Nor does it mean that our society is perfect. It means only that gangs "make sense" in their social & historical context and that many conventional groups also are an important part of the same social world. They are not alien to the world occupied by regular human beings, & that world is not "disorganized" in a permanent or far-reaching way.

Gangs share other important social features beyond the fact that they usually are composed of boys & girls or younger men & women. Most gangs are not large. Their typical activities are confined to a fairly small territory, and members are drawn from that same general locale. Gangs have no explicit social or political agenda. These are communal groups that have few territorial ambitions beyond protecting their "turf" from real or imagined outsiders. As such, gangs, as most social scientists have described them, conform pretty well to the kind of groups that Charles Tilly (1979) has said participated in "primitive" acts of collective violence in the era before large-scale industries and more modern cities in Europe were developed.

These disruptive acts they initiated included "the feud, the brawl among members of rival guilds or communes, and the mutual attacks of hostile religious groups." What distinguishes these activities from later forms of

uncivil behavior, Tilly observed, was "not a lack of seriousness, but their activation of local communal groups...usually in opposition to other communal groups." Our conventional understanding of youth gangs in this country corresponds to the type of communal group carrying out the feuds and brawls that Tilly describes. Gang researchers have done a good job describing this type of group and behavior in their studies.

Although gangs in the United States engage in many of the "primitive" acts outlined by Tilly, the connection between them is not perfect. For instance, Tilly (1979) hypothesized that most forms of "primitive" unrest engaged in by communal groups gradually disappeared with the emergence of nations, industrialization, and the cities which we have come to know. We know that gangs are still around in the United States and have prospered in a number of other modern nations as well (Klein 1995). Gangs have managed to hang on and even flourish in societies that are not supposed to make much room for communal groups. The persistence of gangs in the modern world stands as a challenge to Tilly's basic model.

A second part to Tilly's thesis also is challenged by the persistence of gangs. Not just "primitive" violence was supposed to have been lost. Abandoned also, according to Tilly, were "reactionary" forms of civil unrest. These, too, were engaged in by smaller communal groups. The difference between this latter type of activity and "primitive" violence is that groups direct their hostility toward agents and institutions that hold power over them. Their attacks have a political edge insofar as persons try to assert their traditional rights and to criticize the way authorities behave toward them. Classic expressions of "reactionary" civil unrest are found in the food riot,

anticonscription rebellion, the resistance to the tax collector, the violent occupation of fields and forests, (and) the breaking of reapers or power looms. (Tilly 1979)

There are parallels between gangs and the communal groups that carry out reactionary violence. Observers of American gangs often have commented on the "reactionary" quality of these groups and the kinds of activities in which they engage. Gangs are seen rebelling against adult authority and institutions. They challenge police officials, break laws in a willful fashion, disrupt schools, and deface neighborhoods. The defiance that gangs express is

taken as a sign not only of their resistance to outsiders but often also of their parents and neighbors' reluctance to accept a way of life carried by these same outsiders. That is why many gangs and gang members are said to defend their neighborhoods and why, in turn, many of them are not treated in a hostile fashion by their families and neighbors. Tilly's analysis of reactionary communal violence has strong parallels with many descriptions of gang violence. The only problem is that Tilly expected this type of group & uncivil behavior to fade away. Gang researchers have shown us consistently that this has not happened.

Conditions of life in cities did change dramatically, of course, and what emerged in the wake of large-scale industrialization and city building were new forms of human association & collective action. Communal groups, as Tilly (1979) and others have argued, became less dominant than they had once been throughout the whole of modern society. Updated varieties of civil disturbance, to take but one notable example of human corporate behavior, were no longer expected to be initiated by communal groups, but by "specialized associations with relatively well-defined objectives, organized for political and economic action."

The organizations are complex. Their actions are intended to acquire new rights & resources, not reassert traditional privileges as is the case with "reactionary" activities. The strike, sit-in, & violence that was explicitly political in its tenor and goals are examples of this more "modern" type of disruptive behavior.

Although gangs in the United States usually are not compared to political parties or labor unions, there are ways in which contemporary gangs do mimic more modern types of organizations. Some gangs, for example, have formed far-reaching confederations & have developed something akin to a corporate structure. They also have become engaged in sophisticated business enterprises that make a great deal of money through criminal ventures. In some instances gangs even reach out to local public leaders & become part of a more legitimate political operation. This happened in some nineteenth century cities &, at least in Chicago, it is supposed to be taking place today.

There are clearer parallels between contemporary gangs in the United States and the different types of groups and collective actions described by Tilly. The problem is that our gangs represent some kind of hybrid grouping not anticipated in his model or found during the

several hundred years worth of European history that he described. Even allowing for the kind of mixing of organizational types & action orientations that Tilly (1979) suggests may be possible, there is something unique about the combination brought together by many gangs in the US today. A more thorough analysis of the history of gangs in the United States might help to explain how this came to be.

There might be any number of ways to account for this anomalous situation. One plausible explanation, however, is that the hypothesized abandonment of more communal groupings in favor of bigger and more specialized associations was greatly overstated. Much human activity, as many social scientists have shown, still takes place on a local level through small groups that persons know intimately and which meet a variety of their needs. A second explanation for the odd combination of organizational types and behavioral orientations exhibited by American gangs today may be traced to the development of linkages between communal roughnecks and more disciplined and better organized political leaders that began as early as the American Revolution (Monti 1980). Thus, we brought together elements of reactionary and more forward looking types of collective action and expressed them through a combination of communal groups and complex political organizations. Contemporary gangs would then reflect a tradition of joining communal and more complex organizational forms in the same groups.

The world is a more complex place than Tilly ever imagined on this score. Yet the very mixing of disparate organizational forms and action orientations in contemporary youth gangs confirms Charles Tilly's central thesis. The unconventional activities of these groups complement their routine behavior, and gangs have more in common with regular organizations and groups in the community than one typically supposes. Indeed, contemporary gangs in the United States seem to bring together elements of several different types of corporate behavior and structures. They are communal groups that can be part of bigger and more complex organizations that operate across state and even national borders. They battle other communal groups and conduct sophisticated and profitable business operations. Finally, they have no explicit compelling social agenda, but they can become part of an ongoing political operation in a city. The study of history helps to draw out the similarities and differences between contemporary gangs and

older forms of uncivil behavior & social groups.

Each of these connections suggests that gangs draw upon organizational themes that are readily apparent in the conventional world and have a well-established record of success. Gangs are not alien to the organizational and cultural life to which most of us subscribe. They emerge from the same social conditions that produce conventional organizations and regular human beings.

This can be so only because our society is not fundamentally disorganized as so many gang experts believe. Instead, it is capable of producing a varied collection of groups whose form and actions are far more complementary than we imagine. This, in turn, is possible only because we have a culture whose elements are relatively clear and shared by a broad segment of the population. And the civil society constituted and built by these varied organizations persists only because it works well a great deal of the time.

There are gaping holes in the social scientific theories that purport to explain the presence and behavior of gangs in the United States (Monti 1986). These holes are likely to be better filled by drawing attention to the ways in which gangs are connected to the conventional world. Charles Tilly & others have tried to do this with the history of unconventional groups & civil disorder in European societies.

My objective thus far has been to sketch an outline of what an alternative approach to studying and making sense of gangs might look like and to suggest that gangs are a more complex and sophisticated organizational form than is commonly appreciated. Historical evidence of the sort acquired by Tilly and others that might lend support for this line of reasoning, or to refute it, is at best incomplete and spread across a number of different cities. What historical documentation does exist, however, suggests that gangs fit comfortably into a long and fairly conservative tradition of civil unrest in this country.

The history of New York City, to take one noteworthy example, is filled with many moments in which one or another group used violence to make a point (Gilje 1987; Monti 1980). Furthermore, gangs or collections of young men played a prominent role in many of these episodes. Most of these events have not been studied thoroughly, but it is apparent that they began during the colonial period and continue even today. What may be even more surprising is that it took some time for these activities and the young men who participated in them to

be viewed as public nuisances & to be challenged by local authorities. Episodes of deadly gang violence aside, we have become less tolerant of intermittent displays of disruptive behavior by young persons, not more tolerant.

Moments of popular celebration of complaint that once brought elite and common folk together in the street during the colonial period spoke to a variety of concerns. Sometimes, as in the case of public theater, the event was intended to reinforce "traditional bonds of deference and patronage" (Gilje 1987). On other occasions, such as Pope Day, New Year's Eve, & Pinkster Day, displays of plebian enthusiasm took a much different form (Gilje 1987). In a manner of speaking, these events turned the world upside down, if only for a little while.

During days of "misrule" common folk would act like more well-to-do persons or carry on as if normal rules of public decorum & deference had been suspended, which in fact they had been. Persons gave expression to the divisions & hard feelings that separated one class or group from another in the course of everyday life, but they did so in a highly stylized & temporary way. The effect of these reversals in commonly accepted roles & rules in colonial society was, oddly enough, to remind elite persons of their responsibility to those less well off than themselves even as they were being mocked & to reinforce for less prosperous persons the typical part they played in the world.

Another theme in some stylized displays of civil unrest in colonial towns has been likened to rites of passage. On these occasions persons better prepared themselves to "deal with the awkward moments of passing from one status to another" by misbehaving in forceful but customarily prescribed ways (Gilje 1987). New Year's Eve noise making and riotous behavior was only one of the more obvious examples of how disruptive collective acts could serve as a rite of passage into a new and uncharted world. Nineteenth century gangs would come to serve a similar end for many young persons.

Interesting and revealing as these episodes may have been for colonial Americans, we have not yet made any clear connection between these events and the types of activities associated with gangs in our own time. That young men from different walks of life were the most common participants in these different activities by itself does not tell us much. A clearer line between disorderly conduct in colonial towns and more modern displays of gang behavior is to be found in the

ways that popular unrest was utilized in early America.

It is not hard to draw a parallel between days of "misrule" in colonial towns, or "rituals of reversal" as cultural anthropologists sometimes call them, & more modern gang activities. Even more obvious, perhaps, is a connection between rebellious rites of passage in early American communities & gang behavior in our own time. Young men took loud & vigorous exception to established rules & rule makers in pre-revolutionary America, & seem no less inclined to do so today. That such occasions correspond to a period in their lives when they are making the difficult transition from childhood to adulthood only makes their violence look more like the culturally-prescribed outbursts associated with colonial rites of passage.

Larger towns and cities in early nineteenth century America were not immune to the influence of groups of young men that were bent on creating disturbances. The New Year's Eve celebrations already alluded to seemed particularly attractive to young men from less well-to-do families. They apparently took great satisfaction from disrupting more polite social gatherings and most everyone else's sleep (Gilje 1987). More permanent organizations serving similar purposes emerged during the second decade of the nineteenth century. These groups were gangs. Their behavior, sense of territory, and patterns of affiliation were consistent with what Frederic Thrasher came to call gangs in his famous Chicago study a little more than a century later.

There were obvious and painful differences between the comparative restraint exhibited by groups of young and not-so-young men in colonial America and the more disrespectful actions of early nineteenth century gangs. The latter moved beyond the rituals of misrule that had been so common around the time of the American Revolution, and their rites of passage were marked by considerably more lawlessness. Young persons from more well-to-do families gradually reduced their participation in such activities. Older and more prominent citizens stopped defending these outbursts as legitimate expressions of popular will against arcane rules and capricious rule makers, because they were now making the rules. Instead, they came to view these groups as a threat to conventional ways of acting and thinking, rather than as a noisy but safe way of drawing attention to community problems.

The deadly violence and sophisticated criminal enterprises carried out by young male and female gang members in our time represents another big step in the way that young persons seek to fix a place for themselves in the modern world. Unlike earlier displays of popular discontent, however, there is no hint of respect in their behavior, no lapse in the schedule of affronts to conventional standards and customs. Nevertheless, some themes apparent in early displays of popular unrest still are evident in modern gang activity. Gang membership frequently is seen as part of a teenage rite of passage, and the flaunting or rejection of adult authority is a staple in the gang's approach to the world. These themes may be well hidden in contemporary gang activities, but they continue to shape the outbursts we associate with gangs.

Classes of persons with less standing in the community gradually were ceded control over a variety of loud or otherwise outrageous actions that either celebrated or condemned existing standards for appropriate public behavior & the customary practices that gave substance to the claim of such rules on their lives. More prominent or secure classes of citizens withdrew their support for such activities & worked hard to mute all manner of raucous public gatherings & to suppress groups participating in them. Youth gangs became a prime example of the type of group whose standards & public behavior were not welcomed.

Welcomed or not, however, gangs found a place in nineteenth century American cities and were better integrated into ongoing community routines than we think. Disorders initiated by gangs often helped to maintain political groups in power. The patronage they enjoyed at the hands of local politicians also helped to retard the development of what might have become a stable working-class coalition consisting of persons from different ethnic groups and neighborhoods.

The relation between gangs and other forms of political or civic involvement by the ethnic or racial groups from which gangs emerged did not end in the nineteenth century. There was an interesting decrease in gang activity in New York City during the late 1950s when civil rights groups and the Black Muslims began to mobilize local black residents. Gangs composed of black youths staged a renaissance of sorts in the 1970s after civil rights movement in the city lost much of its energy (Monti 1980). The new gangs were more violent and less discriminating in their selection of

targets than earlier gangs had been. They also were better armed.

The new gangs did not become politicized to any great extent. Most seem to have been content to carry out aggressive and highly profitable criminal ventures related to the drug trade. Oppenheimer (1969) was correct, therefore, when he observed that "people with guns but without ideology are bandits." New gangs have no more an ambitious social agenda or political program than nineteenth century groups did.

Despite the obvious dangers they pose, contemporary gangs seem to fit the mold of earlier communal groups more interested in maintaining their own tenuous position in the city's social order than in transforming political and economic relations. (Monti 1980)

Contemporary youth gangs do engage in a variety of dangerous activities that offend large numbers of persons. Yet there is much in their behavior that speaks to more conservative traditions in the use of violence and public displays of bravado. The point of this essay has not been to ignore the outrages of contemporary gangs or to embrace their view of the world. Rather, it has been to place their way of behaving into a larger historical context and to hint at how their ways fit in the conventional world more than they or we are prepared to recognize.

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CULTURE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN GANG MEMBERS

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INTRODUCTION

The "immigration issue" has become the issue of the 1990s and a hotbed for public policy debates in state and federal politics. In the midst of these heated political debates are the immigrants themselves. Clearly such controversies impact their everyday life and yet an often unasked question is how they experience and construct a sense of self in light of their "place" in public debates.

Although sociologists have had a long-standing interest in the study of immigration and ethnic identity especially in the U.S., the principal concern has centered on the social structural aspects of acculturation and adjustment (Pedraza 1994). A secondary concern in acculturation theory focuses on the psychosocial aspects of adjustment whereby the "marginal man" tries to balance two different cultures, and either eventually "assimilates" or experiences stress. According to this framework, culture conflict and stress may result in deviant behavior.

This assimilation approach, however, fails to address the tremendous changes associated with, what many observers describe as the "new immigration." Among the most significant changes are the decline of a "traditional mainstream culture," the complex layers of multiple cultures of American society, the growth strengthening of group boundaries and ethnic nationalism, and globalization (Edmonston, Pasell 1994; Jennings 1994; Ong, Bonacich, Cheng 1994; Rumbaut 1995). The challenge is to explain the ways in which the "new immigrants" and their families retain, redefine and negotiate a sense of self.

Several scholars recently have moved in this direction, calling for a theoretical and methodological approach which focuses on the ways individuals experience and adjust to the impact of structural factors (Hurtado, Gurin, Peng 1994). At this level of analysis, individuals are not "pushed" or "pulled" toward one line of action over another (i.e., normative or deviant), but actively negotiate their environment and interaction with others. Accordingly, individual modes of adjustment and the construction of a social and ethnic identity are

understood within the context of the immediate and larger social forces of everyday life. As Nagel rightly suggests, ethnic identity, and by extension social identity, is

the result of a dialectical process involving internal and external opinions and processes, as well as the individual's self-identification and outsiders' ethnic designations. (1994)

This framework offers a more dynamic approach for understanding the differences in experiences and definitions of self among the different generations included in the new immigration. That is, we would expect significant differences between younger and older immigrants in the construction of identity. The dialectical process, noted by Nagel, would be differentially experienced as different age groups encounter different social institutions and structural forces. In connection with youth, cultural studies has underscored the dynamic, fluid, and active negotiation of identity construction among young people (Brake 1985; Hall, Jefferson 1976; Hebdige 1979).

We adopt this framework to uncover the social processes by which groups of young immigrant men construct a distinctive ethnic youth identity, specifically, that of the Southeast Asian gang member. Using qualitative interviews with gang members, we explore how a number of structural and institutional forces impinge on, experienced and defined by these young men, and the ways in which they create a new social identity.

ACCULTURATION, DEVIANCE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

As Pedraza (1994) recently noted, the study of immigrants "...is as old as social science itself in America." From the early work of Park and Burgess (1921) and Thomas and Znaniecki (1927), through the later work of Gordon (1964), immigration to the U.S. has been characterized as

...a natural evolutionary process that as time passed would yield an inevitable outcome.... usually conceptualized as acculturation and

structural assimilation. (Pedraza 1994)

Acculturation referred to the psycho-social process by which immigrants learn to live in the midst of a different society by acquiring cultural knowledge and skills pertinent to the new wider society. This newly acquired knowledge is in addition to the specific traditions that the immigrant possesses from their own cultural enclave. Over time, however, the immigrant sheds those native cultural traditions which are no longer appropriate, and moves into the "mainstream" (Dubois 1993). Although many scholars have criticized the functionalist basis of assimilation theory, they underscore the significance of the concept of acculturation because it captures

an important psycho-social aspect of the immigrant experience, the problem of meeting the normative demands of two different cultures. (Rodriguez, Adrados, De La Rosa 1993)

Moreover acculturation and its relationship to stress has been seen as a significant theory in explaining the development of deviant behavior. From this standpoint, the newly arrived immigrant attempts to deal with the often conflicting cultural demands of their own "traditional" culture and their newly adopted culture. These conflicts can result in the development of either stress within the individual himself or herself or strain between the individual and his or her family. These stresses and strains can, in turn, lead to a host of deviant behaviors such as the involvement in street gangs, crime and illicit drug use.

At another level, immigrants, particularly young people, may adopt mainstream values and behaviors; however, this does not necessarily guarantee their acceptance in their immediate environment and larger society. Immigrant youth may find themselves falling between two opposite or conflicting identities - too Americanized for their parents' comfort, yet too foreign for their mainstream U.S. peers' liking. By being too foreign for their peers, the youth may find himself or herself liable to physical or verbal abuse. The lack of acceptance in the "mainstream" may be further aggravated by an insensitive educational system and the "politics" of other social institutions. Youth alienated from conventional culture - be it that of their parents or of their U.S. peers - would seem doubly likely to join deviant sub-populations, such as youth gangs, and

carry out deviant activities such as drug sales and illicit drug use (Chassin, Presson, Sherman 1989; Westermeyer 1993). The combination of these various structural factors can, according to acculturation theory, create a situation in which teenagers are at a high risk for developing delinquent behavior.

Assimilation and acculturation theory can be seen, therefore, as a potential candidate for understanding the development of ethnic youth identity and delinquent behavior. However, despite the seeming usefulness of such an explanatory account, it nevertheless possesses a number of significant weaknesses.

First, because acculturation is based on the premise of a natural evolutionary process, human action is conceptualized in deterministic terms. Many writers (Kibria 1993, Kivisto 1989) have noted that theories of assimilation and acculturation portray the immigrant "...as being passively acted on by the forces of change" (Kibria 1993). The acculturation model views immigration as a process whereby the immigrant gives up one culture, readily accepts another and moves into the mythical American "melting pot." The paths are fairly well defined, and as Dubois (1993) indicates, immigrants are pressed into pre-existing categories which fit other interests. In Dubois' own study of ethnic identity among Southeast Asian school children, he found little correspondence between the preconceived categories of assimilation and the negotiated identity of these youngsters.

Second, as Adrados (1993) points out, acculturation suffers from bi-polarism whereby the newly arrived immigrants abandon their "traditional" culture and adopt the mainstream culture of the host society. While there are questions as to whether there is a "mainstream culture" in contemporary American society, it is clear that this bi-polarism in acculturation theory leaves little room for today's complex plurality of cultures and sub-cultures. Immigrants may not readily accept the ways of the "conventional culture," but negotiate a social identity which blends multiple cultures. It may well be, then, that an immigrant group, in this case immigrant teenagers, in attempting to establish a "new" identity which is neither their own "traditional" culture nor the mainstream culture, may adopt elements from existing sub-cultures. As a reaction to these limitations, various writers have produced an analysis which provides a more active role for the migrant and

incorporates a greater sense of "human agency" (Adrados 1993; Kibria 1993; Nagel 1994). According to this framework, individuals are actively shaping and negotiating a social and ethnic identity based on their interaction with others in immediate settings and within the broader social structure. As Nagel notes, this renewed interest has led to the development of a model

...that stresses the fluid, situational, volitional and dynamic character of ethnic identification, organization and action - a model which emphasizes the socially "constructed" aspects of ethnicity. (1994)

This approach emphasizes also the way in which individuals create and develop social organizations or social practices which can act as symbolic forms or resistances against the pressures of the host society.

In a slightly different context, but extremely relevant to this study are the efforts of the British cultural studies scholars who have described the active resistance and distinctive development of identity, symbolic rituals, and subculture among young people, particularly those from the working classes (Hall, Jefferson 1976; Hebdige 1979). Very recently, a small but growing number of American criminologists have advocated for a similar approach to studying style, criminal identity and subculture (Ferrell 1995; Miller 1995). Style and identity are acquired through a process of interaction with others - peers, authorities, institutions, media, mass market - and dialectically, becomes the basis for interaction. As Ferrell rightly notes:

Style serves as a ready and visible medium for negotiating status, for constructing both security and threat and for engaging in criminality...For each person style becomes the medium for "presentation of self" and for defining that presented self as lodged within the larger stylistic orientations of the group, subculture and community. These orientations, though, do not emerge from within the group alone but under the weight of heavy advertising campaigns, manipulative marketing strategies, and media saturation. (1995)

As we discuss below, our data suggest that the Southeast Asian youth we interviewed have been active agents in creating a distinctive ethnic identity and social organization.

Moreover, their unique style is not only a marker for status, but also an expression of their notion of masculinity in American society.

RESEARCH METHODS AND LOCATION

Research Design and Methods

The data for this analysis are based on in-depth interviews with Southeast Asian gang members, and extends on our previous comparative research on ethnic gangs in Northern California (Joe 1993; Waldorf 1993). The sampling frame was based on a snowball sampling approach (Bernacki, Waldorf 1981). Ninety-one male gang members, from thirty different gangs, each with its own name and its own characteristics, were contacted by two trained Vietnamese interviewers. Although the age range varied between 14 and 38 years old, the vast majority of those interviewed were 18 or under (68%), and of these 56 were still attending school. More than four out of five (84%) were Vietnamese or Chinese/Vietnamese, and only 5 respondents were born in the United States, and hence the majority of the sample were first generation refugees. While the number of years our respondents lived in the U.S. ranged from 2 to 18 years, the median number of years was 13.

The interview process consisted of three stages. In the first stage, the respondent answered questions from a qualitative life history schedule, which explored the problems individuals had experienced in Vietnam and in the U.S. during the process of their migration and early period in the U.S. Stage two involved questions from a quantitative interview schedule which covered such topics as basic socio-demographic data of the respondent, work and criminal histories, patterns of drug use, activities of gang members, drug sale activities and violence experienced by gang members. The third and final stage was an in-depth focused interview which explored such topics as history of the gang, history of the individual's involvement in the gang, activities of the gang, both social and criminal and, finally, its social structure. The interviewers were bi-lingual and conducted the interviews in both English and Vietnamese, depending on the respondents' preference. In many cases, a mixture of both languages were used. The interviewers also assisted in the translation and transcriptions. Once interviewed, the respondent was asked to refer other gang members. Through this process, we were able to establish chains of

contacts.

We also conducted 16 interviews with individuals who work closely in various capacities with Southeast Asian gang members. They include officials and line workers from the local and state police, judiciary, juvenile detention, probation, social work, and a youth serving community agency. These interviews were based on a thematic guide to probe respondents in the areas of their perceptions of the Southeast Asian community in San Jose, and their views on delinquency and gang organization among Southeast Asian youth. Seven of the 16 respondents were Southeast Asian.

The Research Setting and Context

The research locale was the city of San Jose in Santa Clara county, which, after Los Angeles and San Diego, has the largest Southeast Asian population in California. Since 1950, the general population of San Jose has exploded. Whereas in 1950 the population was 95,000, by 1970 it had grown to 459,000. Today it stands at 782,000. Much of its expansion since 1970 has been due to the development of the computer technology industry in Silicon Valley, which has proved a powerful magnet both for domestic migration to the area as well as international migration. Part of this latter migration has been the influx of refugees, especially from Southeast Asia (Meinhardt, Soleng, Tse, Yu 1985-86).

The flow of Southeast Asian migrants to the U.S. began in earnest in 1975 with the fall of Saigon. Before 1975, the total number of immigrants admitted into the U.S. since 1955 was 18,558. In 1975, a total of 133,633 refugees and immigrants arrived. On arrival, they were placed in resettlement camps in different parts of the country and then, after a short period of time, rehoused. By the end of 1975 all resettlement camps were closed. This initial wave of refugees, as many writers have noted (Gordon 1987; Kibria 1993; Rutledge 1992), would prove to be very different from future waves of Southeast Asian refugees. To quote Rutledge:

They were, by comparison, better educated, wealthier, and had political connections with the U.S. government. Many of them spoke English.... They included high-ranking soldiers, professional people, who had worked with American personnel or companies in Vietnam, ethnic Vietnamese, who had been

educated within the United States educational system and individuals who had family ties to America. (1992)

After 1975 the number of Southeast Asian refugees, especially Vietnamese, arriving in the U.S. diminished and it was not until 1979 that the flow of migration began again to reach the volume that it had in 1975. The peak year was 1980 when a total of 171,000 Southeast Asians arrived. This new wave, however, was significantly different from the first wave. Whereas the first wave of newcomers were predominantly Vietnamese, in these latter waves, not only were there large numbers of Laotians and Cambodians present, but also many different ethnicities. These immigrants included ethnic Chinese, the Cham from southern Vietnam, the Khmer both from Cambodia and Vietnam, the Montagnards from the mountain areas of northern and central Vietnam and the Hmong from the Highlands of Laos. After 1982, the flow of immigrants, especially Vietnamese, began to taper off, and by 1988, those resettled under the Refugee Act had fallen to under 40,000 a year. Finally in February 1994, with the ending of the trade embargo between the U.S. and Vietnam, the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees announced that fleeing Vietnamese refugees would no longer automatically be eligible for refugee status. This decision effectively marked the end of large scale migration from Southeast Asia.

Although it is difficult to know the exact numbers of Southeast Asians in San Jose, it is estimated that there are approximately 80,000. The majority of these newcomers live on the Eastside of the city, which is a typical inner urban deprived area. This area is home to 15 percent of the city's population and is the most ethnically diverse area in the entire county of Santa Clara. The ethnic breakdown is 45 percent white (including Hispanic), 28 percent Asian and Pacific Islander, 6 percent Black and 30 percent listed as "other". One-fourth of the adult Eastside population does not speak English well or cannot speak it at all. The population of Eastside is young, family oriented, poor and uneducated. For example in 1991, 50 percent of the population was under 25 years old, and one third is under 18. The population suffers from many of the major problems facing U.S. cities, including poverty, overcrowding, a high crime rate, high unemployment, and a school drop out rate of

percent, nearly double the rate for the whole county.

This then is the environment in which our Southeast Asian male respondents live. Like in many low income inner urban areas, life for newly arrived teenage immigrants can be confusing and difficult, and the environment may be particularly hostile. These young immigrant males face pressures both from attempting to adjust to the ways of a new society as well as from their parents, who may expect their children to succeed in ways that are restricted to them (Kibria 1993). Under these pressures, some Southeast Asian teenagers, far from fulfilling the "model minority" stereotype of them as class valedictorians, may negotiate instead an alternative culture, that of a youth gang and involve themselves in a series of delinquent behaviors.

EXTERNAL PROCESSES: SURVIVING IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Southeast Asian teenagers are situated in several layers of interaction, and attempt to deal with conflicts and stress which emanate both from their family situations and from their life as teenagers in the wider society. A common theme among our respondents was the fragmentation of their family during the immigration process to the U.S. In many cases, one parent, usually the father, left for the U.S., and the rest of the family followed some years later. This pattern of immigration dramatically altered the traditional family structure such that the parent who journeyed to the U.S. with the children, usually the mother, assumed the role of both parents, even when the family was finally reunited. As some of our respondents indicated, their relationship with their fathers were tenuous at best.

Paul is a 16 year old Vietnamese male who immigrated at a very young age with his mother, three older brothers, and an "uncle" (i.e., close family friend). They escaped on a fishing boat, landing on an island near Thailand. After several months, they were able to get to Thailand and remained there for four years. They have been in the San Jose area since immigrating to the U.S., and have reunited with the father who had left for America prior to the family's escape. Paul resents his father, believing that he abandoned the family when he left for the U.S. years before them. Paul indicates that while he is "very close" to his mother, his interactions with his father are strained. As he states, "every time I went to juvie

[juvenile hall], it is my mom talking to me. My dad just sitting there looking at me. I don't get along with my dad."

In other instances, the teenager was separated from both parents, and immigrated to the U.S. with other adult relatives. One or both parents sometimes reunited with the relatives and children at some later point. When this occurred, the teenager was often torn between loyalties to their relative, who they come to perceive as their "adopted" parent and their natural parent. William's case illustrates the stress resulting from conflicting familial loyalties and being thrust into a "guardianship" role.

William is a 17 year old Chinese Vietnamese male. His father who is still in Vietnam arranged for him, his siblings, grandmother and aunt to escape Vietnam in 1979. After stopping briefly in the Philippines, they lived in Oregon for two and a half years. They then moved to the San Jose area since his aunt, who he describes as his "step-mom", found a job in the computer industry. After settling in the San Jose area, his natural mother was able to immigrate to the U.S. and was relocated in the Los Angeles area. He and his sister moved to Los Angeles to live with their natural mother, but found this to be a "difficult period," and moved back to San Jose to live with their aunt whom they felt was "more loving and caring." At present, his mother has been trying to "claim" him back, and while he expresses a sense of loyalty to her because she is his natural mother, he states that he has "greater respect" for his step-mother. According to William, "my step-mom, she was always there for me from the time I was small, all the way up. Basically I look at her [as] more of a mother than my real mom." Paradoxically his natural mother now lives in San Jose with him, his sister and "step-mom." He indicates that he "looks after her" as she has not been able to obtain employment and is on welfare. Because he left his father at an early age, he knows his father only through the occasional letters and requests for money to be sent back to Vietnam.

Another source of tension develops from the expectations and changing relationship between teenagers and their parents. As Kibria (1993) has noted, Vietnamese families place "tremendous pressure" on their children to act as "gatekeepers" in negotiating with the wider society and in achieving academic success

and thereby ensure the future prosperity of their families. By virtue of being at school, refugee children more than their parents are exposed to and are more likely to adopt central values and aspects of conventional identity and behavior. This may cause considerable inter-generational tensions in refugee families (Gold 1992; Kibria 1993). In many Vietnamese families, parents find themselves because of their inability to speak English, reliant on their children. This reversal of roles can lead to a decline in the legitimacy of parental authority, and consequently weaken parental control over their children.

Southeast Asian teenagers' ability to succeed at school is often hampered by language difficulties. This was particularly apparent for our respondents, because, as we noted above, nearly all of them are first generation immigrants who came to the U.S. at varying ages from 2 to 18. Those who came to the U.S. as teenagers were more likely to feel frustrated with their language differences and frequently dropped out of school.

Despite language problems in school, few respondents felt discriminated against by school authorities. Several respondents described their elementary school teachers as being especially attentive and caring. As many matured into junior high and high school, they found the school environment indifferent.

Like in high school, you know, they don't care, they don't care. It is your life and if you want to mess it up, you mess it up. But when I was like little, they tried to help me.

Many found themselves being labelled as being troublesome and expelled for prolonged absences from classes or fighting with other students. They took a pragmatic view of their circumstances, and did not perceive this as negative labeling but as the consequence of their misbehavior.

As our respondents moved into their teen years, race and ethnicity increasingly became important in their interactions with others. As one respondent reflected, "when I was little, I just played with anybody. But now, I don't know, you have to be with your own kind." It is at this point that they often faced physical and verbal abuse from their contemporaries in school who taunted them with racial stereotypes. In response to this prejudice, they may endure the abuse, retaliate or decide to join a street gang as a way of

protecting themselves (Rumbaut, Ima 1988). Most of our respondents described a process in which they initially endured discriminatory remarks and took the "beatings" but gradually realized that there is "safety in numbers." It is in this interactional setting that they found themselves seeking others who are similarly situated, joining together for mutual protection, getting into fights, and dropping out of classes.

Paul recounts his antagonistic encounters with other students which began at age 14, and the ways in which these hostile experiences and his solidarity with others like him, solidified his ethnic identity:

When I came to L.A. and San Jose it was different. That is when it started because people were treating me so bad in school. Black people, they look at us as immigrants and they keep telling us to go back to our country and we shouldn't belong here...they always start things with us. They beat me up and they beat my brother up... that is when me and my brother we begin to have friends and then we got them back...

Yeah I am a citizen... Not really feel Americanized because I still have the Vietnamese and Asia blood in me. Sometimes I walk on the street, people still think of me as an Asian, not as American. So the citizen thing basically just helped me out but doesn't change what I think of myself.

The development of such a gang can be seen as a protective mechanism created by the teenagers to deal with a hostile situation. In fact, the occurrence or the possibility of physical or verbal abuse was given as a major reason for why our respondents joined a youth gang. For example, one respondent replied:

I joined for protection. That was the first thing we did because racism was getting out of hand. If one of us was walking at night and a black guy seen you, he would have jumped you right away. So that's one of the reason to join a gang, for protection.

Another respondent was even more emphatic about needing to join a gang for protection:

You go out and there is a lot of chance that you get into a fight. When you get into a fight, you

need your friends to back you up because you know that the person who wants to fight you is not a "nerd." He wants to fight and he has someone back there too. So you need these guys to come and back you up. That is why you join the gang. That is the only reason to join the gang.

These external factors motivate Southeast Asian teenagers to create or seek out an environment in which such pressures are reduced. Sanders (1994) found that the origins of Southeast Asian gang members in San Diego was also related to the need to collectivize for protection against other youth, particularly gang members. Moreover, as in his study, we found that Southeast Asian gang members were involved not only in intra-ethnic but also inter-ethnic gang fighting. This finding is also similar to the experiences of our other Asian American respondents in the San Francisco study (Waldorf 1992).

Interestingly, although many of our Southeast Asian respondents perceive and identify themselves as relatively Americanized, they are quick to defend those who they define and treat as "FOBS" (recent arrivals).

Oh, the FOB? Like sometimes they get on my nerves but then I feel sorry for them. Like I am thinking that could have been me. I have cousins that just came over. So like those other kids make fun of them. I see them try hard too you know.

Like the FOB can't speak English. But then I don't hang around them, I hang around with people that could speak English. Because I am not good with my Vietnamese language. I hang out with Vietnamese kids but then we would like be speaking English. If anything goes on like with other people, like Mexicans, they were like mistreating them and stuff like that, they all stick up for them, they are my own people.

By adopting a youth gang culture, they rid themselves not only from the dangers of the wider society but also they can lessen the pressures on them from their families. To many of our respondents, the gang operated as a fictitious "family" community which took the place of their own families. Gang members often referred to the gang as a "separate family" or their fellow members as "brothers" who would supply friendship, support and attention. This latter characteristic -attention-

was also given by some of our respondents as another reason for joining. Unlike those members who complained of the pressures, these teenagers seemed to be complaining of the lack of pressure, in that their families paid too little attention to them. This lack of attention is not surprising given the pressures that operate on their parents, who are often working at two or more low paying jobs as a way of surviving financially. In fact these two reasons were not necessarily antithetical, but can be seen as two sides of the same coin. Because of pressures on the parents to survive, they may be able to give only minimal time to their children and in that time they may concentrate solely on issues of academic success as opposed to listening to the other more general difficulties faced by these teenagers in surviving in an urban high school.

In such a situation, their friends in the gang become a substitute for their family and, at least for a while, more important. As one respondent noted:

Back then my friends [in the gang] meant more to me than my family. I put them ahead of myself, ahead of my family. I would do things for them that they just said if they needed it, I would do it. But not for my family.

Life in the gang provided an alternative and protective milieu, which unlike the family setting where academic achievement and success was pushed, demanded instead a different set of loyalties and responsibilities.

The security of the collective becomes even more salient in our respondents interactions in public settings (other than school). The majority of our respondents described heated encounters and harassment by local law enforcement prior to and subsequent to becoming a gang member. This is due to the aggressive surveillance strategies of the police which dates back to the late 1980's when officials and the media began to identify Southeast Asian gangs as a new type of gang organization. These gangs were characterized as being particularly dangerous because not only were they perceived to be very violent, but, because they possessed a loosely knit organization and were highly mobile, they were thereby extremely difficult to investigate. As one national newspaper noted

the neighborhoods are being plagued by increasingly violent gangs and new criminal

enterprises that law enforcement officers say may come to rival the Mafia in its heyday. (*New York Times* 1991)

Part of law enforcement's suppression strategy also included the recruitment of Vietnamese speaking police and probation officers. Importantly, gang members found both Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese speaking officers treating them with contempt.

Even the Vietnamese cops, you know, they treat us like dogs... One time I got caught, and they say they would take me in the back and beat me up... They say a lot of shit, talking bad about Vietnamese, like, 'you people come over here and eat welfare and make trouble.' That is messed up.

To combat a series of "home invasion" robberies, the local police responded with an intensive public relations campaign in the Southeast Asian community, and initiated an intelligence gathering mechanism, namely, a "mug shot" book with photographs of Southeast Asian men. Asian American activists called for end to the use of this book, arguing that the book, containing photos of persons never convicted of a crime but photographed in the course of traffic stops, was racist (Turner 1992).

Our respondents were fully aware of the "mug shot" book, and many described having their photos taken and being harassed by the police.

Yeah, they took pictures of every single one. Not only in our group but other people too. When we go to the coffee shop, they pull the whole coffee shop out, everyone [is] out of there and they took pictures of everyone, even the older people.

The police they know us all. They know who is who among us. One time they come into our house and they booked us all because one of us [was] on parole. When somebody is on parole, they can come into the house at any time. After the search, they couldn't find anything but they booked us in jail. They take photographs... over nothing. All of us are in the mug book. Sometimes someone sitting in a coffee shop, they would come in and take pictures. They take pictures of everybody.... The police do jack us up. They don't actually hit us but they push us into the cars so that we get bruised up and hurt.

Several respondents believed that police practices were rooted in discrimination and racism.

Well they shouldn't put a book just for Vietnamese. Do they have one for just Mexicans? It's not right, for my picture to be in the book because it implies a lot of things to people. What if somebody that looks like me did a robbery and then the lady sees his face, and then they show her a book and my face is on there. You know, it is just implying, putting thoughts into people's heads. I don't think it is fair. They [the police] say, 'you Asians are a problem.' They are all racist.

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW IDENTITY

There are a variety of pressures that our respondents and other Southeast Asian teenagers must find ways to cope with to survive. One of our respondents notes that while:

Some kids went to school and they got picked on and could live with that. Perhaps they are more mature. But that wasn't something I could put up with.

Yet what factors are relevant in the youth's experience and construction of the identity? In other words, what aspects distinguish those who come to identify and define their world within gang culture compared to those who don't? While family tension or conflict may be relevant, it alone can not account for our respondents' gang membership. One comparative study of gang and nongang members suggests that gang members' perceptions of greater levels of labeling by authorities, in particular school officials, is a significant factor distinguishing the two groups (Esbensen, Huizinga, Weiher 1993). While this may be a significant factor, the above discussion suggests that racial tension or conflict at school with other ethnic groups was even more salient in respondents' school interactions. In addition, negative encounters and definitions by law enforcement authorities are also central to the construction of a collective identity.

In so doing, they crafted together a new identity which was neither their own "traditional" culture nor mainstream U.S. culture. Instead they constructed a community with its own collective identity, its own boundaries, its own membership rules, its own purpose and its own symbols. In creating such a "symbolic community" (Cohen 1985) they took elements

from other urban youth gang cultures, whose origins lay in Latino, African-American and Chinese-American neighborhoods. They even adopted gang elements which had been portrayed in mass media films.¹ They then molded these diverse elements to suit their own needs and requirements. To examine the details of this culture and its origins in other existing gang cultures, we will explore the characteristic features of Southeast Asian gang organization. In outlining these elements, we do not imply that each of the thirty different gangs that we located were identical. In fact, at least from the perspective of the gang members, each of the gangs were different and were seen to attract different types of members.

Gang Organization

In terms of general gang organization, our data suggests that most of the Southeast Asian gangs in this study exhibited little hierarchical divisions. This characteristic was similar to the pattern exhibited by Latino and African-American gangs included in our San Francisco study (Waldorf 1993) but was in marked contrast to the pattern we found among that city's Asian American gangs (Joe 1993; Toy 1992). When we asked the question: "Is your gang divided into older and younger members?", the majority of our Southeast Asian respondents said that there was no hierarchical differences within the gangs based on age. This was the case even when, as in the case of two of the gangs, there existed different generations.

The absence of an internal hierarchy, and a clearly defined leadership seems to suggest that Southeast Asian gangs fit the typology of horizontally organized gangs (Moore 1991; Moore, Garcia, Garcia, Cerda, Valencia 1978; Sanchez-Janowski 1991). The groups in our study, however, were not as mobile and changing as those described in Vigil and Yun's (1990) study of Vietnamese gangs in Southern California.

Others have noted that there is often a relationship between ethnicity and gang organization. In East Los Angeles, Moore et al (1978) found Mexican American gangs to be informally organized. In Milwaukee, Hagedorn (1988) found some Black gangs to be more formal in their organization. However, the specific features and context of a community also influence the gang's organizational characteristics (Moore 1991; Spergel et al 1994). Taylor (1989) and Skolnick (1989) suggest

that the purpose of the group (e.g., drug dealing) is an important factor in gang organization.

Joining The Gang

To date there has been an extensive literature on the initiation process or "rite de passage" of potential gang members (Padilla 1992; Vigil 1988). The process by which new members, especially those coming into Latino gangs, are incorporated into the group - frequently referred to as "jumping-in" - has often been associated with some form of physical tests. According to Vigil and Long (1990) this process can serve "...to test member's toughness and desire for membership....and to enhance loyalty to the group." From our data, two types of gang entry exist. The first is a formal process and similar to that outlined for the Latino gangs, and the second is more informal.

In those cases where some form of formalized initiation took place, the actual content of what was required varied from having cigarette burns inflicted; doing a particular deed to prove oneself, such as stealing a car; or more "traditional" method of accepting a physical "pummeling" from gang members. In a couple of cases, the initiation involved more than one method. For example, one respondent described a fairly lengthy process which involved both "hanging around" and being "jumped in."

They [potential members] hang around with us and then they get to know us and then they ask if they could get jumped in. And then we ask all the old members, the members of EST [a Vietnamese gang] like guys that have been in it. We ask them, do you think he is down? Should he be in it? And then if we get the advice from everybody and if they say, no then we can't get them in. If they say, yeah we get them in.

One respondent noted that although initially they had adopted a "jumping in" process, subsequently they had decided to do something else.

They were trying to jump people in but then we didn't think that was right so we just let them kick back with us for awhile and see if they are down or not. Like take them to do a driveby or maybe like tell them to beat some guy up or something. See if they are down.

This use of "jumping-in" methods, although disliked by some of the gangs, was nevertheless clearly identified as a Latino or Mexican gang trait.

1) Do you guys have any initiation rites?

R) No like if somebody wants to join we don't need to jump them or beat them up or have them do something. At first we let them kick back with us for like a couple of months, two or three months and see how their attitude is. Then like if we see that they are good enough like they are not going to be a traitor then we just ask them if they want to be in. And if they say, yes, then they are in. We don't need to do those Mexican style like beating them up.

Interestingly enough, one respondent, when asked about the origin of this Latino cultural trait, noted that the idea of using the initiation of "jumping-in" had come from "...watching movies and stuff, like Colors and stuff like that and we just started copying them."

The informal process of joining the gang involved prospective members "hanging around" or "kicking back" with the gang for varying periods of time which could last anywhere from a couple of months to a whole year. If during this period, the potential recruit could show that he "was down" then he became accepted as a member. Whereas some of the members found "being down" difficult to describe, others did not.

1) What do you have to do to be accepted as a member?

R) You just have to be down. When the homeboys need you, you got to come right away. And you have to be able to do everything. Like if one of our members get shot at or something we all have to go and see what's up with him and see how he wants to deal with it. If he wants to deal with it anyway we take care of it for him.

Gang Insignia

Although Vigil and Yun (1990) has suggested that Vietnamese gangs do not fit the pattern of street gangs as typified by African-American and Latino gangs, we found that there were many gang characteristics that were similar to other street gangs. For example, while Vigil and Yun (1990) stated that Vietnamese gangs avoid using "conspicuous gang symbols," we discovered that many of our respondents told us that symbols,

including cigarette burns, tattoos and colors were used as a way of marking out one gang from another. Many respondents also made reference to what they perceived to be as "distinctively" Mexican, Black and Chinese.

In one gang, the color green was an important gang marker:

1) And do you have colors, jackets, hats or special clothing?

R) We support all green.

1) Why is that?

R) Because there is red and blue already. And it is like we like the color green because we want to start out for Asian, different than red and blue. And so we start wearing green and then everybody is liking it and then they start wearing green. It is like Asian color now.

A second gang marker, that of tattoos, was also common amongst members. The most popular type of tattoos were either the initials of the gang name, or dragons and tigers. Whereas the use of dragons and tigers is unusual for Latino or African-American gangs, it is not uncommon for Asian gangs to use this particular motif.

Furthermore, although the majority of our respondents admitted to having tattoos, it did not seem to be the case that they were compulsory. For example, one respondent having described the type of tattoos he had, replied to the question: "Did everyone have tattoos?"

No basically they just have like the three dots that really means a lot. It depends on them if they want to get it or not. We don't force them to get it. But whoever wants to get it can. I really wanted to get this because I know I won't betray them or anything. I was the one that made it up with my friend.

These symbolic markers establish a sense of solidarity among members and confirm a distinctive identity for the members. At the same time, these markers serve as displays to others of their collective ethnic youth identity.

Territory and Turf

In comparing Vietnamese gang characteristics and those of other gangs, there was one significant difference, in particular, the issue of territory or turf. Territoriality has been often considered as a key distinguishing

characteristic of youth gangs (Miller 1975). According to Moore, Vigil and Garcia, the notion of territory implies:

1) that the gang's activities are concentrated within a "turf"; 2) that the turf is relatively clearly bounded; 3) that the turf is defended against invaders and that fights with other gangs center on intentional invasions of territories; and 4) that members and their families live inside the territory. (1983)

From our data, Vietnamese youth gangs seem to have little concept of territory, at least in so far as that described by et al (1983). The absence of a clearly demarcated or bounded territory has been noted by Vigil as an example of the "fluidity" of the Vietnamese gang structure:

In describing Vietnamese youth gangs, we use the term fluid to indicate that the gangs are structured and organized loosely. There is little or no role differentiation and no declared turf, and membership changes constantly. (1990)

Southeast Asian gang members' lack of territoriality is also very likely due to their recent arrival; nearly all of them are first generation immigrants. As ethnographic studies on Mexican American gangs have shown, territory becomes an important marker in established neighborhoods, dating back several generations (Moore et al 1978; Moore 1991).

The majority of our respondents, when asked the question, "Do you claim any particular turf, street or place?", replied that they did not. However, its absence did not necessarily preclude the possibility that the gangs tended to "hang out" regularly in certain places. Such places included convenience stores, pool halls, parking spaces behind restaurants and an area by a creek. The most distinctive public place, however, were coffee bars designed for and owned by Southeast Asians.

All of these public locales were not considered as private gang territory and were often shared with other groups. This refusal to see the area as the property of a single gang was echoed by many of our respondents who, when asked what would happen if another gang whether they shared the place with any other gangs:

R) Well like we kick it there but like different gangs go there too. And then they kick it with us.

Like different gangs we know them and they can kick there too.

I) Okay, so you guys don't mind as long as they don't cause trouble?

R) Yea.

Others did admit, however, that they saw their turf as their territory and would ensure that a rival gang was made unwelcome. Making another gang unwelcome would either entail "dogging them":

....we dog them. If they are like, if we are just sitting there in front staring at them. And then they just go in and buy something, real fast and leave that is it. They never like really come in.

Alternatively, they would resort to fighting the other gang or, in some cases, shooting.

Everyday Life

The everyday life of gang members is similar to other groups that we've studied in the Northern California area (see Hunt, Joe and Waldorf's other article this issue). Although popular portrayals of everyday gang life suggest that members are busily engaged in illicit activities, especially drug dealing, Southeast Asian gang members like other groups make a variety of attempts to deal with and transcend the mundane.

Got up around 12:00 in the afternoon. Just stayed at my friend's house and watched the babies, the kids for them, eat and went home. Took a shower, and came back to the house and just stayed there. We drank up and watched movies. Stayed up till around 5:00 a.m.

We just drink. We like drinking. And like when we drink, there is girls, and just mess around with them. We kick back at friend's house and talk.

CONCLUSION

Three themes emerge from our data. First, the experience of these young immigrant men raise a number of questions about the acculturation process and the development of a distinctive ethnic youth identity. More specifically, we have tried to uncover the complex layers of their interaction with their families, peers, and the community. These interactions, in different ways, create tension and hostility in their immediate environment. The gang, comprised of similarly situated

youngsters, provides a place of refuge to counter the strained interaction with others. Moreover the members' and the group's sense of "self" and "place" emerges as an eclectic identity, rooted in an array of existing youth subcultures.

Second, the picture of Southeast Asian gangs as portrayed in our data is significantly different from that previously suggested by criminal justice officials and the media. More specifically, the contention that Southeast Asian gangs are in some ways more ethereal, and more fluid than traditional gangs does not appear to be supported by our data. In fact, the gangs exhibit many of the social characteristics of other ethnic gangs including possessing identifying names, gang insignia and formal and informal methods of gang initiation. The only clearly underdeveloped characteristic is that of turf or territory and, even here, there is some evidence that at least some of the gangs possessed a sense of turf.

Finally, the adoption or borrowing of gang characteristics from Latino, African-American and Asian gangs suggests a deliberate strategy by Southeast Asian gang members to develop a distinctive ethnic youth identity which suited their own needs and requirements. The existing culture of street gangs, whether in reality or through the eyes of the media, has provided these teenagers with a rich source of ideas and artifacts to plunder in designing their own gangs. In doing so, they clearly exhibit a desire to test out different types of youth subcultures. For example, the use of an elaborate "jumping-in" process used by Latino gangs was adopted, and tested by some and discarded by others. The use of different colors, and especially green, was used as a boundary marker to distinguish themselves from others. Finally, dragon and tiger tattoos, although borrowed from Asian-American gangs, was still used to demarcate themselves from Latino and Mexican gangs in San Jose.

ENDNOTES

¹This is an example of what Klein (1995) has called "cultural diffusion."

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OVERACHIEVEMENT IN THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY: THE LIFE STORY OF A PUERTO RICAN STICK-UP ARTIST IN EAST HARLEM

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ABSTRACT

The life story of an employment counselor in East Harlem debunks the immigrant American dream of upward mobility, individual achievement, and material opportunity. Based on several years of participant-observation conversations, this article traces in street language the life cycle of a charismatic workaholic individual through graffiti writing, gang banging, school (non) attendance, adolescent violence, parental discipline, substance abuse, armed robbery, gratuitous murder, drug dealing, incarceration, and legal employment. It reveals the contradictions of individual agency and achievement in the context of structural marginalization in the underground economy and street culture. The opportunity structure available to second generation inner-city youth in the United States often channels overachievers into destructive behavior.

INTRODUCTION

"If I could be standing here in front of you today, any one of you can make it out there. You just gotta set your mind to it." Waving his arms at the chipping paint on the cinderblocks and the exposed pipes criss-crossing the ceiling of his cramped basement classroom, Tito Ortega, a trainer at a motivational achievement employment organization, is a charismatic survivor from East Harlem's streets. He desperately believes the dream of individualistic achievement that is promoted by the low-budget non-profit job training program where he had been working for over a year since his release from 10 years in prison at the time I met him in the early 1990s. Crammed into the basement of the primarily Puerto Rican housing project where he grew up, Tito and his colleagues treat their work as would missionaries. The fundamental philosophy of these kinds of motivational job training programs is that "...these people have an attitude problem." Through a boot camp approach, they rip apart the already fragile self-esteem of their unemployed—often depressed and anxious—clients, in order to reconstruct them with an epiphenal realization that they want to find jobs as security guards, messengers, and data input clerks in just-above-minimum-wage service sector positions.

Of course Tito is not telling the truth. He is not a realistic role model. He is not a run-of-the-mill survivor from violent inner-city streets. Most people in his classroom will not "make it" in New York City's legal labor market no matter how much they want to, or how good their attitude is. Most of his students are second- or third-generation descendants of African American and Puerto Rican rural immigrants who now find themselves excluded from the precarious working class niches formerly occupied by their parents. In fact, Tito himself was just

barely holding on to his own tenuous grasp on legal employment, despite the fact that he has always been an overachieving workaholic. The global restructuring of New York City's service- and finance-based economy is no longer offering the working poor the hope of stable, unionized factory employment (Rodriguez 1989; Wacquant 1995; Wilson 1996). Those production jobs have disappeared overseas where labor is cheaper. As second generation American-born youths, Tito's clients are not exploitable enough to be able to compete with the new rural immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and Africa—many of whom are undocumented—who are increasingly filling the lowest wage service-sector positions of New York's restructured labor market (Sassen-Koob 1986).

I met Tito when we were both 31 years-old. I lived across the street from his housing project for almost 5 years in the late 1980s and early 1990s where I was conducting participant-observation among a network of street dealers at the height of the crack epidemic. We tape-recorded our conversations, which I present here in edited, contextualized form, not because Tito's life history is typical of inner-city youth, but on the contrary, because his remarkable exceptionalism as an over-achiever reveals the extraordinary structural constraints that destroy the lives of smart, energetic Puerto Rican men in El Barrio, New York. Methodologically, my relationship with Tito is that of a participant-observer with a long-term personal (as close to organic as possible) relationship to his community and social network. I did not use a formal interview protocol; on the contrary, I purposefully engaged in the anthropological technique of initiating open-ended conversations in a relaxed, friendly setting. This enabled his life story to emerge more organically from our everyday interactions rather

than from a more selfconsciously manipulative and power-ridden presentation of self (Bourgeois 1995). The life story presented in this story, consequently, is actually an edited combination of over a half-dozen conversations spanning a two-year time frame.

Through Tito's life story, the central contradictions of U.S. ideology, which legitimizes poverty and inequality through a psychologically reductionist, blame-the-victim bias, become apparent (MacLeod 1995). Throughout his youth, the more Tito tried to seize control of his life and grab a piece of the American Pie, the more he was drawn into self-destruction and community havoc. On a deeper theoretical level, Tito's life story allows us to explore the problematic relationship between structure and agency (Giddens 1984), because the conditions of extreme oppression shaping his life articulate with his exceptional charisma, to demonstrate the unintended consequences of individual achievement. Popular culture in the United States, with its overarching emphasis on individual achievement, is clearly refracted in how Tito excelled in street culture society and its thriving criminal economy.

A brilliant, articulate man, Tito has never been a passive victim of the structures of economic exploitation and racial oppression that shape daily life in the U.S. inner city. On the contrary, he has always been an active victim and an effective victimizer. Building on Merton's (1994) concept of social structure and anomie (Cloward, Ohlin 1960) and more recent developments in cultural reproduction theory at the interfaces of anthropology, education, and gender studies (Foley 1990; Fordham 1996; MacLeod 1995; Messerschmidt 1993; Willis 1981) I want to illustrate the dynamics whereby Tito's exceptional agency propelled him into a nightmare of destruction. Precisely because he was ambitious, worked hard, persevered, and excelled at everything he did during his youth, Tito became an agent of violence, crime, substance abuse, personal suffering, and community destruction. He pursued aggressively and faithfully a dominant script for becoming a successful male. Following Merton, it is the internalization of the American Dream under structural conditions of adversity in the inner city which spawns a thriving underground economy administered through everyday violence.

GANG LIFE

Predictably, in the early 1970s Tito

immersed himself with all his energy into New York City's gang life in early adolescence. His peer group and his opportunities for emotional and material reward were rooted in the universe of street gangs that controlled public youth space in his neighborhood (Moore, Vigil, Levy 1995; Sanchez-Jancowski 1991; Taylor 1990; Vigil 1988). He began, harmlessly enough, with the all-too-human search for public recognition within his immediate community:

My whole experience with fucking up on the streets started when I started defacing the subways as an adolescent: hangin' out late, writin' on subways.

My tag was JT 115—you know. Everybody knew me by my tag name. And I felt good about that. And everybody said, "Oh shit, that's JT" [pointing at an imaginary subway train going by].

I started getting a little older and that's when I started noticing about a tendency within me—you know. Because instead of buying a magic marker—you understand what I'm sayin'—I would take it off of somebody—you know. And that's how my reputation started. I stopped the graffiti thing and I went into gang-bustin'.

Gang life offered Tito a platform from which to develop his leadership skills. His initial motivation to become organically involved was to avoid victimization without having to retreat from public space and social interaction.

I had the fear of going out of my block to another block by myself because I didn't want to get my ass kicked by another gang. You understand where I'm coming from?

Because back in them days a man would measure his manhood by how he used his hands. [Absentmindedly flexing his biceps] So what I did was I started my own gang. I was really good with my hands. See how it works... I was in the boxing team.

So what I did was, all the guys that I knew; that I felt comfortable with; that I knew I could tell what to do; but who weren't punks... So all these guys who didn't want me to beat them up, right, became the Court Jesters—right here in the projects. We controlled this building.

I was the self-proclaimed president. I collected dues. I did all that by myself 'cause I wanted to put myself in the position where I could feel in power, you understand what I'm saying?

And we became pretty big. We became popular with the girls. And we had our colors on our

jackets—doin' our little thing—mostly fighting.

DRUG DEALING

Tito was still too young during those early years of gang fighting to use drugs. In fact he was disgusted by them, recognizing their destructiveness on his older peers.

I stayed away from drugs at that time. I knew what they was doin'. I'm fairly intelligent, so I came up with this assessment that there's so many dope fiends in the world today because the high is so fuckin' good. I realized why all my friends became addicted to it. I mean, the high is great. Later I shot heroin one time, and I can't even explain it, man.

Well anyway, I wanted to be productive, you know, I wanted to be a good kid. So I thought, I had a choice: Either I can be addicted to heroin and look like my dope fiend friends; or I can get out of it right then and there and that's what I chose to do.

I wasn't gonna let my decision-making process be affected by any kind of mind-altering substance. I was having fun—bad fun, you understand?—but in a clean sense.

It was merely a question of time, however, before the logic of the underground economy's most powerful money-making industry overwhelmed Tito. Being ambitious, he threw his lot in with the only growing equal opportunity employer for males in the U.S. inner city.

But then we started like dealing drugs. Not dope [heroin], just reefer. Because dope [heroin] was still something that you stayed away from.

So the shit like really progressed, and I started selling reefer right from my house with my mother, my sisters, and everybody living there. People were coming in my house before they even went to school to buy a bag of reefer off me, and things of that nature.

And that's where it all started for me. I mean that shit progressed, because at school I was dressing a little better than the next guy. The next guy was a nerd, and I was cool. I had all the pretty girls.

I was intelligent as far as education was concerned, but I was dealing with peer pressure.

The fallout from being a successful street dealer is to become eventually a substance abuser. Indeed, it is rare for street dealers not to use their product (Bourgois 1995; Dunlap 1992; Williams 1989).

Two of the guys that was down with my gang was smoking reefer. And I seen them. That's like the first time I started fucking with drugs. I smoked reefer. I started smoking reefer, reefer, reefer.

It started progressing. You know in the gang situation we started finding ourselves in positions where we had to fight rival gangs, you know. And before I can like throw my nerves up to fight somebody in another rival gang, I would have to be fucked up, you know what I'm saying? So I wouldn't feel the pain, ok?

And I would win the fight and then I'd feel really good about myself, so then I would get high, you know, as a prize.

I started noticing that I had this like violent tendency within me, man. I knew one day that it was going to like put me behind bars; you understand what I'm saying?

I started progressing in the get-high, really fucking up man. I started drinking wine. And wine also made me wild. I started noticing a lot of violent shit within me. That's how come I don't drink wine today.

CRIME, VIOLENCE, AND THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY

Selling drugs, getting high, and gang-banging were not enough for Tito. He was more ambitious, a classic Horatio Alger in Merton's sociological model of social structure and anomie:

I wanted better for myself, but you know, I wasn't going to sacrifice the time. I didn't want to work because I felt I deserved to be out there with my friends so I started sticking-up.

My first experience ever in stickin' anybody up was a Yellow Cab. I used to take the subway downtown 'til like 14th Street, jump in the cab with a loaded pistol, tell the cab to drop me off at 120th Street and Park Avenue. And then put the fuckin' gun to the cabbie's head, to take his little bit of chump change and cut out. I did that shit like fuckin' 20 times in a row all by myself.

It was a personal thing. It was really fucked up because my father at that time was a cab driver.

You see, my father came from Puerto Rico with this iron fist type of rules and regulations, "I whistle and you come up here or I kickin' your ass." But he always had this fear that somebody would get in his cab and rob him; yet little did he know I was robbin' his colleagues at the time.

He whipped me hard all the time. I mean, I could be in the park and he whistles and I come

in a minute late and have my ass whipped. And I know it. So why come in a minute late at 6:00 when I can get the same ass whippin' at 12 o'clock at night? That's the kind of logic that I used back then for stayin' in the streets.

Stick-up artists occupy the most dangerous, but high profit, niche of the underground economy. One has to be skilled "and have heart" to survive in this occupation for any length of time. Indeed, before expanding into becoming the leader of a band of armed robbers specializing in assaulting drug dealers, Tito honed his skills in high school. The institution that was supposed to be educating Tito was so out of control that it really did teach him vocational career skills that rendered him more successful later in life:

My thing was guns; as a matter of fact, I got thrown out of Samuel Gompers vocational high school for pulling a handgun on some people. I was about 15. I put the gun in the teacher's face. But before the security guards and stuff came I ran down the stairs and out the back.

But I really wasn't officially terminated from the school. I didn't go back. But no other school would accept me because they didn't know who the fuck I was, because they still had all my school records on file at my old school, and I couldn't go back.

I tried a number of schools. A lot of vocational schools, Westinghouse, Chelsea, Benjamin Franklin, Julia Richman. They wouldn't take me.

So what happened was this, man: I falsified some documentation, and I made a fake I.D., and I hung out at Richman.

Practically all of East Harlem went to Julia Richman. I spent 2 years in Richman. I swear to God! Back and forth, in classes and everything. They thought I was a fuckin' regular student but they never had me on file.

One day I went into the bathroom. There was a bunch of morence—Black kids—and they were shooting dice, and I was strapped. I had a gun on me. So I said, "Fuck that shit! [snapping his fingers] I'm gonna go back in, and I'm gonna rob all these motherfuckers." It was kinda winter time, and so I bought one of those ski caps from a friend of mine, and ripped some holes for eyes.

I told my friend, "Don't let nobody in." I went back in the bathroom with that shit on and I stuck all of them up—took the dice and everything.

I started my own crap game in the schoolyard out back with the money I took from these dudes that was in the bathroom shootin' dice, 20

minutes ago.

Like any ambitious son of immigrants in America, Tito was determined to seize a piece of the pie. He was not unrealistic, however, about what institutional pathways were open to him for upward mobility. Like so many people in the United States—rich and poor—he invested a large part of his energy into a materialistic commodity fetishism.

I knew I wasn't going to graduate from Richman. Don't get me wrong, I wanted to be productive. I wanted to be a standup guy, but it just didn't work out that way. I ended up being a stick-up kid with no high school diploma or nothing.

I mean, I had the potential to be very, very, very good. Whatever it is I set my mind on doing, I possess the tools to do it. I'm meticulous, articulate; I'm punctual.

But I liked being young with a lot of money in my pocket, you know. I liked wearin' fancy clothes; I liked drivin' a new car. I liked my reputation.

This is what I'm talking about when I say I am a product of my community. You see a guy driving a Maxima, and you want a Maxima—Did you know I drive a Maxima now?

It's like if you see a guy standing on the corner with a gold chain, what incentive do you have to ever want to go to work legal? If your neighbor can pull in, in one day, what I'm making in 40 hours of work week. And he can wake up at 12 in the afternoon. What's the incentive?

I got tired of fuckin' making chump change with the cabs, I started getting greedy. So I did a stickup of a numbers spot. I did it by myself. I fucked up because it was in Manhattan and everybody heard about it. People were saying, "This young kid got a lot of spunk."

Lucky me that I didn't rob 'em for much and the motherfuckers didn't come looking for me.

But what did happen was I said to myself, I got to put together a crew. So one day I sat down with a couple' guys and they said yeah.

We fucked our first job up and we didn't get nothing out of it. So then we come up with this suggestion, "Let's rob drug dealers who don't know who we are." You know what I'm sayin'? "It beats motherfuckers chasing us for blocks."

That's what happened. We started robbin' drug dealers in the Bronx. We was stickin' up corporations. I wouldn't walk in a place with a loaded handgun knowing there's four or five guys inside with guns too. So my thing was to get inside information from dissatisfied workers

and then catch the agency off guard like a sneak attack situation.

Nobody ever seen my face. Nobody knew who the fuck we was. We always used masks and football jerseys. Each jersey had a number on it. They were see-through fishnet jerseys. We called each other by the number. We never called nobody by their names.

I used to walk into a building with a duffel bag full of 45 automatics and a sawed-off shotgun—understand? Nobody knew who the hell I was. I kept a football helmet on top. Everybody figured I was carrying my football equipment.

And me and my crew never walked in together. We didn't even take the elevator together.

Two used to go up the stairs; one go this way; one go that way; one take that elevator; the other one take that elevator. Depending on the floor we'd meet two floors below, you know. Everybody put the masks on, and catch the people off guard.

You know how many people I caught off guard? [smiling] One that I remember real, real good, was one of the biggest spots in the Bronx. I'm not even going to name the name because I don't want it to go public. They might still be lookin' for me. I'm talkin' about one of the biggest distributors in the Bronx. They had a set up of video cameras and walkie-talkies.

I talked to a couple' guys who worked at the corporation. They got this feeling that they were being shafted. So what happened was they got me all the information as far as what time the place was open; what keys open what; what lock is this; what lock is that; the back way out; the front way out; you know what I'm tryin' to say...

This conversation, which I was tape-recording in my tenement living room opposite Tito's high-rise housing project, was interrupted by automatic weapon gunfire. The distracting noise, however, prompted Tito to reel off a series of accounts of particularly grisly hold-ups:

I did one drug spot one day, where they worked out of two apartments, A and B. They was sellin' drugs out of the apartment B, and the family lived in apartment A.

I had my information wrong and I went into the wrong apartment.

I had the whole family there. I had the grandmother, the mother, the son, the nephew, everybody tied up. And I couldn't find the drugs so I had to grab the mother. This lady was so loyal to her husband, who owned the place, that I had to

put a dagger to her neck and actually draw blood before she would tell me where the drugs were at.

I probably would have killed her. I had a nasty reputation, and I had to get what I wanted at that time.

It wasn't till I drew blood that she gave me the keys to the next apartment. Okay, then inside the next apartment, while we was packin' shit up, there's people knockin' on the door, wantin' to buy drugs.

So I started lettin' 'em in; tyin' 'em up; and takin' their money, their jewelry, and everything. This was right across the street from the police precinct, in broad daylight, like 4:00 in the afternoon, in a housing project.

I know stick up crews all over the city, Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan, Queens. We would trade information. I even know guys that tried to stick my organization up.

I reminded myself that Tito was only a teenager during this eventful money-making period of his life and I asked him how he managed to trust the fellow members of his stick-up crew. I expected to hear a classic gang litany about homeboy solidarity—the kind of almost touchy-feely love/bonding that gang members in California or the Southwest revel in communicating to outsiders. I was wrong. Tito did not trust his crew. He controlled them through violent intimidation. Indeed, the extraordinary levels of interpersonal violence on inner-city streets which appear to be expressions of psychopathological dysfunction to outside observers are, in fact, functional in the criminal economy. Public displays of brutality are a way of investing in one's human capital—building one's credibility—when one seeks upward mobility in the underground economy (Bourgois 1989):

They were a lot older than me. If you can believe it, I was about 15—, 16—at the time. And these guys were in their early 20's. But I gave them the attitude that I had nothing to lose.

I gave up the sense that I was a little mentally disturbed, you understand what I'm sayin'. The things that I did, not everybody would do. It got to where I just about chopped off a guy's hand for a fucking diamond ring.

Sometimes I don't know what it is with me, but I intimidate people. As a matter of fact, it's surprising that we can sit here and talk because most people are *really* intimidated when they don't know me personally.

I do things spontaneously. My biggest asset is I can be dangerous when I smile [grinning at me widely]. And people don't know that. So I can laugh and still fuck you over at the same time. A lotta people consider me to be crazy.

So I left them to believe that I was a little crazy, so, you know...what I said went. They never disrespected me. I had a nasty reputation.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND SELF-DESTRUCTION

A side effect of being efficient at mobilizing violence and excelling as a leader in the underground economy is that one falls prey to the ideology of "respect". Tito was not able to do anything productive with his illicitly generated money besides cultivate a street reputation. His universe for excelling and for channeling his career ambitions was confined by the opportunity structures engulfing his inner city streets and his gang/crew-bounded network of friends.

I liked being a stick-up artist because it gave me a reputation. I had money but nobody knew where I was getting my money from.

I was living with my mother in the projects but I used up all that money. It's obvious that I wasn't really mentally business orientated. None of us were because if we had been we'd probably be on top of the world today.

I'd come to the park with a stack of money in my pocket and I'd see 15 of my friends sittin' down doin' nothing. I'd say, "Come on, let's go to the movies." I'd pay for all the cabs, the movies and then cocaine and reefer. We was smokin' pounds of reefer.

Tito was a workaholic and deeply respected his mother as much as he resented his father. In another setting he might not have ended up so violent on the street. He desperately wanted his mother to recognize him as hard-working, but he was also determined to develop the skills necessary for success in the underground economy.

But I never wanted my mother to believe that I was actually doing the things that she heard I was doin' so I got a job working at La Marketa full-time, 40 hours a week.

But I wouldn't leave my house without a gun. When everybody was gone, I used to bring out the big Webster dictionary—that it took my father 18 months to pay for—and put it at the end of the hall; and I used to sit at the other end; and I used

to shoot the gun.

That's what I would do. That's how I used to deal with my free time.

Since he excelled at everything within his reach and had too much energy to keep on the streets, it was only a question of time before Tito began abusing the drugs that flood U.S. inner cities. Youths embracing street culture often bond with one another around drug; it is almost impossible to escape them. Drug are so accessible they become normalized—almost a rite of passage. For example, even at the time of this conversation, some doze years after the fact, Tito could not resist being proud of the unpredictable wildness of his drug-abusing days. It was almost as if the extent of his self-punishment through drugs was proof to him of his superior mind and body.

I did favors for people. They owed me, but I didn't want money, because I had just got a stack of money, so my compensation was, "I want you to give me get-high". They used to give me get-high.

I was on cocaine and then I was introduced to angel dust. I don't know what the fuck attracted me to that shit, man. I started abusing angel dust and I became very violent.

I don't know what it is with me physically. Biologically, I'm supposed to be fuckin' dead! With all this shit that I done to myself, you know.

I mean, I'm 31 years old and I drank as much liquor as anybody else out there. I'm talkin' about drinking bum-fucking cheap wine, from 9 o'clock in the morning, man, to 12 midnight, for fuckin' years in a row!

But my insides feel great. I don't know what the fuck they look like. But they feel great.

I smoked so much fuckin' dust; I sniffed so much cocaine that my nose is supposed to have holes in it and my brain is supposed to have melted.

But it's not. I feel great.

Mainstream U.S. society easily dismisses Tito as an abnormal psychopath. This kind of normalizing psychological reductionist interpretation however, obfuscates the social processes that produce Tito's violence and self destruction. He was simply pursuing his realistic options to their logical extreme. Through his violence and substance abuse I was living up to his fullest potential within the universe of his street-bounded logic, common sense, and personal community:

I can actually go back to the night when I killed this guy, because I'll never forget it. It's what I did ten years in jail for.

I really didn't have no reason for doing it, because I had already almost beat the fuckin' dude to death. There was no reason for me to put four or five slugs in him. But I did it anyway, because I wanted to do it. I was high on angel dust.

He had robbed me earlier that evening. He put a double sawed-off shotgun to my face. I was selling a bunch of cocaine and I had a whole bunch of jewelry and he took it all.

I saw him later that night when I went to the bodega [corner grocery store] to get my girl a fuckin' Three Musketeers candy bar. He started running. I chased him. I stopped him. I had him against the wall.

I beat the shit out of this kid. Not with my fists but with a handgun. I mean I hit with the gun in his fuckin' face about 20 different times.

The kid was on his knees begging. The motherfucker was crawling away from me when I shot him five times. So I didn't really have to do it.

PRISON

Since the 1970s (1973-1993) the size of the U.S. prison population has increased ten-fold (Melossi, Lettiere 1997; Tonry 1995). Indeed, since the end of the Cold War, what could be called a "criminal industrial complex" has emerged as the primary recipient of government subsidy in the United States. With the whittling away of the already rickety social welfare safety net in the United States, and its replacement by a wellfunded police drag net, public policy has focused on criminalizing poverty. Prisons have become a primary socializing institution for increasingly large cohorts of inner-city males.¹

Prison didn't slow me down. At first, I just learned to be a better criminal. I was doin' the same thing in jail that I was doin' in the streets: I had a bunch of assholes following me; and I would tell them to rob this guy, or that guy for his sneakers—just so I could wear them. Or, "I like that shirt his girlfriend brought him. Take his shirt!" Or, "This guy just came off the visit, man, he got a' ass fulla' drugs: Take him to the bathroom and make him shit. Take his drugs."

I was all about worrying about how clean my sneakers were, and if my pants were sewed, and ironed, and pressed correctly. My shirt was pressed to impress...who? A bunch of nobodies.

I used to catch motherfuckers in the bathroom when they just came from a visit and I knew they had drugs up their ass. I used to put a motherfuckin' home-made shank [knife] in peoples' fuckin' necks while they was shittin' so they could shit their drugs out. Right there in the gym bathroom with the fuckin' population of 200 inmates runnin' around—police there and everything.

My thing was like, man, if I can get-over in here where I'm guarded 24 hours a day, they'll never catch me in New York.

I stabbed motherfuckers. I sliced motherfuckers. The only thing I didn't do was kill any motherfuckers.

I even took one of the men I stabbed to the infirmary. They locked me up in the box—which is considered solitary confinement—for investigation, as far as that stabbing is concerned. But I had a witness that said I didn't do it.

Unlike most inmates Tito changed his life direction in prison. First he had to quit drugs.

When I was incarcerated I did even more drugs than what I was doing out on the street because I was holding people up—I had a crew in there too—and my girl was bringing me cocaine. I became addicted to cocaine when I was incarcerated.

In jail, you smuggle drugs in balloons which you swallow and then shit them out. One day, I was in the visiting room with my girl, and she had brought some loose cocaine along with three balloon-fulls.

I snorted the loose cocaine in the back of the visiting room and then I couldn't swallow the balloons when it came time to leave so I stuffed 'em ...you know... [pointing to his rear].

So as soon as I went back to my cell I sat on the toilet and let the balloons out. But I was already so fuckin' high that I flushed the toilet by mistake.

That's when I knew I was hooked, because I stuck my motherfuckin' hand up to here [pointing to his shoulder] in that toilet bowl.

I mean, that's when it actually hit me and I knew I had to do something that would change my life. I had to make a decision. I mean, "What the fuck are you doin', man? You got half your fuckin' arm stuck in the toilet bowl. You're fucked. You have to make a decision: either you're going to stay fucked up or you're going to change."

So I decided to start going to drug programs.

In a way, jail worked out for me.

Tito was lucky that he had access to education in prison:

I met up with this guy who was a lot older than me. He's already been in there like 15 years. He told me, "You got leadership qualities. You goin' to be in here forever if you don't take advantage of their college program"—they'd given me three extra years for extortion. "Get a high school diploma. I been keepin' my eye on you."

At first I was like, "Why you keepin' an eye on me? You a faggot or something?"

But then, I listened. He told me, "I got all this education under my belt in here. You too can use it to your advantage. I'm not even going to go home. I wish I could give you everything I learned."

Finally, I came to the conclusion that incarceration isn't the answer because it's boring and I knew I'd be going back in when I went out—just be a revolving door if I didn't take advantage of the education they had to offer in jail.

I got my G.E.D. and I went to college.

One of the crucial steps in Tito's "reform" was overcoming the fear of losing respect in street culture by violating the norms of masculinity (Connell 1987; Jefferson, Carlen 1996; Messerschmidt 1993):

At first, the bad thing was that all the guys that was going to college, they had this reputation that they were all fucking geeks, or something, and I didn't want to fit into that category; didn't want to be a sucker; didn't want to be a geek.

INADEQUATE SOLUTIONS

Immediately upon his release from prison Tito returned to the underground economy. He felt like he practically had no choice and went into drug dealing, marketing his own brand of heroin:

What really scared me was when I did come back home, it was like I never skipped a beat. I was back in the streets in two seconds.

I went out there with this jailhouse attitude and mentality. You know, the badass in the neighborhood, attracting people for all the wrong reasons until I realized one day it was going to get me killed in no time.

I knew I possessed the tools that a lot of people don't possess. I have a high school

diploma, some college, a sense of purpose, a lot of experience, but I was hindered because of my past criminal history. I had this big wall blocking in front of me. I just couldn't get through the wall.

I tried to muscle in selling dope on that corner [gesturing out the window]. I put out my own label. I had my own stamp and everything: Absolute—that was my brand name. It was a joint venture. I put out a ounce of dope on the street. I lost a lot of money.

Then I realized I could've fell back into sniffing cocaine and shit like that. I realized one day it was going to get me killed in no time. I had my back against the wall.

It was really a completely whole different atmosphere on the streets than what it used to be. All my old contacts were nobody. It was a whole new world out there. It was all crack—that goddamn drug.

There's no more self-respect. Today knowing how to use your hands is not even a determining factor. Nobody wants to fight with their hands no more. You get a fifteen-year-old kid pullin' out a gun on you for lookin' at him the wrong way.

Puts fear in my heart because I don't want to be killed by no fifteen-year-old kid because of the way I looked at him. A lot of the kids can't give you no answer why they put a gun to a guy's head. They doin' it for pleasure to them.

Put it this way, the streets changed me the second time around. I had no idea they was going to be this wild. Case in point: that kid last week, man, pulled out a gun on four little kids, shot them in the head. 'Cause of what? 'Cause of disrespect. There's not that much disrespect left in the world. And I already knew what this kind of future entails: institutions, in institutions, and institutions.

The best thing that happened to me then, was I walked in here [opening his arms and smiling at the cramped cinderblock basement office.] I got this like sense of belonging because they [pointing to the director of the program at a desk in the far corner of the office] generally have been through the things that I been through.

So they sat me down. We talked. They looked at what I had to offer. They didn't give me this runaround bullshit story because of my past and things of that nature. They felt that I did have something to offer. They decided it was like, "Yo, what's more best for you is to give back into your community due to the fact that you was born and raised here, and this is your past."

They got me a job as a counselor in a drug treatment program. That was the best thing that

ever happened to me. I became a supervisor over there; practically ran the program. But then I became discontent with it. They never gave me no pay raise. I felt I was being used.

So after a year and some change, I came back over here and they hired me as a job counselor and now I been a year here.

The institution that was giving meaning to Tito's life by allowing him to help people like himself could not overcome the structural marginalization of its community. Ironically, much of their counseling work serves to legitimize U.S. blame-the-victim ideology. Building on Foucault (1963, 1980) we can understand this well-meaning, socially liberal, self-help (up-by-your-bootstraps) institution as a front line administrator of the "normalizing gaze" that forces the socially marginal to confess and internalize their deficiencies. The boot-camp-style harangues of the job training seminars where each individual confesses his or her powerlessness in front of unemployment serves to discipline recalcitrant workers into accepting boring, low-paid service jobs. Those who resist and/or drop out of the program are often sufficiently humiliated by the confessional forum of the job training seminars to suspect that they really are poor and unemployed because of their own individual shortcomings.

It is easy to critique the premise of psychologically motivating—or even manipulating—desperately poor people to accept their subordination in inadequately remunerated entry-level labor markets. The problem, however, is to develop an alternative in the short-term, or even in the long-run, that provides structurally oppressed people with the opportunity to exercise their agency productively. Despite the emancipatory faith of theorists and practitioners in the field of critical pedagogy (Ellsworth 1989), educational institutions are not a realistic forum for addressing the overwhelming problems faced by the crack dealers, addicts, and gang bangers taking refuge on inner city streets—especially when the number of children living in poverty doubled from 1968-1994 (*Business Week* 1994; Rainwater 1994). While the notion of building one's cultural capital (Bourdieu, Wacquant 1992) with determined hard work—i.e., obtaining a GED or learning how to dress and manipulate eye contact during a job interview—is appealing, this subsidized up-by-your-bootstraps approach will never get drug dealers off of inner-city streets so long as the real value of the minimum wage

continues to decline and income gaps widen (*San Francisco Chronicle* 1996; United Nations Development Program 1996). In fact, failing at these motivational achievement programs reconfirms the contradictory celebratory rejection of mainstream society—tinged with a profound sense of self-blame—and individual failure that most addicts and criminals already carry in their hearts.

Tito's ongoing tenuous survival in the legal world is a case in point of the internalization of these larger structural dynamics. He represents a best-case scenario of the potential of individual agency and up-by-your-bootstraps recovery. Despite his motivation, excitement, and idealism, however, he remains proudly trapped in the projects. He still lives in his mother's high rise apartment on a corner that is famous for being a hub for wholesaling angel dust. Most of his adolescent friends are either dead, in jail, or making large sums of money selling drugs. Meanwhile he earns legal "chump change" as a "motivational trainer" charged with persuading the neighbors and youths on his block to accept poorly-paid service-sector jobs in the white world downtown.

Indeed, Tito's hold on legal stability has proved not only personally painful, but also tenuous. Despite insisting—or perhaps because of insisting—that, "Nothing stops me from getting what I want," Tito spiraled every few months on weekend-long binges of alcohol and interpersonal violence, usually precipitated by arguments with his lover or by run-ins with disrespectful acquaintances. He would return to work hung-over, or with a fresh black eye—but on time—on Monday mornings to harangue boot-camp-style the unemployed men and women in his cramped basement classroom, reproducing the All-American flé: "Any one of you can make it out there. You just gotta believe in yourself." Indeed, tragically, as this article goes to press Tito continues to live the All-American lie. He was finally fired from his job for his ongoing alcoholism and substance abuse and is recycling himself through the criminal justice system.

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END NOTES

California pioneered the U.S. strategy for criminalizing poverty through massive rates of incarceration. The institutional stability and social density of criminal networks in prison allowed for the emergence of highly structured, ethnicity-based corporate gangs that reach deep into the everyday activities of the underground economy on inner city streets—hence the Mexican Mafia (*la em'e*), the Aryan Brothers, and the Black Guerrilla Family. The northeastern U.S. states followed over a decade later with the emergence in the 1990s of the prison-based Latin Kings.

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INNER-CITY YOUTHS, GANGS, AND SCHOOL: CONFLICT AND RESISTANCE

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INTRODUCTION

Researchers have extensively explored the relationship between delinquency and education. However, research in this area has been primarily outcome focused, with an emphasis on quantitative methods; there is a dearth of process-oriented research on delinquency and education. Little attention has been given to the significance of the school setting and social interaction within that setting. The possibility that the constitutive nature of schools may play a role in (re)producing delinquents' substandard performance in and detachment from school has been largely ignored.

This paper builds on several different perspectives for its theoretical framework. Criminological and educational theorists point to the possible significance of lower-class youths' cultural milieus and school experiences. Cohen (1955) suggests that lower-class youths may not perform well in school, an institution that functions according to middle-class standards; these youths form a delinquent subculture due in large part to their failure in the school setting. Miller (1958) posits that lower-class youths' value systems include an anti-education element. Radical education theories argue that schools function to (re)produce existent inequalities through their adherence to dominant value systems and that therefore, marginalized students may resist school authority (MacLeod 1987; Willis 1977). If lower-class or gang identity is as important as research suggests (Covey, Menard, Franzese 1992; Moore 1991; Spiegel 1990; Vigil 1988), it is plausible that students may resist schools that seek to eliminate this identity.

Drawing upon classroom observations of and interviews with youths and teachers, this paper examines the internal dynamics of a state community school for paroled juveniles in a large southwestern city. Teachers attempted to convey to students, many of whom were minorities and gang members, the superiority of universalized notions of community, knowledge, and identity. In contrast, students' views of these issues were more localized, tied primarily to their neighborhoods. This conflict appeared to perpetuate and exacerbate the youths' disengagement from education. While in school, students devoted much of their time

and energy to resistance of teachers' messages and dictates, rather than the completion of work assignments. These findings suggest that the constitutive social processes of the school worked to (re)produce delinquents' failure in and detachment from school.

In the first section of this paper, I present an overview of delinquency and education literature, gang research findings, and sociological studies of school resistance. Next, I discuss the research setting and methods. Following this, I present observation and interview data which illustrate conflict and resistance between students and teachers. In conclusion, I discuss the theoretical, policy, and research implications of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education is an important causal variable in sociological theories of delinquency (Cloward, Ohlin 1960; Cohen 1955; Hawkins, Lishner 1987; Hirschi 1969). Cohen (1955) argues that lower-class youths' experiences of failure and frustration lead them to rebel against the middle-class and its representative institutions, including schools. Lower-class youths, on some internal level, desire middle-class status; however, their working class cultural "characteristics" and "capacities" hinder school achievement. These youths are likely to favor immediate gratification, have relatively low aspirations, be emotionally irrepressible, and be less concerned with outward appearance and personality than middle-class youths. In school, they are judged according to middle-class standards such as: ambition, proper speech and manners, and control of physical aggression. Faced with school failure and an extremely unlikely ascension to middle-class membership, these youths form a delinquent subculture that rejects middle-class values and their manifestations (e.g., property) while simultaneously providing status and ego preservation. Thus, they solve their "problem of status adjustment" through the formation of a delinquent subculture.

Miller (1958) argues that the "lower-class community" has a distinctive cultural content that promotes gang delinquency. Rather than being concerned with middle-class values, lower-class youths conform to adult and cultural standards that are

completely separate and distinct from the wider society. Formal education is considered effeminate, and school knowledge is not valued in a community whose "focal concerns" include "toughness" (Miller 1958).

Encouraged by such theoretical frameworks, numerous researchers have examined the correlations between delinquency and education. Several studies report a negative relationship between school performance (e.g., grades) and delinquency (Frease 1973a, 1973b; Hirschi 1969; Kelly 1971; Kelly, Balch 1971; Lawrence 1985; Rhodes, Reiss 1969). Correlational studies present an inverse relationship between school-bonding and delinquency (Hirschi 1969; Kelly, Pink 1973; Lawrence 1985). Other research has documented that school-bonding (Cernkovich, Giordano 1992; Jenkins 1995) and school performance (Chavez, Oetting, Swain 1994) are statistically significant predictors of variation in delinquency rates; namely, low bonding and/or poor performance helps explain greater delinquency involvement. Most research finds that the inverse relationship between delinquency and education is relatively unaffected by student background characteristics (e.g., class, race, gender) (Cernkovich, Giordano 1992; Chavez et al 1994; Hawkins, Lishner 1987). Moreover, some studies show a negative correlation between the time period when students are "out-of-school" and delinquency; this leads to speculation that negative school experiences may play a role in the facilitation of delinquent behavior (Elliot 1966; Elliot, Voss 1974; Phillips, Kelly 1979).

Not all research has documented a correlation between education and delinquency. Some studies find no relationship between the variables (Cox, Davidson, Bynum 1995; Wiatrowski, Hansell, Massey, Wilson 1982); other research points to the relative importance of other factors (e.g., peer association) (Elliot, Voss 1974; Lawrence 1991). In short, the relationship between delinquency and education requires further examination. Hawkins and Lishner (1987) note that "there remain important gaps in our understanding" of the delinquency-education connection. Most of all, to the extent that there is a causal relationship between delinquency and education, the mechanisms whereby this link is accomplished remain unspecified.

There is a clear need for process-oriented research in the delinquency and education area. Ogbu (1988, 1991) suggests that

lower-class minorities may lack motivation for school success due to their perception of limited future career opportunities. Faced with an uncertain and limited place in the labor market, they may consider school as irrelevant to their adult careers. Although they may value education in the abstract, inferior schools and a lack of future opportunities lead them to consider school work and commitment as wasteful energy. Consequently, they may become alienated from school, and, ironically, help seal their occupational fate (Ogbu 1988, 1991; Willis 1977).

Schools, like all of social life, are constituted by social interaction. Students may not be passive recipients of school knowledge and authority; several researchers have documented the significance of social interaction and student resistance within schools (Everhart 1983; MacLeod 1987; Willis 1977). Willis' (1977) seminal study discusses student resistance involving dress, rules, and knowledge among working-class youth at a secondary school in England. He links their school resistance to their world view, a view which is largely a result of their working class cultural background. MacLeod (1987) and Horowitz (1983) posit that teachers may not value the local ties and identity of inner-city youths, thus fueling these youths' resistance to and failure in school. However, neither MacLeod nor Horowitz elaborate on the relationship between delinquency and education. Furthermore, neither of them spent a significant amount of time observing school settings.

Research indicates that most gangs exist in urban areas and usually consist of lower class, minority teenage males (Covey et al 1992; Moore 1991; Spergel 1990; Vigil 1988). Studies of gangs suggest that their members often have strong connections to these social groups, which provide a resource for status and identity (Cohen 1955; Covey et al 1992; Miller 1958; Moore 1991; Spergel 1990; Vigil 1988). Consequently, gang members may resist an institution that attempts to negate the social importance of the gang. Researchers have not examined the possible importance of gang identities in schooling interactions.

In sum, the literature on delinquency and education is hindered by a lack of field research in and focus on the school setting. Researchers have largely ignored the internal dynamics of schools and student resistance to school authority, & the role these factors may play in reproducing the delinquency-educational

relationship. Sociological studies of student resistance, theories of delinquency, and the relative importance of the gang to its members suggest that schools that attempt to negate local identities may be marked by conflict and resistance. This paper provides a first step in addressing this research gap. The work of Cohen (1955) and Miller (1958) points to the relative importance of lower-class/gang culture for delinquency involvement, while Willis (1977) points to the possible significance of particular bases of identity for school resistance. Through a combination of these perspectives, this paper examines local/gang identity as a basis for student resistance.

RESEARCH SETTING AND METHODS

Research Setting

The community school where this research took place sought to "provide a positive and effective learning environment for youth transitioning to the community from a secure care facility" (Mission Statement). The school was run by the state department of corrections, and was located in an office building upstairs from the juvenile parole office. It was one component of a larger "partnership" program that sought to provide services to paroled juveniles in the community. The school provided an alternative education setting for youths who had a history of failure in public schools.

At any given time, there were two full-time teachers at the school, each with his/her own classroom. The lead teacher had been with the department of corrections for fifteen years, most of that time working at the state training school for males. During the first six months of operation, a principal was present at the school one day per week. Students could work on attaining an eighth grade diploma, public school credits, or a GED; in addition, pre-employment training was offered. Most of the students were minority males, many of whom were gang members. A total of 146 youths were enrolled during the school's year of operation; on average, youths would attend sporadically for a few months before being dropped from the rolls, the vast majority due to excessive absences. The school was open from June 1994 - July 1995, when it was closed due to state budget cuts in the area of community services. During its year of operation the school suffered from a lack of staff and material resources. Although this paper is quite critical of the school, this lack of resources, as well as the organizational limits imposed upon

teachers (e.g., required student work assignments, enforcement of departmental regulations), should be kept in mind. Teachers struggled to do their jobs within the context of organizational constraints.

Students were required by their parole officer to attend class for two hours per day. They came to school to attend class and left immediately afterwards; thus, this was not a "regular" school where one had recreation, lunch, etc. Daily attendance at the school averaged 10-15 students. Student assignments were individualized; in theory, students should have entered the classroom, gotten their materials, and worked quietly.

Methods

I gained access to the school as an evaluator; consequently, I was a special type of "participant as observer" (Atkinson, Hammersley 1994). As a participant-observer, I wanted to understand the "ordinary, usual, typical, [and] routine" nature of the school (Jorgensen 1989). I was an observer at the school several days per week from July 1994-June 1995, spending over 400 hours in the field. I would enter a classroom in the morning and occupy a student desk. I would write down key words while in class and write up detailed field notes during school breaks and/or at the end of the day.

In addition, I interviewed the 4 teachers who worked at the school during its year of operation. I also completed 54 individual and group interviews with 33 students (some youths were interviewed multiple times) outside of the school setting. I bought lunch for the respondents in exchange for talking with me about the school, their neighborhoods, and their everyday lives. The interview formats ranged from structured, to storytelling, to open group conversations.

CONFLICT AND RESISTANCE

The research reveals that the teachers attempted to convey to students the superiority of universalized notions of community, knowledge, and identity. Teachers disparaged and attempted to negate what was important to the students—their local community and knowledge and their gang identity. This conflict resulted in teachers struggling daily to impose their perspective and values on students. Although the school was an alternative to regular schools, the teachers' orientations were similar to those described by Cohen

(1955). The teachers' attempted imposition was met with obdurate student resistance; this resistance was often a consequence of the local basis of their lives.

The Teachers' Perspective

For the teachers, the school was a place where students had the opportunity to be "successful" and prepare to "enter the world of work." The school provided an opportunity, according to the teachers, for the youths to learn the necessary behavioral and cognitive requirements to be good workers and citizens in the future. In order to achieve these goals, teachers sought to have students dress, talk, and act in ways that did not reflect their local lives, but rather reflected a universal, objective type of identity. Students were often told that if they could learn "self-control" in school, if they could learn to dress, behave, and inter-act in appropriate ways, then they had the opportunity to leave their local environment and lead decent lives. As one teacher stated:

Part of what I teach is behavior modification, self-discipline. When they go to the job, they got to have that, whether it's professional, sales, an assembly line. Companies said they want this, self-discipline, before they come to the job.

One way by which teachers strived to instill their perspective in students was through the enforcement of official rules. Official school rules attempted to negate the students locally based dress styles and writing forms. These rules included: shirts tucked in; all belts in loops, not hanging; pants pulled up to waist; no colors (rags), no hats, headbands or bandanas; and no graffiti or tagging of any type (Youth Rules and Regulations). By trying to require the students to dress and write in ways which did not signal identification with local culture and identity, teachers hoped to negate youths' manifestations of their local lives. For the teachers, gang dress styles suggested that the students were still connected to their local communities.

Through their interactions and conversations with students, teachers also attempted to disparage and curtail the local aspects of youths' existence. Students wanted and tried to talk about their activities outside the school (e.g., encounters with police, rival gangs). The teachers constantly had to direct the students to be "quiet", "focus", and "stay on task". Students were repeatedly told by teachers that

they were "only concerned about what goes on in the classroom", "did not care about the extra-curricular," and "did not care what you do once you leave here." One teacher told the students that because of their "cultural background" all they knew was the "barrio life", and therefore they were lacking knowledge about the real world. Through such directives, teachers made it clear that the only important interaction at the school was objective, educational discourse. Yet, although teachers tried to curtail students' discussions about the lives, they would occasionally lecture to the students about the various problems in the students' local communities. Students were lectured to on gangs, AIDS, crime, teen pregnancy, drive-by shootings, suicide, and youth promiscuity. According to the teacher, the students' local communities were lacking any positive attributes; students should see to escape from their local environments, disavow them, and become good citizens and workers.

One particular area stands out in regard to the teachers' perspective of students' local identity, gang membership and involvement. One teacher repeatedly referred to gang writing (on folders, papers, school property) as "being like a dog, leaving a scent". He blamed gangs for most street crime, and told youth that "we would not have all the trouble we see if it was not for gangs". Teachers often told the students that they "had to get out of" and reject the gang life in order to make it in life. Another teacher, in an interview, referred to gangs as a "low level mentality" phenomena and stated that she could envision the day when such criminals were forced to live in isolation from the rest of society. Thus, as a consequence of teachers' views on gangs, there was no substantive dialogue or interaction with students about an extremely important aspect of their lives. Student discussions and expressions of gang activities and identities were expressly forbidden, and viewed only negatively in the classroom.

The teachers' lectures on communities and gangs were related to views about "knowledge". When students became frustrated with school work and/or called themselves "stupid", the teachers would often respond "nobody is stupid, anybody can be smart, you learn through [education] experience... repetition". This message, although positive, also implies that students who do not have standard educational knowledge are lacking in

gence. One teacher constantly told the students that they were "street smart *and* book dumb"; he would often tell them that the "younger generation thinks they know it all" but "they learn from their home boy/girls". The word "and" is italicized above because it illustrates the teachers' view on students' knowledge. The things that students learn on the streets are invalid, what youths learn from their friends is "no good" according to the teachers. It is only through books that one can attain real, important knowledge. The students' social world on the streets is worthless, and thus, knowledge of it is meaningless and not legitimate, according to the teachers. This perspective ignored the necessity of street smarts for students' survival (especially those who were gang members). One teacher often told me that because of the students' limited knowledge, he lectured to them about the evils of their communities, hoping that a "little information would go a long way". He hoped to "teach them, make them knowledgeable [about their world]," so that they could avoid being enmeshed in their communities and future legal problems.

In sum, for the teachers, the key to the students' success was the renunciation of their local identities, community, and knowledge. By dressing, talking, learning, and writing in appropriate ways, ways that did not reflect their local lives but instead were a reflection of dominant cultural standards, the students had an opportunity to become productive, obedient workers and good citizens.

Student Resistance

Previous delinquency and education research has largely ignored the significance and meaning of student activities within the school setting. Yet, students are not necessarily passive classroom participants. They actively resist the attempted imposition of hegemonic cultural ideologies and values, drawing upon their own culture and life experiences (Cohen 1955; Giroux 1983; MacLeod 1987; Willis 1977). At the community school, the attempted teaching and enforcement of dominant values was met with resistance by most of the students. These youths strongly valued their local identities and life experiences, and usually did not allow teachers to curtail their expression within the school setting. Thus, an extraordinary amount of school time was spent resisting teachers' rules and dictates, rather than doing school work. Most fundamentally,

the school was a place where a minuscule amount of educational work was performed by students.

Most of the students interviewed liked the school for non-educational reasons; namely, its hours were short, and it provided the opportunity to be with similar peers and meet members of the opposite sex. This is similar to Willis's (1977) documentation of the lads' schooling experiences. Other interview respondents complained about the repetitive nature of the work assignments and wished the community school was more like a "regular school" (e.g., a variety of classes). Students' belief that the school was inferior corresponds with Ogbu's (1988, 1991) argument that minorities often believe that they are offered an inferior education.

Regardless of their views about the school, however, few work assignments were completed there. Student resistance at the community school classroom took several forms. Students often refused to follow school dress and writing regulations. They would dress in ways which signified their local cultural and social identities (e.g., Cholo, gang); they would often "tag" their school work and school property (desks, bookshelves) with gang names to indicate their local identity. An example from field notes indicates the futile nature of the teachers' efforts to negate students' local identities through the enforcement of official rules that prohibited their manifestations:

A teacher tells a student that his gang belt buckles are inappropriate, that he cannot wear them at the school. The student puts his arm out, points to his gang tattoo, and says to the teacher, what are you going to do, take this off too? When the teacher turns around the student emphatically flashes his gang sign at him.

Students resisted teachers' attempts to have them dress and write in ways that conformed. For example, they often refused to tuck in their shirts, or write in traditional cursive (non-tagging style). Thus, every day, a large portion of teachers' and students' activities and interactions centered on struggles over and resistance to compliance with school regulations.

Students also resisted the completion of their work assignments. They would often fake the completion of work; spend their time talking with peers about local people, activities,

and events; simply stare out the window; or pretend to be sleeping. They made incredibly frequent trips to the bathroom and water cooler. They would, when possible, move the teachers' clocks forward and begin to ask whether they could leave for the day prior to the completion of their hours. In fact, perhaps the best description of what students did at the school is "time." They knew they had to be there, per their parole officer's order, but they usually attempted to do their time without doing school work. An example from field notes aptly illustrates this perspective:

Jimmy enters the classroom and goes to the teacher's desk to sign in. He signs in and asks the teacher what he should write for his sign out time. The teacher proceeds to try and have Jimmy figure it out for himself through addition: "You came in at 9:00 am, you have to stay two (2) hours, so what time would that be?" The student responds: "Don't do fuckin math, just tell me what time I leave."

In sum, students resisted the teachers' attempts to instill in them the importance of objective knowledge and an identity which negated their local life experiences. Teachers' efforts to have youths dress, write, and talk in ways that did not correspond with the youths' local bonds were usually unsuccessful. Youths' interview statements reveal the local basis of their resistance to the teachers' messages.

Students' resistance to school rules and teachers' directives was primarily rooted within the significance of the local: local knowledge, local neighborhood/community, and gang identity. The strength and importance of the local cannot be overstated. During interviews they would express shock and confusion when I asked them if they "liked their neighborhood"; for them, where they were from should be accorded loyalty and respect. Youths' ties to their neighborhood/gang are often extremely strong, providing them with love, support, and family-like ties. The following 17 year-old black male gang member noted:

BS: Do you like your hood?

Student: I love it.

BS: Why?

Student: I like it, cause when I started out in the hood, when I was young, running around, a little dirtbag, always dirty, always in trouble, the OG's [Original Gangsters] and [gang] seen me, said cut out. When I ran away from home, got in

trouble with my mom, they took me in, said stay with me. Even though they were selling dope and everything, they still showed a young brother love, showed me much love. And I was like, I'm always going give love back to the hood. I'm going love the hood forever no matter what goes down.

This local identity was both a present reality and a future vision for many youths. The above youth said he would continue to be a gang member until he was "in his coffin." The following interview excerpt is from a 14 year old female Mexican gang member who started her own gang:

BS: Why did you start it?

Student: Cause I wanted to make my own gang, and when I get older be an OG [Original Gangster]. I wanna make it real big so everybody can know about it. Because, this is how I think, when I grow older and everything, and the gang's real big, it'll be like, the leader is me. I'll be real happy, I'll be a "veterana," sitting there in my wheelchair with my teardrop tattoo. It'll be bad.

Some youths expressed a desire to preserve their connection to and identification with the local in the future, even if they had the means by which to escape. A 15 year-old Mexican female illustrated this view:

Student: I grew up in the projects. I always lived in the projects. My mom used to tell me, where do you want to move, an apartment or the projects? And I liked the project, there's a lot of people there. If I had money, I wouldn't go to no big house. I'd go to the projects, because I like them, I'm used to them.

Street knowledge, dismissed as irrelevant and unimportant by the teachers, was highly valued by the youths, and was essential to their survival in a dangerous environment. Many youths concurred with the following perspective of a 16 year-old black male gang member:

BS: Who do you know that's smart?

Student: Me.

BS: Why?

Student: I know I'm smart because I made it this far. Half the people in our hood didn't make it this far, you can barely make it this far. So I must be doing something right, I got street intelligence, street smarts. I'm gangbanging and I'm alive,

just to make it to 18, that's intelligence.

Students' interview statements indicate the continuing importance of local knowledge, community, and identity in their everyday lives. Thus, the teachers' attempt to negate the local basis, in order to formally educate students, was largely futile.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper has illustrated the significance of the internal dynamics at a state community school for paroled juveniles. The main research finding is the students' locally-based resistance to teachers rules, directives, and values. In agreement with previous resistance research (e.g., Willis 1977), and explorations of school and street identity conflicts (Horowitz 1983; MacLeod 1987), teachers and students at the community school had different views on what constituted appropriate identities, communities, and knowledge. The unique contribution of this research is its illustration of the local basis of this resistance, and how gang membership and identity may conflict with schools' objectives. Especially in regards to the importance of gang membership and its expressions, students and teachers came into conflict. Due, at least in part, to these differences, little school work was completed by students. This resulted in a (re)production of students' failure and detachment from education. Since failure in school is often correlated with delinquency, it is plausible that students in this study were at a heightened risk to return to their delinquency involvement.

Explanations of the students' activities and failure at the community school must be placed within the general context of their everyday lives. They live in urban areas, which in their own words were marked by violence, poverty, disarray, and extreme uncertainty; many of them did not expect to live beyond their twenties. Their school resistance can be partly explained by the apparent irrelevance school success had for their futures and their belief that the school offered an inferior education (MacLeod 1987; Ogbu 1988, 1991; Willis 1977). This general context must be kept in mind, however, the fact remains that the school and its staff attempted to negate the legitimacy of youths' bonds and identities.

The community school was one correctional response to gangs; it represented special assistance to youths who had not been successful in public schools. The school rules

and teachers' messages, and students' resistance to them, should be located within the general organizational context of the school (DiMaggio, Powell 1983). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) suggest that although organizations may diversify (e.g., the community school), their functions often mirror the general organizational context. Thus, the community school's views of students and their communities can be found in the department of corrections' orientational philosophy, a philosophy that is anti-gang membership. Students expressed an extreme dislike for the "law" and "police" during interviews. As the community school represented one more control institution in their lives, it is plausible that part of their resistance was due to this factor.

The work of Cohen (1955) and Miller (1958) provides another possible explanation for the school's internal dynamics. Teachers blamed the students' communities for their failure, and thus seemed to view those communities as fundamentally inferior to and "different" from conventional society; many students also expressed a desire to remain in their particular communities, rather than join mainstream society (Miller 1958). Although we find some support for Miller's perspective, he does not consider how lower and middle-class cultures and values may come into conflict with one another in particular settings. Teachers attempted to convey to youths conventional middle-class values and beliefs, and the youths rejected this attempt (Cohen 1955). However, I have suggested that students resisted school not because they desired middle-class status (e.g., Cohen 1955), but because the school did not value their life experiences and local identities. These students *already had gang identities*, and did not form or join gangs because of school failure. This research, then, both supports & expands upon Cohen's and Miller's frameworks. Sociological studies of school resistance, which place a primary focus on social interactions, provide the framework for this expansion. These studies indicate how youths and teachers, armed with different cultural values and beliefs, may come into conflict and resist one another in the school setting. As Pfohl (1994) reminds us, "[d]eviants never exist except in relation to those who attempt to control them".

The findings of this study indicate an appropriate future direction for delinquency and education research. Perhaps most importantly, this study points to the potential of

field methods in this research area. Such methods open up the black box of schooling and can best elaborate the delinquency and education relationship. Researchers should examine whether official rules and social processes of schools reinforce and (re)produce delinquents' detachment from education, especially in relation to gang membership.

The irony is that teachers at the "community" school attempted to create an environment that silenced and repressed students' discussions about and symbolic expressions of their local lives. The ethnographic and interview data indicate how important local/gang identity is to some youths, and how they may resist institutions' attempts to negate this identity. These findings point to some important policy recommendations. It may be necessary for teachers working with special student populations to reflect upon and reconsider traditional teaching methods. School personnel working with such populations should explore ways to make school rules and teachers directives more accepting of and relevant to students' social and cultural identities. Connecting formal work assignments to the students' everyday lives outside of the classroom may also be useful.

Of course, one cannot expect school to be a panacea for the youths' lives; as the principal stated: "the kids needs are expansive, diverse, school can only offer [what it can] and try to do it well." For the most part, the teachers did try to "do it well", and expressed a genuine concern for the well-being of the students. However, this research reveals that due to identity conflicts, the reality of youths' everyday lives, and the resistance that this created, neither teachers nor students were able to "do school" well.

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OAKLAND CHINATOWN'S FIRST YOUTH GANG: THE SUEY SING BOYS

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ABSTRACT

Research concerned with Chinese gangs in the United States focuses on two sites, San Francisco and New York. This study examines Oakland Chinatown and the development of its first Chinese immigrant youth gang, the Suey Sing boys, during the five years from 1968-1973. I rely heavily on data from primary sources such as interviews with gang members and field observations. Key topics for investigation are the formation of the Suey Sing boys, the relationship of the youth gangs to the Chinatown social structure, and the relationship between gangs in Oakland and San Francisco.

INTRODUCTION

The gang problem is an issue of serious concern to American society. Many people are fearful of, and many are adversely affected by, gangs and their activities. The American public demands tougher police tactics, punishment, and prisons in response. Despite vigorous efforts, crime and gangs continue to be major social problems in the United States. Although most Americans can trace their ancestry to Europe, the literature on youth gangs focuses primarily on African American and Hispanic gangs.

The 1960s witnessed the emergence of contemporary Chinese gangs in the United States. The first nationally known Chinese gang, the Hwa Chings, which means "young Chinese," originated in San Francisco Chinatown in 1964. Eventually, branches of this group and other similar types of gangs spread throughout America's Chinatowns. Since the 1970s, due to escalating violence and expanded criminal activities, Chinese gangs have been increasingly viewed as a major social problem in the Chinese American community and as a menace to society-at-large. In government reports and the popular media, these gangs are blamed for the increasing violence in Chinatowns, shiploads of undocumented Chinese immigrants, and the massive smuggling of illegal drugs to the United States. Although these sources frequently exaggerate the criminality of the Chinese gang situation, it is accurate to state that Chinese gangs are involved in a variety of criminal activities, such as extortion, burglary, robbery, assault, and murder, that bring hardship and misery, especially to the Chinese community.

Study of Chinese gangs broadens our knowledge of early gang formation and gang structure, and illustrates how gangs can interface with Chinatown organizations within the context of contemporary social problems. Since the inception of gang studies by researchers Frederick Thrasher (1927) and William Whyte

(1943), traditional gang research has paid little or no attention to the Chinese community. Reasons include lack of interest by traditional youth gang researchers, often linked to images of Chinese and other Asian Americans as the "model minority," the difficulty of gaining access to Chinese gang members, especially for non-Chinese researchers, and the political and social isolation of the Asian American community (Joe 1994).

This paper explores the premise that Chinatown gangs are not isolated entities, but are a part of, and connected to, the Chinese community; gangs impact community life and the community impacts gangs. The topics discussed are 1) the historical development of the first contemporary youth gang in the Oakland, California Chinatown community, 2) the "gang perspective" on why they formed a gang, 3) the relationship of the Oakland gang to Chinatown community organizations, and 4) the relationship between Chinese gangs in different sites, San Francisco and Oakland.

METHODOLOGY

I began inquiring about Chinese gangs, in 1968, to understand gang members' experiences and why such gangs form. Oakland, California (1960, population 367,548) was an ideal city in which to document the development of a gang. Chinatown was located in the heart of the city, adjacent to the downtown shopping area and the main police headquarters, and near city hall. There were no deviant Chinese groups operating in the area. Unlike San Francisco Chinatown, with a myriad of social organizations, Oakland Chinatown had only a few, such as the Wong Family Association, the Chinese American Citizen Alliance, and the Suey Sing Tong.

First as a participant observer, my field observations were the foundation to this study. In youth and adult gang studies that utilize observation as the primary methodology (Padilla 1993; Patrick 1973; Whyte 1943), the

researchers target a particular community or group to study. In my case, the gang members adopted me as friend and confidant. My father was a well respected tong member who had an excellent rapport with gang members. I was also treated with respect and loyalty by the Suey Sing boys. Though not a gang member, I was looked upon as an educated friend who worked for the members' welfare and needs. I had access to the social benefits of gang membership such as intra-group friendship, but never the responsibilities, such as participating in violent confrontations with other groups. I was marginally a part of the group, who could communicate with its members. I obtained meaningful and valid information as a semi-participant observer.

Second, I conducted numerous informal interviews with San Francisco and Oakland adult Suey Sing members and the Oakland Suey Sing boys, in a four and a half year period (summer of 1968 to early 1973). Conversations were held at restaurants, bowling alleys, and the Oakland Suey Sing clubhouse. I recorded the gist of these conversations and informal interviews but at that time I was not involved in any active gang research. Since 1993, I have conducted eight interviews with former Oakland Suey Sing boys and their associates. According to the authors count and key informants, there were "officially" 28 Suey Sing boys. Two were considered to be part of the Oakland Suey Sing boys and simultaneously were part of the San Francisco Suey Sing group. One resided and went to school in Oakland but spent a great deal of time in San Francisco and was considered to be an influential gang member. Interviews, which were about 1.5 hours long, were tape recorded (with permission) and transcribed in summary form. Data collection spanned three years (1993-1996). Quality ranged from little useful information to full descriptions of events and community social life.

Third, I examined archival sources in newspapers and governmental reports. From 1970 to 1988, there were articles about Chinese gangs in San Francisco, New York, and Los Angeles. A study of *New York Times* articles on Chinese Americans over an 80-year period showed an abundance of crime coverage (Auman, Mark 1997). The study notes that half of the coverage analyzed was crime-related, followed by political events (25%), routine other news, and culture (Auman, Mark 1997). There were only a few articles on

Chinese gangs and crime in Oakland Chinatown. Government criminal intelligence reports or law enforcement conference papers were of little use because of their unreliability and lack of emphasis on Oakland. Government reports do show growing concern of state and federal law enforcement agencies regarding Chinese gangs and heroin smuggling.

Fourth, a few researchers have published books or articles concerning Chinese gangs in San Francisco and New York (Chin 1990; Chin, Fagan, Kelly 1992; Joe 1994; Kwong 1987; Lyman 1970; Sung 1977; Takagi, Platt 1978). No one has studied Chinese gangs in Oakland. Only Gong and Grant (1930) and Chin (1990) examine the tongs to any significant extent.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a multitude of youth gang studies in the United States, most concerned with ethnic minority communities. However, there has been a dearth of scholarly research and publications concerning the Chinese gangs in the United States. What little there is falls into two major categories: 1) journalistic accounts, some of which are based upon law enforcement gang task force reports (Bresler 1981; Posner 1988), and 2) descriptive/theoretical studies (Chin 1990; Chin, Fagan 1994; Chin, Fagan, Kelly 1992; Joe 1993, 1994; Lyman 1970; Sung 1977; Takagi, Platt 1978).

Some journalistic accounts glamorize Chinese gangs and heighten the fear of these gangs flooding the U.S. shores with tons of drugs. Two of these accounts, by Bresler (1981) and Posner (1988), state that adult and young Chinese criminals are trafficking in heroin. Bresler believes that there is an international Chinese crime conspiracy that is headquartered in Asia. Posner maintains that the Chinese Triads are the most powerful form of organized crime in the world and consequently pose the most serious threat to law enforcement. Both charge that the Triads in Asia, the tongs in Chinatowns, and the Chinese youth gangs are in close contact and structurally related, posing a serious threat.

Scholarly works on Chinese gangs concern two cities. Lyman's (1970) study focused on San Francisco Chinatown gangs, describing they were due to changing demographics and a tradition of social banditry from China. He examined the development of American born and foreign born San Francisco Chinatown gangs, such as the Hwa Chings and the Red

Guards, from the 1950s through the early 1970s.

Sung (1977) examines New York Chinatown gangs using theories of social disorganization, social structure, crime as conformity to explain the nature, and formation of these youth gangs.

Chin's 1990 book, *Chinese Subculture and Criminality*, focuses on New York Chinatown gangs, examining Chinatowns, Chinese secret societies, the development of Chinese gangs nationally, Chinese gang patterns and characteristics, and social sources of Chinese gang delinquency. He studies the relation of adult Chinatown organizations and Chinese criminality, and why and how Chinese gangs formed, claiming that New York Chinatown Chinese gangs and the tongs have a symbiotic relationship that deeply intertwines both bodies.

Karen Joe (1994b) examined the relationships between Asian American gangs and two variables, organized crime and drug distribution (*The New Criminal Conspiracy? Asian Gangs and Organized Crime in San Francisco*). In regard to San Francisco Chinatown gangs, her findings indicate that gang members know little of and have little or no contact with the tongs in Chinatown. Therefore, Joe found no evidence to indicate that the tongs in San Francisco are actually organized crime groups that have incorporated gang members into illegal enterprises. In addition, her findings support the thesis that the gangs as an organized group are not involved in heroin trafficking. Some gang members, as individuals, were involved with drugs, but not the entire gang.

Joe (1994a) *Myths and Realities of Asian Gangs on the West Coast*, poses two related questions: are Chinese gangs well-organized with ties to the San Francisco tongs and the Triads in Asia? and Are Asian gangs in Northern California involved in heroin trafficking? Joe refutes the theory, supported by journalistic accounts, that Asian street gangs are part of a larger conspiracy of an "Asian Mafia" and organized crime. She also takes issue with U.S. law enforcement beliefs and policies, in particular, the link between Chinese youth gangs and the Chinese Triads in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

OAKLAND CHINATOWN

Oakland Chinatown has been located in five different sites, each centered around the

waterfront and the Oakland downtown/commercial area. By 1880, the location of the present Chinatown was established just a few blocks from where City Hall is today. As in most other cities, Chinatown was restricted to old, undesirable, commercial districts because of racial segregation in both housing and commercial enterprises. Thus, Chinatown was originally established in the midst of warehouses, factories, rooming houses, and junkyards. By 1960, Oakland Chinatown was in a sharp decline due to dispersal of Chinese to other areas in the East Bay and the reduction of residential housing, attributed to construction of the Nimitz Freeway, Laney Community College, the Oakland Museum, and the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) (Chow 1976).

An additional and forgotten factor in Chinatown's deterioration was the decline of gambling. This was due to the passage of the 1951 Federal Stamp Act (26 U.S.C. 4401 and 4402), which levied a flat ten percent tax on wagering income and an additional fifty-dollar tax on gambling operators. Violators could receive a \$10,000 fine and five years in prison. Thus, gambling in Oakland Chinatown was sharply curtailed, which severely impacted businesses that thrived from the gambling industry (Mark 1989). There were fewer jobs, fewer residents, and a significant decrease in Chinatown business activity.

By the mid-1960s, Oakland Chinatown stabilized and its residential population grew because of the increase in immigrants as a result of the 1965 Immigration Nationalization Act. Families began to reappear, and the local elementary school (Lincoln School), the neighborhood junior high school (West Lake), and the two high schools (Oakland Technical High and Oakland High) enrolled progressively larger numbers of foreign born Chinese students. In 1970, Oakland's Chinese population numbered 11,335 and the Chinatown core area supported a population of 1,607 Chinese (Tracts 4030 and 4033) which represented 570 families (Honna-True 1976). By 1970, the Chinatown community was comprised mostly of immigrants, and 22 percent of Chinatown residents were classified with incomes below the poverty level as compared to 13 percent of the rest of the city. The median income in Chinatown was \$6,690 compared to \$9,626 for the rest of the city.

"HWA CHINGS" IN SAN FRANCISCO CHINATOWN

San Francisco Chinatown supported 40,000 people in an area of 42 blocks (Takagi, Platt 1978). American-born Chinese street corner groups such as the "Chinos" ("Chinese" in Spanish) became visible in the late 1950s. They raced hot rods and frequented Chinatown bars. One group known as the "Bugs" became involved in burglaries and were identified by their black clothing and raised heel boots. In 1965 over a period of six months, the Bugs committed 48 burglaries worth \$7500 cash and \$3000 in merchandise (Lyman 1970), but the San Francisco Police Department made key arrests and broke up the Bugs gang.

In 1964-65, the Hwa Chings (Young Chinese) were formed by mainly teen-aged immigrant youths, the majority from Hong Kong. The Chinese population in the United States, and in Chinatowns, in particular were increasing because of the changes in United States immigration laws and policies that permitted an increase in Chinese immigration to the United States. As more Chinese immigrated to San Francisco, the Hwa Chings became larger, more visible, and more powerful. They committed crimes such as burglary and assault. The Hwa Chings had as estimated 300 members in a loosely organized group. In an interview with a reporter, "Tom Tom" declared that the Hwa Chings only wanted jobs, girls, and to be left alone (Lyman 1970). Tom Tom was the gang's main leader, but there were others high in the leadership structure who had many followers.

By 1967, Hwa Ching crimes became more violent, and to the Chinatown establishment, more serious, when they extorted Chinatown businesses for protection money. In the winter of 1968, the Hwa Chings, through their spokesman, George Woo, threatened to burn down Chinatown if their demands for better jobs and educational opportunities were refused. Although the Hwa Chings did not and probably could not follow through on their threats, the Chinatown establishment realized that some action had to be taken (Lyman 1970).

In 1969, the Hwa Chings gained the attention of the national media. In the December 1969 issue of *Esquire* magazine, Tom Tom and the Hwa Chings were part of an article, "The New Yellow Peril," that centered upon the conflicts and violence that were

plaguing Chinatown. Tom Tom was quoted saying:

TT: ...We never marched as a gang.... You have to kill us to stop us. You split my head open—I get up, keep fighting. We all been to the hospital. I been three times.

I: What did you use as weapons?

TT: Axes and knives.

I: Axes?

TT: Yeah. They don't slice but they hurt plenty. (Wolfe 1969)

In 1967/68, San Francisco Chinatown leaders devised a plan to split the Hwa Ching into various factions in order to control Chinatown gang violence and extortion. The Chinatown establishment leaders turned one part of the community's social structure into the tongs. Four of Chinatown's five major tongs (Hop Sing Tong, Hip Sing Tong, Big Kong Tong, Yin On Tong, and Suey Sing Tong) invited gang members to join them and each identified a Hwa Ching leader and recruited him and his followers into the tong. The tongs offered the youth gang members a clubhouse to hang out in, a "slush fund" for bribes and employment opportunities in Chinatown gambling dens which they controlled.

The Hop Sing Tong was initially the most active tong in the recruitment of gang members. Soon their young gang members were demanding protection money from Chinatown gambling dens. However, most of the dens were under the protection of Suey Sing. As a result, the Suey Sing Tong actively recruited Tom Tom and his Hwa Ching followers in order to counteract Hop Sing. The gang situation in Chinatown dramatically changed from one large gang to five smaller ones, the remnants of the Hwa Chings and the four tong youth groups, each vying for power and control of the Chinatown community. Contrary to the intentions of the Chinatown elders, gang violence increased, and the tongs could not control the youth groups. The top gang had fear and respect of the community. By the end of 1968, the Tom Tom gang, the youth group affiliated with the San Francisco Suey Sing Tong, emerged as the strongest gang.

SUEY SING TONG

The word *tong* means "hall," or, translated, "lodge." The tongs descended from Triad or "secret societies" that originated in China. Formed after the Manchu overthrow

the Ming Dynasty in 1644, the tongs sought to overthrow the Manchus and to restore to power the Mings. The concept of these secret societies was transferred to the United States and the first tong, the Kwong Duck Tong, was founded in San Francisco in 1852. The second was the Hip Sing Tong, the only tong to have branches throughout the United States. Soon after the Hip Sing Tong was founded, Yee Low Dai established the Suey Sing Tong (Hall of Auspicious Victory) (Gong, Grant 1930).

The initial purpose of the tongs was to counteract the larger and wealthier family (surname) associations (Gong, Grant 1930). The early history of the tongs was marked by conflicts with other Chinese societies, especially the family associations. The tongs were most successful in their wars with the clans and by the 1890s gained a great deal of power and wealth. Simultaneously, the tongs gradually lost sight of their original function, which was to seek justice for the weaker groups. Inside Chinatown the secret societies soon took control of gambling and prostitution (Gong, Grant 1930).

Since World War II, the tongs have continued their involvement in the gambling industry (Mark 1989). A tong would either directly operate a gambling den or have it under its protection (Chin 1990). If a gambling den was on a tong's protection list, the den would make weekly contributions to the tong and possibly hire some of its members (Mark 1989).

The Suey Sing Tong national headquarters is located in San Francisco Chinatown. There are nine Suey Sing branches in the western U.S.: Oakland, Stockton, Watsonville, Salinas, Marysville, Monterey, Portland, and Seattle. The ten Suey Sing Tongs elect officers every year. For example, in 1972, eleven officers were elected for the San Francisco headquarters. The top seven positions were occupied by Chinatown business owners.

Chinese New Year is a significant event for the different Suey Sing Tongs. Although all of the branches celebrate this annual event, each year, one Suey Sing Tong hosts the other cities for a large celebration with performances by a Chinese orchestra and singers, banquet dinners and gambling.

By the 1970s, the Suey Sing Tong served four basic functions: 1) It celebrated special occasions such as New Year. 2) It provided assistance such as interpreter services,

employment referrals, and burial arrangements; 3) the tong clubhouse provided opportunities for members; 4) the tong protected the business interests of its leaders by providing opportunities for additional business, such as business partnerships.

WHY FORM A GANG?

Only three studies (Chin 1990; Lyman 1970; Takagi, Platt 1978) concerned with Chinatown youth gangs examine why the gangs formed. Lyman (1970) asserts that the gangs were a product of conflict and rebellion, and examines why existing groups such as the Hwa Ching develop in a specific direction.

Takagi and Platt (1978) attribute gang formation and gang violence to the social structure, asserting that the Chinatown structure, specifically the tongs, were the reasons for the violence in Chinatown.

Ko-lin Chin (1990) believed that causative and intervening social factors gave rise to Chinese gang delinquency, including school problems, family problems, and the lack of employment opportunities. These factors alienate immigrants from the Chinatown community and the broader society. Chin asserts that these causative factors, coupled with intervening factors, such as affiliation with and internalization of tong norms and values, contribute to a youth group's development into a Chinatown street gang.

In this section, I look at an earlier stage in Chinatown gang formation than the three other researchers. What I believe is important to explore is just why these youth join or form a group in the first place.

During my five years of association with the Suey Sing boys, I had the opportunity to casually talk to many of the San Francisco and Oakland members. Several, including Tom Tom, were original Hwa Ching members. All of the gang members indicated that after their arrival in the United States, they were verbally harassed and physically abused by many different groups at school and in their neighborhoods. The gang members stated that the people that harassed them the most were the American-born Chinese (ABCs). Regarding this topic, Tom Tom stated in an interview:

We use to fight the American-born Chinese all the time. They call us 'Chinabugs.' We say 'Who you think you are?' They say, 'We American-born.' That's a joke. They Chinese same as us. (Wolfe 1969).

Another gang leader stated:

I wanted to go to school. And I tried. But it didn't work. You know what happens; the other Chinese kids say they are not Chinese but Americans. They spit on me. (Allard 1975)

As a result, many Chinese immigrant youths were forced to band together with other Chinese immigrants in order to protect themselves (Thompson 1976).

Why would the ABCs antagonize the Chinese immigrant children, commonly referred to as "FOBs" (Fresh Off the Boat)? Many local-born Chinese respond to this question by stating that the foreign-born Chinese represented everything that they "wanted to get away from" such as speaking Chinese, dressing differently, eating Chinese food, and simply not being "American." Ignatius Chinn, who for 21 years was the primary police officer working in Oakland Chinatown, expresses this sentiment. Chinn grew up in a middle-class family, his father was an Oakland accountant, his mother a secretary. Asked about his youth, Chinn speaks with painful candor.

When I was young, I was trying to be white. Most of my friends at Westlake Junior High and Oakland High School were white. When I saw Asian immigrants I thought they were geeks. I felt contempt for them because they reminded me of who I didn't want to be...

With difficulty, Chinn tells of feeling ashamed when friends visited his house and met his uncle from Canton, who spoke no English.

I felt uncomfortable because they reminded me of what I was trying so hard not to be. I felt between races, between cultures. I didn't have much background about anything Asian. (Rosenthal 1991)

A method for the ABCs to create a barrier between themselves and the FOBs was to make fun of, put down, and verbally and physically harass their foreign born cousins. In this way the foreign-born would be established as a different and distinct group from the American-born Chinese.

Why did Chinese born in the U.S. feel ashamed of their ethnic background; or, in other words, suffer an ethnic identity conflict? The Chinese were a small ethnic minority numbering only 237,292 in 1960, and 431,583

in 1970. Shortly after the first arrival of Chinese workers to the United States in 1850, racial discrimination and hatred was directed towards the newcomers, culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882, 1888, 1892, and 1902 (Lai, Choy 1971). For over a hundred years, to be Chinese in the United States meant to be slandered, abused, and treated as a third class citizen with few of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to other Americans. To many young Chinese Americans, to be Chinese was not desirable. What was desirable was to be like mainstream white America; speaking standard English, eating sandwiches, cookies, and milk for lunch, and wearing the latest American teen fashions. As a result, anything associating them with China and being Chinese was rejected.

THE OAKLAND SUEY SING TONG YOUTH GROUP

The Oakland Suey Sing Tong is located on 8th Street, right in the heart of Chinatown. Oakland Chinatown supports several Chinese traditional associations and community service organizations; but Suey Sing is the only tong. In 1966/1967, teenage immigrants began to develop a community reputation as a group of young toughs who frequently got in trouble. One incident occurred in late 1966 when two Oakland youths, "Barry" and "Puk" were beaten up in San Francisco Chinatown by some Hwa Ching members including "Ben Gong" and a youth nicknamed "Big Head." As a result, Tom Tom and his San Francisco followers assisted and befriended the two from Oakland. "Ben Gong" was later murdered in 1970, in an unrelated crime. By 1967/8 approximately 28 young men who hung out at the corner of 8th and Webster started to spend time in the Suey Sing Tong clubhouse. Their ages ranged from 15 to 18 years old and their families had immigrated from Hong Kong. They were fluent in Cantonese and one was completely fluent in English. They wore casual clothes. Only one eventually completed high school. All but four lived at home with their families.

A merger between youth gangs and the old established Oakland tong was brokered by two tong members. They had established rapport with gang members and were willing to take on this risky endeavor. "Uncle Choy" was the Suey Sing Tong member who recruited and advised the San Francisco youth group. At that time, "Uncle Yee," my father, was acting

in San Francisco, and was also the Oakland Suey Sing President. According to D.F., "Uncle Yee" was the main Oakland Suey Sing contact and worked with "Uncle Choy" to recruit the Oakland Suey Sing group.

The motives for the Oakland Suey Sing boys were different. They simply wanted a place to hang out. They also desired affiliation with the San Francisco Suey Sing group for their protection from other youths. At the same time, Tom Tom and his San Francisco Suey Sing Tong followers believed that the Oakland group could assist them in turf battles in San Francisco Chinatown. By 1968, the group was called the "Oakland Suey Sing boys" or "Sing Sing boys" and the San Francisco group was referred to as the "Tom Tom Gang" (Chin 1990). The Oakland group was relatively small, consisting of eight paid official Suey Sing members and about 20 associates. Unlike the Hwa Chings and, later, Tom Tom's group, the Oakland Suey Sing boys did not have a clearly defined leader. From my observations, between 1968 to 1972, they often deferred to Tom Tom, but by no means was he their acknowledged leader.

One day in August 1968, a Suey Sing member was beaten up by two Hop Sing Tong members. Later that night the former saw "Big Nose" of the Hop Sings driving his car on Grant Avenue in San Francisco, and ran up and shot "Big Nose" in the head. Although "Big Nose" survived and knew who shot him, the assailant was never arrested. The assailant was able to leave San Francisco and flee across the Bay where he stayed for one night at the home of one of the Oakland Suey Sing youths, and then stayed the next three weeks at the Oakland home of a tong elder. After a cooling off period, the Suey Sing member joined the Merchant Marine and left the gang life.

By 1969, the Oakland group faced two major challenges. One was conflict with Chicanos, especially at Oakland Technical High School. When Chinese students were beaten up by Chicano students, older Suey Sing members came to the aid of the high school members and used hatchets as weapons to defend the Chinese students. During the same time period an Oakland-based American born group of Chinese and Japanese, "The Rickshaw Runners," posed the second challenge. The Runners had numerous altercation with the Suey Sing boys in Oakland Chinatown and at the local bowling alley. In this case, the San Francisco Suey Sing members assisted their

Oakland counterparts in fighting the "Rickshaw Runners" in a number of skirmishes. Eventually, the "Rickshaw Runners" were forced to back down and maintain their distance from Chinese immigrants in general, and the Suey Sing boys in particular.

In August 1969, the East Bay Chinese Youth Council (EBCYC) was established in Oakland Chinatown. It was organized by American-born Chinese college students who wanted to bring a progressive voice to the East Bay Chinese community. They lobbied to increase social services for Chinese youth in the East Bay cities of Oakland, Alameda, Emeryville, and Berkeley. Unlike other Chinatown organizations, the founders were a diverse group of young people. Some of the founding members and original EBCYC Board of Directors included three Suey Sing boys from Oakland. Tom Tom from San Francisco was a founding member. I was the organization's founder and first President.

Unfortunately, the goals of the gang members involved in EBCYC was not to bring about community empowerment and social change, but to make "easy money" through government-funded programs the way Tom Tom did in San Francisco. In San Francisco Tom Tom was employed as a gang outreach worker and often worked only 15 minutes per day. His job was to control gang activities and violence. However, this position only further enhanced Tom Tom's ability to recruit new gang members because it demonstrated to potential members that he had the connections and the intelligence to manipulate "the system." In the case of the East Bay Chinese Youth Council, it never became a source of "easy money." The Youth Council never obtained the gang prevention funding that other organizations in San Francisco Chinatown were able to obtain, and the EBCYC staff was interested only in working for the larger community.

The relationship between EBCYC and the gang members had a profound effect upon the latter. Between 1970-1972, new members (ages 14-17) attached themselves to the Oakland Suey Sing youth group and were also participants in EBCYC's programs such as the War on Poverty's Neighborhood Youth Corps Program. Many of the older gang members (ages 18-22) had changed and had adopted the principles of the college students. Those older gang members were now concerned with improving Chinatown community life.

By the end of 1972, Tom Tom's gangs power base eroded because of a change in policy by the San Francisco tongs and increasing competition and conflict with other gangs in Chinatown. First, by the summer of 1972, the San Francisco experiment of incorporating the former Hwa Chings into the tongs was deemed a failure. The tong youth groups were viewed as too big a liability. In San Francisco, both the Hoo Sing and Suey Sing tongs, who had the largest youth groups, either expelled many youth members or no longer supported the youth. In San Francisco Suey Sing, only fifteen who actually became tong members remained.

Another factor was the reemergence of the Hwa Chings. In January 1970, one of the old Hwa Ching leaders, Kenny Mack, was discharged from the U.S. army. He maneuvered his way back into power and revitalized the Hwa Chings. One night in August 1972, Tom Tom was severely beaten in a San Francisco Chinatown restaurant. He was hospitalized for six weeks. During that time, the Tom Tom gang dissolved: some joined other gangs, and others left the gang life. Still others had to flee because Tom Tom could no longer protect them, and a few, including Tom Tom himself, moved to Oakland. Thus, the transition of power was made—the Hwa Chings became the strongest gang in San Francisco Chinatown.

Tom Tom and the remnants of the San Francisco Suey Sing group attempted to reestablish themselves as a viable gang in Oakland. Tom Tom approached the Oakland Suey Sing boys and was rejected by the older group that once supported him. As mentioned earlier, EBCYC had positively influenced some of the older gang members and they did not want to follow Tom Tom.

Some of the younger Suey Sing members and their friends followed Tom Tom and initiated a hostile takeover of the EBCYC club house, programs, and staff. I participated in three months of negotiations which resulted in the takeover of the Youth Council by Tom Tom and a few of his followers. By the time the gang members took over the EBCYC, nothing was left to take over except for an empty shell of a club house. The EBCYC Board of Directors and staff had transferred everything to the newly founded organization, East Bay Asians for Community Action, which continued and expanded upon the EBCYC programs.

In 1968, the Oakland Chinese Community Council (OCCC) was established to

provide Chinese-speaking referral and social services to the Oakland Chinese community. In 1970, OCCC hired its first full-time salary Executive Director, Edward K. Chook. Little was known about Chook except that he was active in the local Kuomintang (KMT) Party. At the beginning of his tenure, EBCYC and Edward Chook had a cordial working relationship. By 1972, the relationship had cooled a great deal. According to Tom Tom, Chook had advised him and his followers to take over the Youth Council. Chook even promised Tom Tom that he would help set up youth programs such as the summer Neighborhood Youth Corps program. In 1972/1973, Tom Tom's efforts to remodel EBCYC for his personal benefit had failed and the organization had a quiet end. Tom Tom lost his followers and was shortly afterward deported to Hong Kong because of a felony conviction.

Unlike their San Francisco counterparts, the original Oakland Suey Sing youth group did not extort Oakland Chinatown business and community members. However, after the group no longer existed as a Suey Sing sponsored group, some of Tom Tom's Oakland followers named themselves "Suey Sing boys" and began to extort members of the Oakland Chinese community. In November 1972, a local newspaper reported the arrest and conviction of four Chinese juveniles and two adults who were part of an extortion ring. To their victims they identified themselves "Suey Sing boys."

The Suey Sing boys took a variety of paths. Four continued their deviant life styles and have become involved with drugs and were incarcerated for serious crimes such as murder. Twenty are married with children, and they have indicated that they do not want to join any gang. Six own and operate businesses. One is a well known chef and restaurant owner in another city. Approximately 10 are gainfully employed in occupations such as hair stylist and automobile mechanic, and seventeen have moved out of Oakland but live in the greater San Francisco Bay Area, and are successful in their professional and personal lives.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings from this study suggest that early Chinese gangs on the West Coast were not originally a product of mere greed or irrational deviant behavior. Instead, they were initially a group of youths who banded together

for protection and survival. Even today, thirty years later, young immigrants still join Chinese gangs, Samoan gangs, Cambodian gangs, and Filipino gangs for mutual protection (Alegado 1994; Revilla 1996). The implications of this study for public policy makers is that they should look beyond the gangs as the sole problem, and to look inwards towards the broader Asian American community. One obvious question to be addressed is how we can reduce the rift between local-born Asians and our immigrant/refugee cousins.

Oakland Chinatown's Suey Sing boys did not come into existence as a gang because of their association with San Francisco Chinatown gang members nor due to the Oakland Suey Sing Tong. Before their recruitment into Oakland Suey Sing, they already functioned as a gang. However, they were acknowledged as a gang only after they became affiliated with Suey Sing Tong and the nature of their activities were in fact influenced by the San Francisco Tom Tom gang. In other urban centers, the pattern of gang members in one city creating or influencing the development of a new gang in another city has been a major factor in the spread of Chinatown gangs in the United States. This phenomena requires additional study not only for Chinese gangs but other Asian gangs in the United States.

The Asian gang literature does make linkages (Chin 1990) and non-linkages (Joe 1994) with the tongs and Triads. What I discuss in this study that requires further research is the links to other community organizations such as those of the Suey Sing boys to the East Bay Chinese Youth Council. For the Suey Sing boys, the gang's development and also its demise were influenced by a variety of components of the Chinese community. Future gang studies need to address these important issues of gang/social structure relations. Another topic for examination is: can self help community-based organizations positively impact the nature of a gang, gang membership, and violence perpetuated by gang members? If so, should there be more community programs for our youth? And what should these programs look like? These questions have significant public policy implications regarding the control of gangs and related criminal activities.

In 1971, Oakland Chinatown had only one gang, the Suey Sing boys. This group operated as a gang for approximately five years. The situation in Oakland Chinatown is

different today. There are now 16 predominantly ethnic Chinese gangs in Oakland and many are based in Chinatown. They have gang names such as the Red Fire, Wo Hop To, Vietnamese Troublemakers, Asian Car Thieves, and Chinatown Rulers (Rosenthal 1991). What can we do?

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BLACK LEADERSHIP IN GANG MOVEMENTS: TOWARD NEW DIRECTIONS**Jacob U. Gordon, The University of Kansas****INTRODUCTION**

Researchers, professionals, and public officials have been struggling to explain the recent increase in black youth violence in the United States. The current plight of African-American males is believed to be associated with street gang activities. There is a widespread belief that black people, and particularly young black inner city males, are far more prone to violence than white people. The current status of black men and boys reveals alarming data which has often been viewed as gang-related:

Almost one in three (33%) Black males between the ages of 20 and 29 is under the control of the criminal justice system - in prison, jail, on probation, or on parole. This compared with one in sixteen White males and one in ten Hispanic males. (Maurer 1990)

The number of African-American males in prison and jail exceeds the number of African-American males enrolled in higher education. (Maurer 1990)

Black men in the United States are imprisoned at a rate four times that of Black men in South Africa: 3,109 per 100,000 compared to 729 per 100,000. (Morton, Snell 1982)

Forty-four percent of all prisoners in the United States are Black; Black men make up 40 percent of the condemned on death row. (Sentencing Project 1990)

Black males are more likely to be born to unwed teenage mothers who themselves have limited education and even more limited life choices. (Gibbs 1988)

Nearly half (42.7%) of Black youth under 18 live in families below the poverty line. (Curtis 1996)

More than 20 percent of the Black male adolescents in the 12-17 age groups were unable to read at the 4th grade level. (Brown 1979)

Unemployment among Black youth was 34 percent — twice the rate of 17.4 percent among all teenagers. (Gibbs 1988)

By most demographic indices — mortality, health, crime, homicide, life expectancy, income, education, unemployment, and marital status—African-American men have the smallest chance to achieve the American dream. In fact, of the four comparison groups (Black males, Black females, White males, White females), social indicators show that Black males experience the highest rates of health and social problems, including heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, homicide, suicide, unemployment, delinquency and crime, school dropout, imprisonment, and unwed teenage parenthood (Gordon, Mayors 1994). As Gibbs (1988) put it, Black males have been miseducated by the educational system, mishandled by the criminal justice system, mislabeled by the mental health system, and misread by the social welfare system. In fact, she argues that Black males have become rejects of our affluent society and misfits in their own communities.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The literature in Black Leadership in America does not consider the Black street gang hierarchical structure and its leadership as an aspect of Black Leadership. Yet many observers and researchers seem to agree, at least in part, that young Blacks, especially the males, are attracted to gangs because of the potential to become leaders within the ranks of the group. Liberal observers and researchers often argue that Black youth find street gangs attractive because the system and its traditional/conventional leadership have failed them. On the other hand, many gang members are returning to conventional leadership to share in the American traditional values.

Some research has portrayed gang members as relatively invariant. Walter Miller (1976) viewed gang delinquents as representative of a lower-class cultural milieu; his six "focus concerns" are persistent and distinct features of the entire American "lower class." Similarly, Jankowski (1991) said that male gang members were one-dimensional "tough nuts," defiant individuals with a rational "social Darwinist worldview" who displayed defiant individualism "more generally" than other people in low-income communities.

Other research, however, has suggested that gang members vary, particularly on their orientation toward conventionality. Whyte (1943) classified his Cornerville street corner men as either "college boys" or "corner boys," depending on their aspirations. Cloward and Ohlin (1960), applying Merton's (1957) earlier typology, categorized lower-class youths in four cells of a matrix, depending on their aspirations and "criteria for success." Many of their delinquents repudiated the legitimacy of conventional society and resorted to innovative solutions to attain success goals. Cloward and Ohlin took issue with Cohen (1958) and Matza (1964), whose delinquents were internally conflicted but, as a group, imputed legitimacy to the norms of the larger society.

Some more recent researchers also have found variations in conventionality within gangs. Klein (1971), echoing Thrasher (1927), differentiated between "core" and "fringe" members, a distinction that policy makers have adopted seeing gang members as "corporates," "scavengers," "emulators," "auxiliaries," or "adjuncts," mainly on the basis of their distance from gang membership. Fagan (1990), like Matza and Cohen, found that "conventional values may coexist with deviant behaviors for gang delinquents and other inner city youth." Macleod (1987) observed surprising variation among ethnic groups. The white "hangers" believed "stagnation at the bottom of the occupational structure to be almost inevitable" and were rebellious delinquents, whereas the African-American "brothers" reacted to similar conditions by aspiring to middle-class status. These findings suggest that not only are there variations within the gang but that gang members were engaged in leadership acts. They developed corporate and community leadership skills. The use of these leadership skills poses a different question.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The present investigation attempts to address four related questions: Are youth gangs responsible for the plight of Black males? What is the role of Black leadership in the gang movement in Metropolitan Kansas City? What are the changing values of gangs? And finally, what are the perceptions of Black professionals about Black street gangs in the Kansas City area? It is hypothesized by the researcher that answers based on empirical data will increase our current limited knowledge of street gangs in general and Kansas City in particular.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As to the first question, Evan Starks (1993) analysis of Black violence does not support the widespread belief that the youth gangs are responsible for Black violence and the plight of Black males. Instead, the epidemic of teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and the prevalence of households headed by women are more closely linked to Black violence. Pundits speculate about these problems; conservatives frequently describe them as being moral deficits; liberals focus on racial discrimination and poverty. Both conservatives and liberals are beginning to reach a consensus that, as former President Bush described in his January 28, 1992, State of the Union Address: "The major cause of the problems of the cities is the dissolution of the family."

According to Feagin (1986), "The end of slavery as a legal condition did not end the subordination of the Black Americans." Although almost 130 years have passed since the 13th Amendment to the Constitution abolished slavery, discriminatory practices and oppressive conditions have continued to perpetuate a vicious circle from which the majority of African-Americans are unable to escape extreme poverty, inadequate education, inadequate health care, substandard housing, exclusion from middle income or higher job opportunities, and the denigration of pride in self and the African-American culture. Many African-Americans have yet to obtain basic human and civil rights that were due to them but denied in the U.S. Supreme Court Dred Scott decision of 1857. These elements have contributed to the negative environmental conditions that characterize the plight of many African-Americans.

Scholars have argued that the devaluation of African-Americans, especially their culture, has resulted in psychological scarring interpersonal violence, and ethnic group victimization. In reporting on black-on-black homicide, Poussaint remarked,

Institutional racist practices place a positive value on whiteness and a negative one on Blackness.... Many of the problems in the Black community are related to institutional racism, which fosters a chronic lack of Black self-respect, predisposing many poor Blacks to behave self-destructively and with uncontrollable rage. (1983)

Despair, low self-esteem, and rage often presage intrapersonal and interpersonal abuse and, sometimes, homicide and suicide. An adolescent who lives in poverty and sees his father unemployed and his family suffer, and who is surrounded by destitution, disparagement, murder, and crime, may strike out against others and himself. Survival is problematic and optimistic life changes are at best long shots.

A devalued status, racial stereotypes, and high crime rates have led to the societal perception of violence as "normal" in African-American communities and families (Hawkins 1987). Yet this image belies the historical facts of close-knit and protective kin that have survived despite forced separations and intolerable circumstances.

Our explanations of the status of Black males are more complicated. A picture that emerges of what Wilson (1987) called "the black underclass," is that low-income black people have become isolated in the inner-city. Wilson argues that the twin pathologies of black-on-black violence and female-headed households are mutually reinforcing. Violence-related arrests deplete the pool of black males available for marriage, while the absence of strong male role models in the home leads to delinquency and violent crime. Wilson favors national jobs and income-support programs targeting black men. Another important explanation of underclass behavior emphasizes psychological characteristics such as low self-esteem. In this connection, for West (1993), the underclass of black youths embodies a "walking nihilism" of pervasive drug addiction, alcoholism, homicide, and suicide. Poussaint (1972) traced the ghetto "subculture of violence" to self-hatred, particularly among young Black males.

The links between youth and violence, welfare dependence, and the "tangle of pathology" of the black family were first made by Daniel Patrick Moynihan in *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action* (1965) to dramatize the inheritance of white racism. It should be noted that as late as the 1960's, 75 percent of African-American families were headed by a husband and wife. But by the 1980's, there were more than 1.5 million African-American female-headed families in the United States, resulting in poverty for these families (Baker 1988). For these writers, the absence of strong male role models in the home is a major factor. In response, several hundred Black professionals, human service agencies, and

foundations have created several intervention programs: the National Council of African-American Men, National Coalition of African-American Men, the National African-American Male Collaboration, Saturday Academies for African-American Young men, the 100 Men, and the 1 million march on Washington.

RESEARCH METHODS AND SOURCES OF DATA

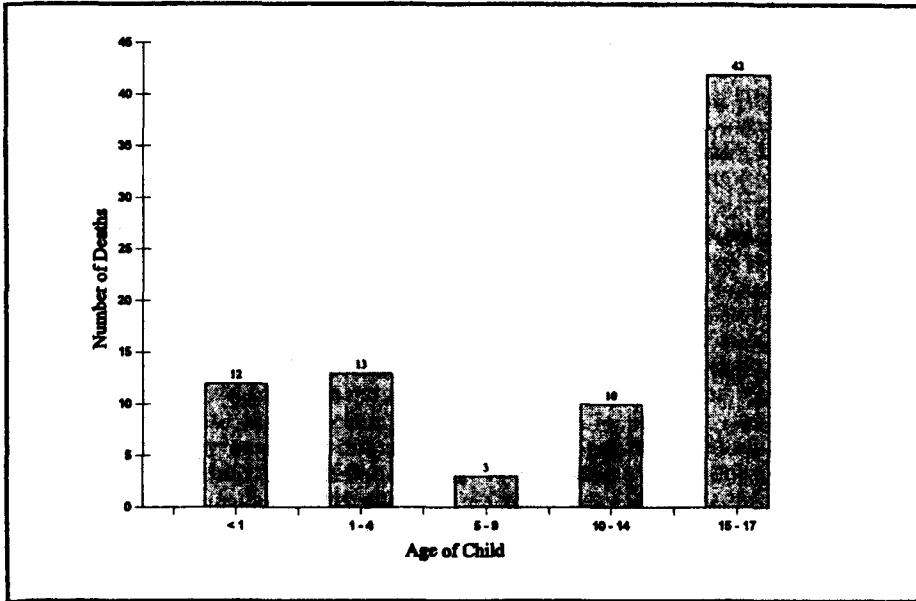
The information and interpretations presented here draw on observations, related literature, questionnaire data, and extensive fieldwork conducted over four months in Metropolitan Kansas City. During the first month of fieldwork in January 1996, I conducted a series of workshops in organizational skills and human relations with the Executive Committee of Break and Build. Break and Build represented the largest youth gang in the area. Between February and March, I conducted four focus groups with members of the Executive Committee of Break and Build. The purpose was to determine project priorities for funding by local philanthropic groups. By mid-February, I developed and administered questionnaires to 50 selected African-American professionals in the area. The purpose was to determine their perceptions of Black youth gangs. I later had the opportunity to personally observe members of Break and Build and their staff (35) in early March. My research design did not enable me to conclude how fully the members of Break and Build represented the more than 50 gang groups in Metropolitan Kansas City. The primary focus here was on the leadership of Break and Build and its implications for future gang activities in Kansas City.

THE CASE OF METROPOLITAN KANSAS CITY

The role of Black leadership in shaping gang movements in the metropolitan Kansas City area is important. It is estimated that there are about 50 gangs in this area. Metropolitan Kansas City is a twin city (Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas). The area has a combined population of 1.4 million. Youth violence is a major problem in Kansas City. The following is a report summary prepared by the Department of Justice outlining the nation's youth violence and victimization crisis.

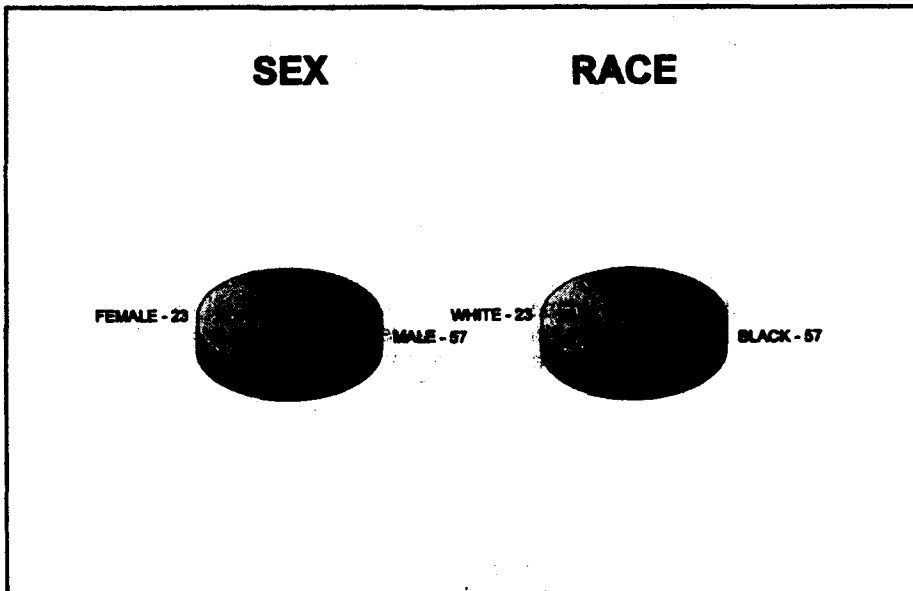
- Between 1988 and 1992 juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased nearly 50 percent.
- Juveniles were responsible for about 1 in 5 violent crimes.

Figure 1. Age Distribution of Homicides in 1995



Source: Missouri Child Fatality Review Program 1995

Figure 2. Sex and Race of Homicides in 1995



Source: Missouri Child Fatality Review Program 1995

- Law enforcement agencies made nearly 2.3 million arrests of persons under age 18 in 1992.
- If trends continue as they have over the past 10 years, juvenile arrests for violent crime will double by the year 2010 and the juvenile rate for murder will increase 150 percent.
- Any juvenile between ages 12 and 17 is more likely to be the victim of violent crime than are persons past their mid twenties.
- Most offenders who victimize juveniles are family members, friends or acquaintances.
- A gun was used in 1 in 4 serious violent crimes against juveniles in 1991.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (1993) has also provided some juvenile homicide data which suggest an alarming trend.

- Between 1984 and 1991 the rate at which juveniles ages 14 to 17 committed murder increased 160 percent.

At this point in the year, the Kansas City metropolitan area has exceeded the previous year in child and youth homicides, according to the Childhood Fatality Review Program. Current available data indicate that Kansas City is not immune from the national trend of growing youth violence and victimization.

- Homicide was the cause of 80 deaths of children less than 18 years of age in 1995, representing 23 percent of injury-related deaths.
- As shown in Figure 1, 53 percent (42) of homicides were children 15 through 17 years of age. The next largest group was one through four year-olds with 16 percent (13) of the total.
- While black children make up a minority of the overall population, they are over-represented as a majority of the homicide deaths (Figure 2).
- The peak month for homicides in 1995 was May with 14, followed by February with ten (Figure 3).
- Firearm injuries followed by Shaken/Impact Syndrome were the common known causes of child homicides in 1995 (Figure 4).

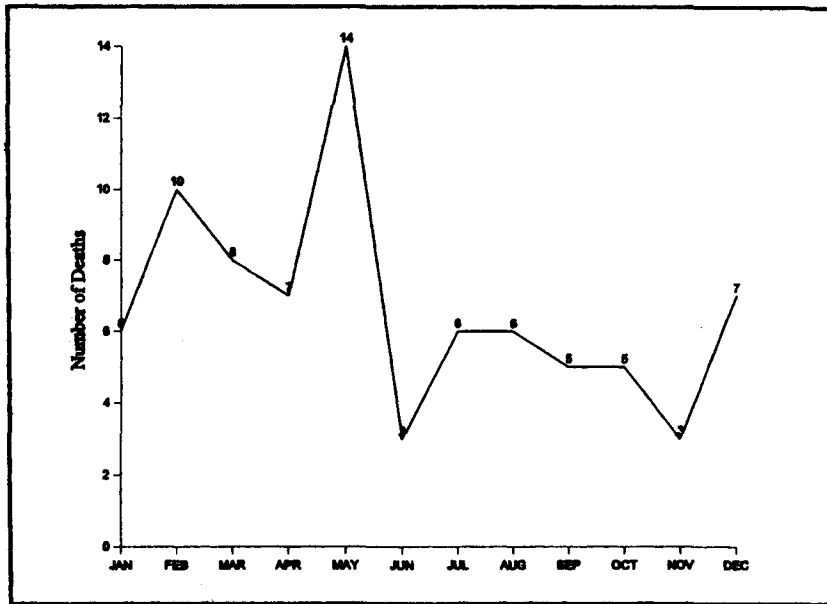
As Spergel (1995) has indicated, there are youth gang-related problems in America. However, there is no evidence to support the assertion that street gangs are responsible for American violence. Available data indicate that gangs alone are not responsible for the violence in Kansas City as indicated above.

The data shows that there are multiple causes for violence, including substance abuse, dysfunctional families, values, lifestyles, a sense of personal responsibility, greed etc.

It is important to understand that African-American gang leadership is in part, a search for alternative leadership. In a real sense, the emergence of street gangs in this country is a product of our national contested values. It is no exaggeration to say that the fraying of America's social fabric has become a national obsession. Presumably, it is in this context that the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich (1995) calls for "a return to mainstream American civilization and the basic principles upon which we must face as a nation." According to recent polls, more than three-quarters of American adults are convinced that the United States is in moral and spiritual decline. For example, America's public schools, traditionally responsible for teaching common values, have become battlefields. At issue are differences about moral authority, family life, sexual expression, and how to live together in a multicultural society despite our differences. It should also be noted that for many African-American street gang leaders, pocketbook pressures have been a major consideration — the apparent lack of equal chance for all Americans. Whatever the motives and causes of African-American street gangs, their leadership has had a tremendous negative impact on society. It has also been significantly different from traditional African-American leadership in the context of American civilization. Perhaps most importantly, it has sensitized America to the needs of its youth.

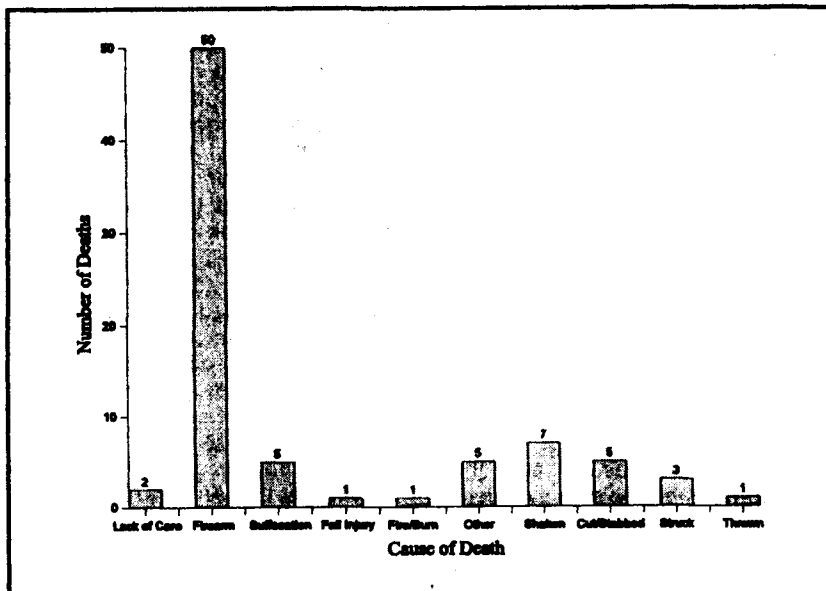
In the quest for human rights and racial advancement, African-Americans have managed throughout their history to draw their leaders from their own ranks. African-American leaders have always sought diverse ways to overcome the racial barriers and oppression that have pervaded American society. It should be noted that the security of power, prestige, and ideological differences in the African-American community have resulted in a struggle for leadership that is often ruthless and ineffective. This form of leadership grows out of the dispersion of Africans to the Americas. Thus the African-American leadership that emerged was conditioned by environmental factors and the psychology engendered by the system of slavery. Although both forms of African-American leadership (traditional and street gangs) are products of the dominant

Figure 3. Homicides by Month in 1995



Source: Missouri Child Fatality Review Program 1995

Figure 4. Causes of Death in 1995 Homicides



Source: Missouri Child Fatality Review Program 1995

cultural oppression, they are significantly different. The traditional leadership is built on the concept of bourgeoisie reformism; that is, the notion that full political participation within the system will produce benefits to African-Americans. On the other hand, African-American street gang leadership operates from the perspective that the American power structure, dominated by white males, will never fully accept African-Americans as first class citizens, qualified and capable of sharing in the American "dream."

Led by Andre Thurman (1996a), the Break and Build in Kansas City, Missouri is providing a foundation for new directions in street gang activities in Kansas City. Members of this group are former gang members who have had diverse street and criminal justice experiences. Although the founder and President of the group is an African-American male, the organization's leadership involves both African-Americans and Hispanics.

Operation Break and Build is a result of the 1993 Urban Peace and Justice Summit referred to as the Gang Summit. Its primary purpose is to provide viable alternatives for the transformation and redirection of its staff, members, and clients. More clearly stated in its promotion material, Break & Build's purpose is "to develop non-traditional leadership to improve the quality of life of African-American and Latin American young men and women in the metropolitan Kansas City area." This is a very challenging goal with enormous responsibility.

During the 1993 Urban Peace and Justice Summit in Kansas City, Missouri, the gang members identified four areas they felt must be addressed for their transformation process. These areas were: Crisis Intervention, Economic Development, Women's Issues, and Criminal Justice. Later, Operation Break & Build added Education as a fifth area. Operation Break and Build leadership was determined to change the fate of the gangs and dedicated themselves to the reconstruction of society and the environment from which they came. They searched for resources to support their new agenda, a redirection of street gang activities from destructive to constructive behaviors. With funding from the Kauffman Foundation, the Jackson County Anti-Drug tax (Combat), the Amercorp Program, and the National and World Council of Churches, Operation Break & Build has officially kicked off its program.

A recent flyer (April 8, 1996) (Thurman

1996b) mailed to hundreds of groups stated: "we are seeking the opportunity to network with you/your organization on behalf of Operation Break & Build and its participants." Specifically, the organization is seeking employment for the youth, opportunity for apprenticeship, mentoring of young people in schools, and resources for the work done.

Break & Build prides itself on being unique because it is youth-driven. Its leadership, composed of youth, has travelled throughout the country giving speeches, lectures, and seminars to other youth-focused programs. This effect is likely to have tremendous impact on American youth because of the youth leadership of Operation Break & Build.

At a recent seminar on March 7, 1996 with the founder and Executive Committee members of Operation Break & Build, the author of this paper developed a plan of action for the future (Gordon 1996a). That plan included two additional areas of development: 1) arts and culture and 2) political participation. In addition, the group planned a peace negotiation—street gang organization forum. The forum focused on conflict resolution among all gangs and collaboration with traditional human service providers. The group planned to work with alternative schools, providing monthly retreats for high-risk youth. Its working committee was represented by 1/3 youth, 1/3 professionals, and another 1/3 members of the faith community. A timeline to accomplish its immediate objectives was set.

In light of the desire of Operation Break & Build to work with Black professionals, social providers, and street gangs in order to accomplish its mission, a survey of the attitudes of fifty black professionals who are regarded as power brokers and/or impactors in the metropolitan Kansas City area was conducted by the author of this paper (Gordon 1996b). Among other things, the survey asked participants to describe their attitudes toward street gangs. The most frequently used words and phrases were as follows: Bad news, crying out for acceptance, needs self-esteem, needs guidance in setting goals for upward mobility, neglected and misguided, dangerous drugs, out of control, fear, I am not proud of them, black power, losers, lawless, dangerous, no hope. It is important to note that the educational levels of the participants ranged from a bachelor's degree (25%) to the master's degree (40%) and the doctorate degree (35%).

The current attitudes of the sample of African-American professionals toward

African-American street gangs have serious implications for the future. The new direction of street gangs in Kansas City should not only be applauded but encouraged and supported, especially by Black professionals. Many Black professionals represent the traditional Black leadership and the power structure in Kansas City. This is probably the case in most American cities, particularly the inner cities. The development of the inner cities requires collaborative efforts among all concerned. In the case of Kansas City, if Break & Build is to turn things around, it needs the support of Black professionals, especially those in the power structure.

CONCLUSION

The problems of gang violence have been well documented. However, it is unclear whether the growth in urban violence should be attributed largely to gangs, law-violating youth groups, or nongang youths. Although several studies have documented higher levels of violence among gang members compared to nongang youths, the research necessary to clarify this issue has not been conducted since Miller's study in the 1970's. More definitive data must be collected to untangle this situation. What roles have Blacks played in gang movements? There is much evidence that Blacks have played major roles in gang movements and gang-related violence. Black involvement includes leadership roles toward new, productive directions. Regrettably, this leadership style has been neglected in American leadership literature. As indicated in this study, the current activities of Operation Break & Build gang groups in metropolitan Kansas City are a case in point.

The current plan of action by Operation Break and Build in Metropolitan Kansas City is indeed a refreshing model in street gang history. It needs to be nurtured and replicated. Its present funders are to be commended. Equally important is the grassroots support. But it also needs the blessings of traditional Black power structure in the community. The question is, will the Black professionals come around just like the street gangs have come around? Only time will tell.

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PRELIMINARY TEST OF THEORY OF GROUNDED CULTURE AND GANG DELINQUENCY

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of *subculture* as an explanation of delinquency has taken two different forks. One fork is reflected in the work of Albert Cohen (1955), Cloward and Ohlin (1960), and Walter Miller (1958). In this view, a delinquent subculture is a world view that essentially incorporates values in opposition to conventional (middle class) ones generating delinquent patterns of behavior. It is the *oppositional nature* of the values that leads to *oppositional behavior* in the form of, often non-utilitarian, delinquent behavior. The other fork is that of the control theorists, most particularly, David Matza. For Matza (1964), a *subculture of delinquency* is not characterized by oppositional values but rather by conventional ones. The conventional values, though, have a particular twist due to *subterranean convergence*. The deviant traditions in the subculture provide a surplus of *negations of the offense* (in a neo-classical sense) that allow the subculture delinquent to maintain conventional values while at the same time behaving in a way that breaks the conventions in the form of delinquency.

This paper's sociological perspective involves studying the interaction structure of the situation in the tradition of Erving Goffman (1959, 1961, 1963a, 1963b, 1967, 1969). However, at the same time, it recognizes the importance of the phenomenological tradition, especially that of Harold Garfinkel (1967) and the ethnomethodologists. On the one hand, Goffman treats situations as "little institutions" in a fairly positivistic manner. On the other hand, ethnomethodology takes contextual embeddedness (indexicality) as a condition of social behavior, and contends that all meaning relies on context for its exact and specific sense. Furthermore, there is a reflexive (mutually elaborating) relationship between interpretation and the phenomenon in the world. The interpretation of the phenomenon characterizes the phenomenon in a certain way that gives it a specific sense while simultaneously justifying that very interpretation in terms of the phenomenon being interpreted (Garfinkel 1967).

Reflecting this background, the key concept used in this paper to account for the

nature of gang violence and patterned behavior of gangs is *grounded culture*. Rather than separating culture and structure, with culture hovering over social structure like a cloud, culture's *specific sense* is viewed as grounded in the social structure. (By *specific sense*, I mean how talk is used and understood in a given context.) As typically used in sociology, culture is a "gloss" to explain behavior relating to a set of shared values, norms, and world view. Culture is somewhat vague even though the content of culture is explained in terms of key values. However, the key values tend to be further glosses that only become sensible when pointing to specific instances of behavior. In an attempt to cull the specific sense of culture as related to behavior, rather than simply naming and defining a value for one and all in a given society, it is necessary to show how a certain value term is used in a specific situation. For example, a cultural concept such as *loyalty* must be located in a specific instance for it to have a social reality. The concept *loyalty* is woven into the day-to-day experiences of those who live in the structure. *Loyalty* gets its exact meaning from life in the structure and not simply as a verbal tradition handed down independent of the structure. Hence, while in middle-class society loyalty may be viewed in terms of patriotism to back military actions taken by the government, it can be viewed in gang areas in terms of standing up for your gang. While some experiences and senses of culture are held in common, others, grounded in different structures, are very different. Thus, in talking about grounded culture, we are talking about how a certain cultural value is used in the context of a group, organization, or subculture.

By examining the social situations of violence, we can see not only the patterns of violence, we can examine what sense is made of these situations. *The meaning of the actions in the situations constitutes the culture*. That is, culture is embedded in the situated meaning of events and actions. The violence elaborates the culture, and at the same time is explained by the culture. That is, gang violence tells us something about the culture (or subculture) while we use the culture to explain the violence. It is a reflexive relationship.

In order to test such ideas, it helps to codify and specify them in the form of a set of theoretical propositions. The following propositions reflect the key ideas in a way that I hope can be empirically tested, criticized, revised, and generally used as a tool for further understanding of patterns of gang behavior. Some of the propositions are fundamental and others are supplemental to the main ideas. Those near the beginning are more fundamental, and those toward the middle and end, supplemental.

Theory of Grounded Culture and Gang Delinquency

1. All values, whether dominant culture or subculture, can only be understood in the context of their use.
2. Identically expressed values (i.e., the words used to talk about values) may have widely different meanings in different contexts.
3. Delinquent gangs constitute a salient context for creating the specific sense of values for gang members.
4. Actions by gang members are guided by commonsense reasoning based on the values grounded in gang activity and interpretive schemes commonly used by gang members to understand and explain such activities.
5. Gang subculture is generated in and sustained by gang members who teach other youths in the community the interpretive schemes for understanding expressed values grounding them in shared experiences, actions, situations and life position.
6. The expression of a value in a given context must be grounded in a contextual matter that can be seen as an event or action. Otherwise it lacks meaning and essential sense.
7. Different religions, ideologies, ethnic group beliefs, and histories (group and individual) are further contexts in the community for interpretive schemes.

Question and Problem

Besides any purely logical or internal consistency problems, the theory must stand the test of empirical validation or rejection. At the outset, it is necessary to test a fundamental assumption of a subculture based on different

values. Asked in its most simple form, "Can gang members express similar or different values than nongang members?" We must have some test of the assumption that we can differentiate gang members from nongang members in terms of values.

METHODOLOGY

The most straight-forward way of doing this is to ask a gang group and nongang group about their values. If the same instrument given to the two groups and there is a difference in expressed values, then we can see what values they are and the strength of their relationship, if any.

Generating a set of values that reflect the conventional values was done using young people pursuing conventional goals. It was reasoned that while any group could be used to generate a set of values to be compared with gang members, a more conventional group would serve as a more valid test for comparison since deviance has its defining point in conventional norms and values. To this end, college students served as a group whose very being in college suggested conventionality. A group of students, mostly Mexican-American, reflecting the ethnicity of the region and gang members in the region were asked to list the values that they believed to be of key importance. Listed values were then compared to see which ones came up the most frequently. Then using values identified with non-conventional lifestyles (e.g., coolness, courage) from Miller (1958) and Goffman (1967), the following 17 values were derived using this method:

Coolness
 Courage
 Dependability
 Education
 Family
 Hard Work
 Honesty
 Independence
 Integrity
 Intelligence
 Kindness
 Loyalty
 Open Mindedness
 Religious Values
 Respect Others
 Self Respect
 Trust

The questionnaire constructed was

Table 1

Coolness

Very Important _____ Important _____ Neutral _____ Not very important _____ Not important at all _____

simple one using Likert categories with the following heading:

Below are listed several values that may or may not be important to you personally. Please place a check mark next to the description that best describes how important the value is to you personally. If you're not sure what a value means, use what it means to you. (The listing is alphabetical.)

Following the heading, each value question was posed as in Table 1. In addition, there were test variables for sex, age, ethnicity, religion, education level, and gang affiliation. Gang affiliation was tested by a request to draw a gang "placa" (a gang logo that is stylized for a particular gang). If the gang placa was not present or if it was one that was either of a tagger crew or inauthentic, based on previous research in the area (Sanders, Rodriguez 1995), it was not included in the gang sample.

The sample was drawn from four sources. The college students were sampled from large, introductory, general-requirement courses at a state university. This assured a general cross-section of college students from different disciplines. The gang members were drawn from an alternative school for youths who had been suspended from the general high school population for behavioral problems, incarcerated youths in a local rehabilitation center, and from youths on probation in the community.

Of the 302 questionnaires completed, 159 were college students, 111 were self-identified and verified gang members and 32 were non-college students either from the probation or alternative school sample. The analysis for this paper was based on only the college students and gang members.

Since the basic question concerned differentiating two groups on the basis of responses to values, it lends itself to many forms of statistical analysis. Logistic regression analysis was chosen because it is especially good for S-curve regressions found in a dichotomous (instead of continuous) nominal variable such as gang affiliation measured against an ordinal variable on a Likert scale. In order to see if gang-affiliation could be predicted by the 17 variables set up as value expressions,

gang membership was held as the dependent variable and the 17 values as the model for the independent variables. The first model produced the following results, using the SPSS format for logistic regression output (see Table 2).

As can be seen, the model accounted for 75 percent of the variance. That it, it was able to differentiate gangs from nongangs in about three-fourths of the cases. In order to see if a more accurate model could be generated, the four variables with levels of significance nearest .05 were selected and recomputed. As can be seen in the results, slightly less variance was accounted for, but that was with only four independent variables (education, trust, integrity, and honesty) instead of 17. This provides us with a much better model, but still there is not a clear rejection of conventional values by a significant proportion of gang members when we examine those variables that can best distinguish gang from nongang values.

Overall, though, while the nongang sample appeared to have clearly different value array with 86 percent falling into the nongang category in the first model, and 90 percent in the second, those identifying with gangs were almost evenly split in the gang and nongang value array (see Table 3).

DISCUSSION

This first exploratory effort at differentiating gangs from nongangs on the basis of a simple questionnaire resulted in a surprising outcome. It was not expected to differentiate gang from nongang members to the extent that it did. Indeed, when we looked at both models, we find that gang members are about as likely to express nongang values as they are gang values. That was not too surprising given that the theory posits that the *expressed values* can be conventional or not. What counts is what those values mean in the context of their application. Apparently, though, there is some difference between the college students and the gang members in their expressed value arrays.

The expressed values by the gang members on probation and those in incarceration may tend to reflect more the nongang values since it is expected that they were trying to

Table 2

-2 Log Likelihood	257.539
Goodness of Fit	244.726

	Chi-Squar	df	Significance
Model Chi-Square	83.117	17	.0000
Improvement	83.117	17	.0000

Classification Table for GANG

Observed		Predicted		Percent Correct
		Non-Gang	Gang	
Non-Gang	N	134	22	86%
Gang	G	43	56	57%
			Overall	75%

Variable	Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig	R	Exp(B)
COOLNESS	.2402	.1492	2.5927	1	.1074	.0417	1.2715
COURAGE	.0218	.2204	.0098	1	.9212	.0000	1.0220
DEPEND	-.0644	.1665	.1493	1	.6992	.0000	.9377
EDUCATIO	-.6352	.3255	3.8075	1	.0510	-.0728	.5299
FAMILY	.5727	.2987	3.6763	1	.0552	.0701	1.7730
HARDWORK	-.3564	.2605	1.8716	1	.1713	.0000	.7002
HONESTY	-.7043	.2819	6.2402	1	.0125	-.1116	.4945
INDEPEN	.2170	.2259	.9224	1	.3368	.0000	1.2423
INTEGRIT	-.6210	.2625	5.5976	1	.0180	-.1028	.5374
INTELLIG	.1905	.2351	.6567	1	.4177	.0000	1.2099
KINDNESS	-.3986	.2194	3.2994	1	.0693	-.0618	.6713
LOYALTY	.3657	.3009	1.4772	1	.2242	.0000	1.4416
OPENMIND	-.2557	.2195	1.3575	1	.2440	.0000	.7744
RELVALU	.0241	.1488	.0262	1	.8713	.0000	1.0244
RESPECT	-.1598	.2507	.4063	1	.5239	.0000	.8523
SELFRESP	.1544	.3136	.2425	1	.6224	.0000	1.1670
TRUST	-.5067	.2589	3.8299	1	.0503	-.0733	.6025
Constant	8.0161	1.9157	17.5093	1	.0000		

some extent play for the audience of a probation officer. Unfortunately, in the coding of the data, we did not differentiate the groupings in the sub-samples. There may have been a greater difference in the value arrays if we had gang members in the streets as the primary sample group.

In further research on the problem of values and context-related elements of values, two different strategies suggest themselves. First, a questionnaire that asks questions about actions in various situation related to values can determine whether the same values are held constantly across situations or, as the theory implies, what may be a value for some in some situations are not

appropriate in other situations. (e.g., Is coolness in a drive-by shooting considered in the same way that coolness in an examination is? Secondly, using participant observation techniques combined with informal interviews when an action is accounted for in terms of different values.

CONCLUSION

This theory has been derived from larger corpus of work (Sanders 1994) and represents inductive logic from observational research. However, the amount of research leading up to the development of the theory is irrelevant to the quality of the theory. Much work still needs to be done on refining the

Table 3

-2 Log Likelihood	281.848		
Goodness of Fit	253.436		
	Chi-Square	df	Significance
Model Chi-Square	69.299	4	.0000
Improvement	69.299	4	.0000

Classification Table for GANG

		Predicted		Percent Correct
		Non-Gang	Gang	
Observed		N	G	
Non-Gang	N	143	16	90
Gang	G	53	50	49
			Overall	74

Variable	Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig	R	Exp(B)
EDUCATIO	-.6862	.2392	8.2294	1	.0041	-.1332	.5035
HONESTY	-.7141	.2404	8.8241	1	.0030	-.1394	.4896
INTEGRIT	-.4560	.2151	4.4934	1	.0340	-.0843	.6338
TRUST	-.3915	.2043	3.6717	1	.0553	-.0690	.6760
Constant	9.5557	1.5451	38.2480	1	.0000		

propositions both as a scientific-logical issue and also as propositions to be rigorously tested. This paper is a request for criticism, revision, insight, and empirical testing.

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VULCANS AND JUTES: CUBAN FRATERNITIES AND THEIR DISAPPEARANCE

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ABSTRACT

Formation of gangs usually has involved two themes: lack of opportunities for youth and cultural context of youths' activities. Although practically all studies of gangs address how they form and attract new members, none have addressed how gangs disappear. Formation of Cuban youth gangs, or "fraternities" exemplifies how gangs may form and disintegrate as immigrants establish resources for channelling youth into positive roles. Cuban exiles in Miami between 1959 and 1980 experienced difficulties similar to those experienced by other immigrant groups arriving in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Family disruption, arduous work schedules, friction with neighbors of contrasting ethnicity, and struggles with a new language characterized their stresses in exile. Formation of gangs followed, as it often does, but these gangs died out by 1978. Reasons for disappearance of Vulcans and Jutes included establishment of true economic power and prosperity within the Cuban exile community and provision of productive roles for youth who otherwise would have been involved in gangs. This experience provides suggestions for addressing gang related problems in other ethnic minorities.

INTRODUCTION

During the last two centuries in the United States, young men and sometimes young women have formed groups often called gangs under various conditions and for various purposes. Formation of adult gangs may have begun as early as 1820, and that of ancillary youth gangs, usually attached to the adults' groups, began shortly thereafter (Goldstein 1991). Since late in the nineteenth century, youth gangs, either as sub-groups of adult gangs or as autonomous organizations, have received extensive sociological and criminological attention, and the analyses of gang related phenomena have focused on how young people become involved in gangs. This attention has given rise to a number of theories of gang formation and maintenance, which follow roughly the sociological theories of deviance: Strain (Cloward, Ohlin 1960; Cohen 1955), Subcultural, or Differential Association (Johnson 1979; Miller 1958; Sutherland, Cressey 1974; Voss 1963), Social Control (Elliott, Agerton, Canter 1979; Hirschi 1969; Nye 1958), Labeling (Krohn, Massey, Skinner 1987; Tannenbaum 1938), and Radical Theory (Abadinsky 1979; Meier 1976). The literature on gangs during the last century yields descriptive and empirical evidence in support of all of these theories to one degree or another, and in fact all have their uses in explaining how and why gangs form and persist.

Two consistent themes emerge from the different theories of gang formation and perpetuation. One emphasizes acute lack of opportunities for youth to participate in institutions that inculcate young people into legitimate adult roles. Theories that emphasize this theme include strain, social control, and radical theories. The other theme defines the influence of

cultural context on how gangs develop, and its theoretical correlates include the subcultural, labeling, and radical theories of gang formation. Both themes may apply in a given community's history, partially explaining why gangs form and under what conditions they are perpetuated.

This paper attempts to reverse the perspective on gang formation by asking why two particular gangs died out. Rather than pointing out a community's lack of well defined roles for youth, the case examined here shows that in circumstances where youth initially lack institutions that channel them into positive, productive adult roles, they may form gangs. Nevertheless, these circumstances may change over time; if productive roles await them when they become adults, gang members mature into former gang members (Goldstein 1991; Vigil 1988); if the community develops effective institutions that re-channel, or re-direct the adolescent energies that contribute to gang activity, gangs die out. Furthermore, whatever tendency youth may have had to form gangs will be restricted to populations that continue to lack mechanisms for tracking youth into productive roles. These complementary perspectives on the formation of youth gangs will underlie the entire narrative of this paper. The following report will also draw on the fact that no published studies have, to my or my colleagues' knowledge, ever chronicled the processes involved in the disappearance of a gang. Gangs observed in Miami during the late 1960s through the late 1970s provide examples from Miami for comparison with ethnographic and other research on gangs in the literature.

PERCEPTIONS OF GANGS

Young people between the ages of nine and nineteen often form close networks of informal relations based on friendship, common interests such as sports, music, or hobbies. This tendency is not cross-culturally universal, but rather it has occurred primarily in urban, industrial and post-industrial societies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Miller (1982) attributes the emergence of gangs in part to industrial societies' division of labor in the inculcation of youth, involving family (primarily parents), formal institutions (schools and organizations), and age-peers. Boy scout troops, high school bands, baseball teams, chess clubs, and dance hall cliques all reflect some of the socially acceptable varieties of the institutional peer group. The need to belong to a group in which peers play a major role appears to be universal in industrial and post-industrial societies, but in order to receive the endorsement of parents and the rest of the community, most of these groups have the participation of parents, teachers, scoutmasters, coaches, bandmasters, and the like. Street gangs are usually dominated by peers in the total absence of supervision by parentally approved adults, and therefore they automatically attract the distrust and opprobrium of parents and other adults.

The street gang in North America has taken on many meanings, and these meanings have shifted over time. Early in this century (Furfey 1926; Thrasher 1963) gangs were associated with "mischief," but they later took on more association with conflict, including criminal activity and violence. The term "gang" is a gloss generally applied to groups of urban youths anywhere from eleven to 30 years old who form a recognizable organization for purposes including, among others, self-protection, defense of ethnic-identified territory from other ethnic groups, procurement of material goods, making of fashion statements, and using the group's resources to deal with the vicissitudes of life. School disruption, revenge killing, drug trafficking, demands for respect (and sanctions against disrespect), and community activism all have received attention in cinema, television drama, and news media as activities and themes of street gangs.

Attempts to define "gangness" tend to dwell on urban origins (Bloch, Niederhoffer 1958), youth (Kodulboy 1994), establishment of a directive hierarchy and code of conduct (Arnold 1965), marginality (Huff 1990;

Jankowski 1991; Spergel 1990), criminality (Curry, Spergel 1988; Fagan 1989), ethn homogeneity (Spergel 1990; Vigil 1988), and display of group-identified symbols (Kodulbc 1994).

The definition of a gang needs some flexibility, but also some properties that discourage over-inclusion. Stress-response may prove useful in defining gangness. For populations of adolescents and young adults who become gang members, sources of stress usually abound. First, and possibly foremost, they are culturally and often physically distinct from the surrounding population. Whether they are Hispanics living in East Los Angeles (Vigil 1988) or African Americans living in Minneapolis (Hagedorn 1988), they are sufficiently different from schoolmates and neighbors to attract routine teasing and perhaps harsh treatment on the part of their non-Hispanic or non-black peers. Second, they are often poor although this may be related primarily to recency of arrival. Third, their relationship with their families may be disrupted by factors such as differential acculturation and low wages, and fourth, their realistic assessment of what will happen to them in the future may not yield much hope. In many cases the communities that produce gangs have all of these sources of stress, and all communities that have street gangs have at least some of the sources described above.

If we view the formation of a gang as a response to some kinds of stressors specific to youth from a particular ethnic background, we begin to ask how many stressors and which kinds of stressors must be removed in order to prevent the formation of gangs or to cause them to disappear in places where they have already formed. If we minimized prejudice in the surrounding community, would that help to reduce the likelihood of gang formation? If we prevented breakup of nuclear families? In most cases, we cannot manipulate the conditions in a given community to test these kinds of hypotheses. Nevertheless, we can look retrospectively at cases of gang development or disappearance and assess what made things happen as they did. This will be the approach taken in the narrative that follows, focusing on two entities called fraternities by their participants, that arose and disappeared during the 1960s and 1970s in Miami, Florida, among the sons of recently arrived Cuban exiles.

METHODS

In the course of conducting a study of polydrug use among Cuban-Americans I established a streetside office in the upper southwest section of Miami known as Little Havana. This location, occupied between December, 1978, and September, 1980 enabled me to observe and make numerous contacts with the people who frequented a drug dealing and using zone (Wiedman, Page 1982). I also collected drug use histories on 80 Cuban polydrug users from the neighborhood. These histories provided the narratives shown later in this paper in order to describe the gangs.

The task of recruiting active drug users from a street setting demands that the investigator take time to establish a benign presence in the neighborhood. This process requires several weeks of regular appearances at key locations in the areas that have reputations for drug related activity. The investigator's eventual goal is to make an extended contact with at least one active drug user who has informal social relations with other users.

In the study's Little Havana setting, I had to "hang out" for about three months before I was able to make the first contact. From a distance, I had on one occasion observed an individual who staggered from shop to shop in a small shopping center across from one of my key observation post. Several days later, I encountered this individual in the same zone and opened a conversation with him about how he had acted "strange" on that earlier occasion. He quickly agreed that his behavior had been odd, and he admitted that he had spent the days after the incident going to each shop owner and asking forgiveness for his outrageous behavior. He explained that he had drunk a fruit drink into which someone had put some sort of drug (he was unable to identify it other than to say that it was a kind of flower). I explained to him that I was in the neighborhood to study drug use among Cubans, and he took an interest in my work, introducing me to twelve drug users in the neighborhood. In my other ethnographic studies, the first contact has not been particularly useful, but this individual not only introduced me directly to twelve drug users, but he also had been a member of a local gang, the Vulcans.

The initial breakthrough led to additional contacts and the eventual recruitment of a wide variety of drug users in Little Havana. The individuals studied there were predominantly male, as is often the case with people who use

street drugs, and they ranged in age from eleven years to 55. All participants under eighteen years old obtained verified permission from parents to take part in the study. Each participant responded to a structured interview schedule and then to an open-ended interview that was tape recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded for retrievability. The interviews contained reviews of migration history, drug use history, and general life history for each respondent, focusing on how they had become active drug users. These materials, along with two years of field notes based on observations of drug using behavior in the street setting, provided the data presented in this paper.

Although only five of the 80 interviewees recalled the Vulcans and Jutes, they each provided extensive narratives in the mode of the anthropological key informant. They also spent time with me in street settings, interacting with other former gang members and engaging in informal conversation about the gangs' activities. In some cases, I was able to talk to the participants' parents about gangs. This configuration of perspectives on gangs, although not replete with numbers of respondents, nonetheless provided a fairly broad perspective on what the Vulcans and Jutes did, who they were, and how their community reacted to their presence.

LITTLE HAVANA AND ITS ORIGINS

The neighborhood's background sets the scene for the cultural conflict that helped bring about the formation of the two gangs described here. Located on the northern edge of the prestigious Coral Gables municipality, Little Havana was settled between 1926 and 1959 by white non-Hispanic lower middle class families, predominantly from the Shenandoah valley in Virginia and Ohio. They built and occupied modest, closely spaced houses that usually mimicked the stucco Spanish colonial style of their more affluent neighbors in Coral Gables. Some remnants of that time, embodied in the continued presence of the name Shenandoah for a middle school and a Presbyterian church persist there, even though the original families have long since moved to less Hispanic surroundings.

The massive influx of Cubans that began with Fidel Castro's revolution in late 1958 and continued throughout the next three decades tended to settle in Dade County into two places, Hialeah, to the northwest of Miami

proper, and along Southwest Eighth Street in Miami. The comfortably dense spacing of houses in the latter area, and the modest costs of living there proved especially attractive to Cuban families struggling to establish a life in exile. In these relatively dense neighborhoods, children could form large groups of friends and play safely without much supervision, a very common circumstance in households where both parents often worked full time (Gonzalez, Page 1981; Page 1980, 1990). The neighborhood's layout also gave adults the opportunity to sit on front steps and greet their promenading neighbors, or to promenade themselves.

Their arrival in what is now Little Havana was not always well received, despite the Cubans' hard-working, law-abiding behavior. The cultural contrast between Cuban and Shendean ways of doing things led to friction, especially in motor traffic encounters, situations where Spanish was spoken in the presence of English speakers, cooking smells, and business transactions. As parents offended each other's sensibilities, children heard and acted on the friction in their own way, teasing, criticizing, and picking fights. Vulcans and Jutes formed as gangs at least partly in response to these kinds of stressors.

GANGS AT THE TIME OF THE STUDY

At the time of the study there was almost no evidence of gang activity, but some of the participants, especially those older than twenty but under age 30, recalled the peak popularity of two Cuban gangs, the Vulcans and the Jutes, which seemed to have disbanded at least a year before 1979, when the first interviews were elicited. Five key informants had been members or otherwise associated with three gangs, and they provided details about the activities, leadership, and criminality of the Vulcans and the Jutes during their time of greatest membership. As they presented it, people joined these gangs primarily for self-protection, amusement, and self respect.

The only mention in the *Miami Herald* of the gangs cited by study participants occurred in 1977 during the span of a week in which gang members were tried and convicted of violent crimes in association with the activities of the Vulcans (Buchanan 1977; *Herald* 1977a, 1977b). A full search of *Herald* articles between 1962 and present yielded only these three mentions, all referring to Vulcans, and all related to the same sequence of events.

The parents who talked about these

particular gangs felt that they represent another effect of the immigration process which children distanced themselves from their parents' heritage. They particularly disliked the drug using behavior of some gang members, because Cuban adults perceived marijuana smoking as something that respectable white people did not do (Page 1982, 1990).

Cuban study participants who had not joined gangs still had used drugs, but they had various reasons for not joining. In the case (shown later) of a Vulcan who dropped out of the gang, the individual did not want to jeopardize his trafficking activities by keeping company with a group under constant scrutiny by the police. In other cases, the violent activities put them off of gang membership. Different acculturation or marginalization did not help distinguish between gang joiners and non-joiners among youthful Cuban drug users. Both joiners and non-joiners tended to have predominantly Cuban friends as teenagers and they learned how to use drugs from other Cubans.

VULCANS

For reasons that have remained undocumented, the young people who formed the Vulcans in Little Havana called their group a fraternity. This apparently had its origins in the group's formation for the purpose of pooling resources to throw parties, as one informant articulated (translation):

I) And why do you think that they formed these fraternities among these boys? Do you have some idea?

R) Yes, because, well because they were friends and wanted to do things together, right? Parties, and they went always together, and they wanted...to be tough (uses English word), you understand me? The tough group, and I don't know.

I) And why do you think that they wanted to go around so much together and wanted to be like you said, so tough (also in English)?

R) Because they felt good that way...

Because they lived near the University of Miami's campus, the organizers of Vulcans may have had some familiarity with the Greek letter organizations' activities. Especially in the 1960s, these organizations would have provided models for the pooling of money for parties and the sharing of alcoholic beverages. The interviewer and respondent he

both Cubans recalling the fraternities, describe motivations for their formation (translation):

I) ...because there are people that say that the fraternities were a form of defending yourself.

R) Exactly.

I) Other people say that fraternities...like you say...that they were a way of organizing [parties]...

R) ...There were fraternities that were ...like...a club that they have in High School, so as not to say it was a fraternity, it was a club, but in reality it was a fraternity...It was a bunch of guys...they would skip...they would buy their beers, and that's the way they would entertain themselves.

The speakers allude to the defensive purpose of fraternities, but they also talk about the fraternities' strategy to be partly sanctioned by the schools.

In keeping with the bellicose, fiery connotations of their mythological namesake, Vulcans had a reputation as brawlers. One non-Vulcan who attended one of the high schools in which they operated described them this way:

The arrival of Vulcans was like the arrival of the Huns; one minute you're at a normal party, and the next minute chairs are flying through the air. They came to a quinceañera (girl's coming out party) I was at and completely broke the place up.

The choice of a name for this gang of Cuban boys cannot be clearly linked to the god of fire in Greco-Roman mythology, and could just as easily have its origins in the process for making rubber for tires. The lore of the gang did not indicate how they arrived at the name. Either source of the name would connote toughness. Although my informants could not describe the origins of the gang or its name, they had strong ideas about why Vulcans organized in Little Havana in the 1960s. They reported that the non-Hispanic boys picked on Cuban boys mercilessly if they did not have gang affiliation.

Informants offered various explanations for how and why a boy came to join Vulcans. First, a non-Vulcan who used street drugs since early adolescence, explains why he did not join the Vulcans (translation):

But that...It was bad to be in that, because they

had [matching] pullovers and ...Then the police would see you and would grab you right away ...No... because they killed so-and-so and they were dressed in white and it said Vulcans on the back...So they went looking for you and there were even fights here, riots and it was said...this name...this Vulcans or Jutes or whatever...then they would look for those people...And for people that dressed alike; that way they had them marked, and they gave them numbers. And they would say it was 7, it was 13, it was 12...

I) Did they ever question you about the fraternities?...Some policeman said, "I know that you know something about the fraternities; talk to me about that."

R) No, never. But always I would be hanging with a group of them and [the police] would stop them and would make them get in the police car, and they couldn't do anything to me because I didn't have a pull-over or...I hung with them, nothing more, but they were all dressed in the same pull-over and all, so [the police] hassled those people.

I) Why didn't you join one of [the fraternities]?

R) Because they were between drugs and that, and brawls, and I never was into any of that.

The wearing of the Vulcan equivalent of "colors" (Kodulboy 1994) came to invite trouble with the police, especially as the Vulcans developed their reputation for violence and criminality. Another informant who joined Vulcans commented on his entry and exit:

I) Was this in New Jersey, when you were little and belonged to a fraternity?

R) No, here in Miami.

I) That was here? What was the name of it?

R) Vulcans.

I) Oh, the Vulcans, you are another Vulcan? Some other Vulcans have done the interview...but you were pretty young.

R) Yeah, I was.

I) Were you like a *mascofa* or something, or...?

R) No, no...I got in in paddling, you know, I was the one who used to give the paddles...

I) And...that was about until you were 14?

R) Yeah, I got in when I was in...14, 13, around that age, around 15...maybe 15, 14...I really don't know. Then...because then it got worse, you know, it got like...shooting....

I) Más bravo, yeah.

R) So I decided to stay by myself.

This segment alludes to another cultural element that links the Vulcans with the college

fraternity concept, initiation by paddling. As the Vulcans' violent activities escalated, this person dropped out, but he continued to use drugs for the next four years until the time of the interview in mid-1980.

Another informant describes the presence of Vulcans in his junior high school:

R) Well, we had a...in school everybody had to respect [Vulcans], or you would get in a fight...we all got in a fight. And besides that, weekends and stuff, you know, like we used to chip in money every time that we had a meeting or something like that...we'd buy some beer and sandwiches and go party to the beach and all this. That's what it was like. A lot of times we had fights with other fraternities and stuff.

I) How do those usually start?

R) Start?

I) One of your members got jumped by another fraternity?

R) Right...or we asked them to play football with us or something and after the game...

Vulcans commanded respect in school, provided resources for parties, and in some cases looked for excuses to get into fights, even with other Cuban fraternities. Use of illegal drugs received attention in the elicited narratives about Vulcans, but it appeared not to have as much importance to the participants as the other aspects of gang life. In fact, the key informants reported that they had learned to use marijuana outside of the fraternity context. They did, however, report extensive use of marijuana and inhalants within the fraternities.

Vulcans also had Cuban female associates, young women described variously as "nice girls" and "not decent type girls" who participated in the group's parties and hung around gatherings of Vulcans. The party girls were considered good company when the group was in a mode of celebration and revelry, but they did not participate in fights or drug trade. They otherwise did not belong to Vulcans and did not go through initiations. The key informants also noted that these girls were not considered eligible for lasting or significant relationships. "Decent type girls' " parents did not permit them to be alone with any boy, and the issue of the chaperoned date remained significant among Cuban young people in negotiating with parents for freedoms throughout the time of the study. Informal interviews with some of these girls revealed that their families

did not have adequate resources for supervision after school. The household had only a grandmother in charge of supervision, or an older child was left in charge. In these situations, there was little to prevent a young girl from consorting with Vulcans if she chose to do so.

The three *Herald* articles cited earlier provide some perspective on the Vulcans' involvement in serious crime. In that particular sequence of events, a reputed gang leader received a sentence of 60 years for attempted murder of two police officers after attempting to evade their pursuit of the vehicle in which he was riding and shooting at them from the window of that car. Twenty-five gang members who attended the trial began a riot when the judge read the sentence, and another gang member received a six-month jail sentence for contempt of court because of his actions in the riot (Buchanan 1977; *Herald* 1977a, 1977b). The Buchanan article also mentions that the original defendant had already begun serving a fifteen-year narcotics charge. The defendant in the contempt case said in a statement that he apologized to the court and its officers, but he was angry because of the heavy sentence "imposed on a friend 'who had stood up for me since grade school'" and "a reaction to his father having been a political prisoner for ten years" (*Herald* 1977b).

The content of the articles provides evidence of the Vulcans' violent behavior, and it alludes to their involvement in drug trafficking. In addition, however, the last (*Herald* 1977b) article mentions a factor that had special importance for Cuban boys growing up in Little Havana. Many of them for various reasons had not much contact with their fathers, who may have still been in Cuba in prison or by political choice, or who may have been absent or killed in the revolution (Page 1990). The absence of a close male role model supervising the boy's behavior may have made gang membership especially important to this particular young man in a life circumstance similar to most of my younger informants in the Cuban study.

The field notes and interview materials from the era of the study do not contain any direct descriptions of Vulcans' organizational hierarchy. In comparison with highly structured gangs, such as the Bloods of Los Angeles or the Black Gangster Disciple Nation of Chicago, descriptions of Vulcans seem egalitarian. Only one of the informants mentioned a slate of officers, and that was for another

Cuban gang, the Hawks.

JUTES AND OTHERS

Some confusion remains regarding the name of this particular gang, because different sources have rendered it Jutes, Utes, or Yutes. The former two choices would offer some explanation of the name through their connection with fierce fighting tribes in western Denmark. Another etymological clue may lie in the properties of the tough, rope-making fiber called jute.

Only one of the participants in the Little Havana study had been a member of this Cuban fraternity that became inactive by 1978. Jutes primarily operated outside of Vulcans territory, west of Le Jeune Road and in Hialeah. As did Vulcans, Jutes had a reputation for brawling. They also became involved with drugs and other criminal behavior. The key informant, who was initiated in 1970, reported that his initiation involved committing a theft in order to bond him with other members. The initiation ceremony featured paddling.

Additional Cuban fraternities that were active at the time of Vulcans and Jutes included the Aztecs and the Hawks. One informant reported a brief affiliation with the Hawks and close association with the president of the organization, but as this was at the end of his gang career, he gave no details on the hierarchy of Hawks, as he had been sworn to secrecy. All of these organizations shared several characteristics:

- 1 They formed in the early 1960s.
- 2 They consisted almost exclusively of Cuban members.
- 3 Their members pooled resources for parties and called themselves fraternities.
- 4 They had reputations for brawling that escalated to gunplay by the early 1970s.
- 5 They wore characteristic clothing, pullovers or tee shirts with group insignia.
- 6 They had an officer structure of organization, but members' descriptions made them seem egalitarian.
- 7 They had escalating involvement in drug use and other forms of criminality.
- 8 They all disappeared by 1978.

The fraternities' operative characteristics apparently sprang from similar circumstances of exile. Parents of the young men who joined fraternities found themselves in working class or lower middle class statuses

subsequent to leaving what in many cases had been higher statuses in Cuba before exile. They settled in acceptable but low-cost housing and set about trying to recover some of their lost social and economic wherewithal (Gonzalez, Page 1981; Page 1980). Inability to supervise children led to formation of intense social links among the exiles' offspring between the time school let out and the time work ended. The children themselves sought their own means to deal with the interethnic tension they experienced in the schools and on the streets in the form of peer groups. Just at the time these groups were forming, a major wave of opinion and behavior change (Hunt, Chambers 1976) regarding illegal drugs took place in Miami, and the rest of the United States (Page 1990), leading to greater use of illegal drugs among youth.

Of course, the situations that led to weak or non-existent supervision and involvement with fraternities varied considerably from Vulcan to Vulcan, Jute to Jute. The rigors of exile left some families attenuated, with either father or mother, or both absent (Page 1990). Some families broke up subsequent to exile, and some experienced ongoing uncertainty because of economic vicissitudes in Miami. Still, the process of joining a fraternity had a general shape, motivated by a sense of threat, need to belong socially, and economic uncertainty.

WHY EXTINCTION?

Although some literature addresses Hispanic variants of the gang phenomenon (Vigil 1988), and many authors have offered theories on how gangs form, nearly nothing has been written on how gangs decline. In the case of the Cuban fraternities, they had disappeared by the time of my investigation, and examination of the social and economic processes that took place during that period affords some clues to explain their disappearance.

The major processes that transformed Miami's Cuban community in the early 1960s into the city's dominant social and economic force by the 1970s are well known (Casal, Hernández 1975; Clark 1980). Cuban exiles had made the most of their Hispanicity in establishing businesses that reached toward willing Latin American markets and met the growing needs of their own sizeable community. Schools that they had transplanted from Cuba were educating their children, and health maintenance organizations were taking care of their

ill. Essentially, to be Cuban in Miami in 1975 constituted an advantage, not a disadvantage.

This circumstance had a clear, direct impact on gang membership during the early 1970s. One former Vulcan member, despite his dropping out of school, moved into the following situation:

I) You say that you started working at age 16 or 17, a year before you would have graduated from high school?

R) Yeah.

I) ...Was it that you were earning so well in the job that...

R) Yeah...and I got married right around there, dropped out of school, and as soon as I got married I got that job. I was sixteen years old, or seventeen, making a \$280 [weekly] wage. I didn't go back to school.

At that time, college graduates could count themselves fortunate to earn \$200 a week to start. A young man with his apparent prospects in Little Havana had reason for optimism, and little need to resort to the gang for social or economic support.

Another former member of Vulcans took a completely different path, becoming a street level marijuana dealer and never holding a wage earning job:

I) And how have you survived since then?

R) I don't know, making business in the street, you know.

I) Business in the street?

R) Selling nickel bags.

Little Havana's expanding early 1970s economy was able to accommodate this individual as well as his job holding former associate, even though he chose continued criminality instead of wage earning. In order to do so, however, he had to leave the highly visible gang setting and become more covert in his activities.

As circumstances developed in Little Havana and Hialeah, gangs became irrelevant and unnecessary. Uncertainties became less important when Cuban exiles achieved increasing numbers within their home neighborhoods (they are currently the plurality among Dade ethnicities by a considerable margin) and their economic power increased. The development of a strong Cuban community did not completely erase the social problems associated with exile, but they reduced the

numbers of people facing them so that they were no longer a critical mass of youth between 13 and 27 who needed gang membership to adapt to difficult or oppressive situations. The "carrying capacity" of the Cuban community Dade County received a further test in the arrival of 123,000 lower class Cubans during the Mariel Boatlift between May and September of 1980. After an initial period of high crime attributable to the prisoner populations included in the boatlift, the community absorbed most of these new entrants over the next few years, regardless of the site of their original settlement.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THIS BRIEF CHRONICLE

The Cubans in Miami have had several advantages in their erasure of conditions that produce gangs:

- 1 The dominant racial phenotype was indistinguishable from Euro-American, especially in the first waves of the exodus from Cuba (Portes, Clark, Bach 1977). This helped them to avoid racial prejudice in a Southern city while they were establishing themselves.
- 2 The immigrant population had a relatively high level of education upon arrival, and high levels of economic achievement in their backgrounds.
- 3 The United States government made concerted and well funded efforts to assure adjustment to life in Miami, including re-certification for professional credentials, minority business initiatives, and interim welfare programs to smooth the process.
- 4 The fact of settling in an area with strong potential in tourism and international commerce, especially commerce emanating from a region whose people shared Spanish language and much cultural background with Cubans.

These advantages stand in sharp contrast to the conditions in which gangs have assumed a multi-generational, institutional status. Typically they have the opposite conditions in three of the four areas:

- 1 Dominant racial phenotypes in many gangs correspond with those of minorities that have long backgrounds of discrimination against them.
- 2 Historically low levels of education and achievement reside in the gangs' home neighborhoods, and residents flee ethnic neighborhoods once they have achieved both.

3 Although governmental support has sometimes been massive, it has tended to be short-sighted and administered in ways that cannot foster growth in communities with no base of capacitated population.

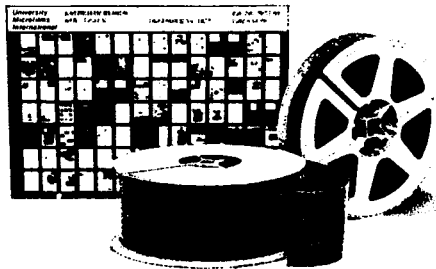
4 In no case are the surrounding ethnic communities so poor in their prospects that they cannot grow economically (Hagedorn 1988). The obvious unfairness of this circumstance exacerbates the antagonism between gang members and the "establishment."

The extinction of the Cuban fraternities points out only that the solutions to the problem of intransigent gang-based antisocial activity are far from easy. They require that we overcome racial prejudice and interethnic conflict. They demand that we make every effort to educate and capacitate members of disadvantaged communities. They suggest that we rethink the ways that we provide governmental assistance to populations in need. Finally, they dictate that we closely evaluate the developmental potential of all communities, regardless of their present state.

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THE IMPACT OF GANGS AND GANG VIOLENCE ON CONTEMPORARY YOUTH: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN COLORADO SPRINGS

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ABSTRACT

Focus groups were conducted with adolescents (n=62) in four high schools and one middle school to assess the impact of gangs on nongang youth. Findings reemphasize the importance of analyzing the youth gang phenomenon in specific social contexts that take into account immediate ecological factors. Locally, nongang youth have developed a capacity to adapt to the presence of gangs, with variations in responses contingent upon the geographic proximity to specific types of gangs and student age. Students demonstrated a critical awareness of gangs and considerable self-confidence in their ability to handle encounters with gang members. Nongang youth singled out wannabes as more prone to violence than known gang members. This analysis suggests that future studies on the impact of gangs on everyday, nongang youth may yield more fruitful results if they employed alternative conceptions and definitions of gangs and gang membership. In addition to emphasizing practical education concerning gangs, preventive programs should be directed toward middle school students, and special attention must be directed toward wannabes. Adolescent attitudes toward authority may represent a significant obstacle to the development of new programs.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of youth gangs in towns and smaller cities across the United States since 1980 reflects the growth of what is commonly called the "gang problem." Surveys have indicated an alarming number of law-violating youth gangs in suburbs and non-metropolitan areas (Bastian, Taylor 1991; Miller 1981; Needle, Stapleton 1983). In the Pikes Peak region, a recent large-scale survey of junior high and high school students in Colorado Springs showed that as many as 15 percent of local adolescents are now involved directly or indirectly in gangs (Dukes, Martinez, Stein 1995).

As youth gangs developed into a major social problem throughout the United States, gang members have been increasingly connected to criminal violence, drug use, and drug dealing in news stories as well as in the perception of the general public. Addressing the youth gang phenomenon has become a major concern among politicians, law enforcement agencies, and educational institutions at all levels of society.

Sociologists have responded with more intensive research examining the relationship between youth gangs, violence, and drugs. Gang members are more likely to commit criminal offenses than nongang members, especially serious and violent offenses (Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, Chard-Wierschem 1993). Nonetheless, gang research suggests that violence can have different origins and meanings within specific social contexts, serving a variety of distinct functions (Fagan 1989; Hagedorn 1988; Horowitz 1987; Klein, Maxson 1989; Moore 1978; Vigil 1988). Likewise, while the relationship among drug use, drug dealing,

and youth crime remains strong, gangs are diverse and shifting organizations whose members participate unequally in substance abuse (Dolan, Finney 1984; Elliott, Huizinga 1984; Fagan 1989; Hagedorn 1988; Klein, Maxson 1989; Spergel 1989). While most studies on youth gangs have focussed on the inner-city youth of major metropolitan areas, as gangs and gang activity have emerged in smaller towns and cities, sociologists have begun to conduct research in such communities (Winfree, Fuller, Vigil, Mays 1992; Zevitz 1993; Zevitz, Takata 1992).

Yet the "gang problem" concerns not just members of these gangs; it also concerns youths that are not involved with gangs. In what ways do the existence of gangs affect the youth in a community? How do young people respond to the challenge of gangs? And how are youths affected by a community's effort to confront a gang problem? Answers to these questions are important to understanding the nature and meaning of the youth gang phenomenon for smaller American towns and cities. Thus far, research has concentrated on the culture and social structure of gangs and gang members. Surprisingly little is known about reactions to gangs and gang activity by nongang members, even among the youth of major U.S. cities where most studies have been conducted. Colorado Springs is a smaller city with a growing gang presence, and it offers an ideal opportunity for gauging the impact of gangs on everyday youth. The present study represents an exploration of the general impact of gangs and gang activity on area youth, thus identifying factors that should be considered in developing gang prevention programs for these youths.

Table 1: Demographics of Focus Groups

	North	East	Central	South	Middle	Total
Male	6	11	4	8	5	34
Female	5	12	3	4	4	38
White	4	16	5	4	9	38
African-American	4	4	2	4	--	14
Hispanic	3	3	--	3	--	9
Other	--	--	--	1	--	1
Senior	9	--	--	--	--	9
Junior	1	--	--	--	--	1
Sophomore	1	10	--	--	--	11
Freshmen	--	13	7	12	--	32
8th Grade	--	--	--	--	3	3
7th Grade	--	--	--	--	3	3
6th Grade	--	--	--	--	3	3

be overlooked or forgotten by the participant in an individual interview, resulting in a greater range of relevant opinions and responses. Consequently, the group interview generally yields a more diverse array of information and affords a more extended basis both for suggesting interpretations grounded in experiences of given situation as well as for designing systematic research on the topic (Merton, Fiske, Kendall [1956] 1990).

Despite its social-scientific origins, the use of focus groups in the academic community has remained rare, if not scorned altogether. Merton recently has cited its extensive use and misuse in marketing as a significant cause for the reluctance to use focus groups as a means of gathering scientific data (Merton, Fiske, Kendall [1956] 1990). Nonetheless, many researchers agree that results can be cautiously generalized to a similar population, despite the fact that focus groups are seldom chosen at random. As Staley (1990) argued, the validity of a focus group research study may be increased by continuing to conduct groups until the responses of participants become predictable and no new information surfaces. Usually this point is reached after four or five sessions have been conducted on the same topic.

METHODS

Focus Group Sample

The interpretations presented here draw upon qualitative data gathered in five focus groups from different schools in Colorado Springs. The focus group study was reviewed

and approved by a departmental human subjects committee at Colorado University, Colorado Springs, and interviews were conducted between November, 1994 and May, 1995. The four high schools and one middle school represented a cross-section of the demographics and social ecology of Colorado Springs, the largest city in the Pikes Peak region. The first high school was located on the city's north side, a middle-class area; the second and third high schools were located in a transitional zone from the the city's north side to the south side; the fourth high school was located on the city's south side, a lower middle-class/working class area. The middle school was located in the transitional zone between the city's north and south sides. For purposes of convenience and anonymity, the high schools will be referred to as North, East, Central, and South High Schools.

The schools assumed responsibility for selecting 10-12 students to participate, and securing parental consent and student assent. Four of the schools chose students who would participate actively, based on recommendations from teachers and counselors; the fifth school randomly selected every twentieth ninth- and tenth-grade student. All students were informed prior to the focus groups that they would be asked to discuss the issue of gangs in Colorado Springs. In no case were students chosen because of any suspicion that they were gang members. No students in the groups evidenced gang membership, and comparatively few appeared to be "at risk" youths. Anonymity was ensured in that the school staff

LITERATURE REVIEW

The great diversity among gangs and gang members – the nature of their affiliation, their social organization, and their involvement in delinquency and violence – represents a significant challenge to contemporary social research. This is especially true in light of ecological approaches that have identified specific social and economic characteristics of communities which contribute to a greater likelihood of gang involvement and delinquency. Such factors as population density, ethnic composition, poverty, transience rate, housing patterns, and land use offer renewed insight for explaining the geographical distribution of gangs and gang activity (Bursik, Webb 1982; Curry, Spergel 1988, 1992; Reiss, Tonry 1986).

In shifting the focus of research from these major urban areas to smaller towns and cities, two potential analytic dangers arise. First is the possibility of theoretical overdetermination with its consequent ontological commitments. Earlier studies of youth gangs in non-metropolitan areas have tended to interpret their findings in a framework derived from large-city gang research (Rosenbaum, Grant 1983). As a result, small-city gang research risks overlooking important distinctions that may exist in the organizational structures and activities of youth gangs in different settings.

The second analytic danger concerns the extent to which major metropolitan gangs influence the growth of youth gangs in smaller communities, potentially causing an underestimation of the development of youth gangs independent of external recruitment. Earlier research by Hardman (1969) and Rosenbaum and Grant (1983) suggested that the size, structure, organization, and delinquent behavior of youth gangs in smaller cities resulted from the influence exerted by metropolitan gangs in nearby major cities. While one study described a high level of geographic mobility among gang members in establishing drug distribution connections, subsequent studies concluded that the diffusion of gangs from large urban centers only minimally affected gang formation in smaller communities (Hagedorn 1988; Huff 1989; Maxson, Woods, Klein 1995; Zevitz, Takata 1992).

Beyond issues related to differences between youth gangs in major metropolitan areas and elsewhere, one area largely overlooked in gang research is the impact of youth gangs on society at large, and upon everyday

youth in particular. A preoccupation with gangs may neglect the majority of youth who are neither involved in gangs nor delinquency, but are affected nonetheless by the influence of youth gangs.

Initial efforts have been made to gauge this impact upon everyday youth. As a part of their studies on public perceptions of the youth gang problem, Takata and Zevitz (1990) and Pryor and McGarrell (1993) surveyed both youths and adults that yielded important relevant findings. Both studies concluded that youths have different perceptions about gangs than adults. Perception of gangs by adults were shaped largely by media portrayals, but youths were more likely to be aware of gang activity in their own and other neighborhoods to give larger estimates of the number of gang members in their communities, and to perceive gangs as more mixed in terms of ethnicity and age. Furthermore, Takata and Zevitz found that youths were less likely than adults to describe the threat of gangs as very serious, but they were more likely to perceive gangs as active in their own neighborhood. Pryor and McGarrell indicated that perceptions of the youth gang problem differed from neighborhood to neighborhood, dependent upon exposure to gangs and the media's identification of the gang problem with specific neighborhoods.

While the survey method used in these studies is useful in tracking trends, it is less useful in exploring the perception and impact of gangs, drugs, and delinquency on youth in general, or in discovering what factors should be considered in developing programs for everyday youth (McConnell 1994). To obtain such qualitative information, focussed group interviews were conducted among junior high and high school students in Colorado Springs.

Focus groups have a number of advantages over individual interviews, especially when participant observation, a complementary method, is not a viable alternative. Merton, whose *The Focused Interview* provided the foundations for this method, has argued that social processes inherent in a group often uncover a greater depth of cognitive ideas, sentiments, fears, anxieties, and symbolism than individual interviews. As each group member introduces personal comments within a relatively unstructured context, implicit standards are set for others to flow toward a progressive release of inhibitions and subjective experiences. Such group interaction also prompts individuals to recall details that might

Table 2: Perceived Problems Facing Youth in Colorado Springs*

	North		East		Central		South		Middle		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Drugs and Alcohol	6	30	10	32	7	35	7	54	7	29	37	34
Gangs	2	10	5	16	5	25	2	15	5	20	19	18
Crime and Violence	2	10	4	13	3	15	2	15	6	25	17	16
Peer Pressure	3	15	3	10	2	10	1	8	6	25	15	14
Sex and Pregnancy	3	15	4	13	--	--	--	--	--	--	7	6
Future Employment	2	10	1	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	3
School	1	5	2	7	1	5	1	8	--	--	5	5
Other	1	5	2	7	2	10	--	--	--	--	5	5
Total Responses	20	100	31	100	20	100	13	100	24	100	108	100

*Students (n=62) were asked what they considered the three biggest issues facing young people in Colorado Springs. Many students listed only one or two issues.

knew nothing of what was said in focus groups. Furthermore, the group moderators did not know any personal information about the youths. The groups were representative of the student bodies in terms of gender and ethnicity, but younger students were overrepresented (For the demographics of each group, see Table 1).

Focus Group Format

One session of up to two hours was conducted with each group. Since the discussion topic included gangs and drugs, the use of recording media may have inhibited candid responses from our participants. Therefore, the focus groups were conducted with a moderator who guided the discussion, a notetaker to record comments, and an observer to follow significant interactions. Otherwise, procedures outlined by Greenbaum (1993) and Staley (1990) were used as a guide.

The sessions followed a standard question-answer-discussion format. At the outset, the moderator stated that the purpose of the group was to explore the concerns and problems local teenagers were facing, assuring that the group members would remain anonymous. To initiate the group interview and encourage the participants to structure the discussion, as prescribed by Merton et al ([1956] 1990), students were asked simply to list what they considered to be the three biggest issues facing young people in Colorado Springs. These responses were collected and tabulated for the respondents (Table 2). Their answers formed the basis for the following discussion of problems. Students were then asked to describe in writing what the ideal program would be to handle these important problems. Again responses were discussed among the

group.

To provide a baseline for the analysis of discussion data, a brief set of five questions was distributed for students to fill out following these first two discussions. Three general questions asked: "Tell us what concerns (if any) do you have for your own safety?" "What do you think the schools and police can do to help to take care of these concerns?" and "What would you do if someone you knew came up to you and offered you drugs? Please be specific." Furthermore, while the relatively unstandardized format of a focus group is not the appropriate tool for establishing systematic counts measuring the frequency of designated responses (Merton et al [1956] 1990), to provide a succinct corroboration of focus group findings, the questionnaire also included two quantitative questions, with responses recorded on a 5-point scale: "How often (if ever) are you ever afraid for your personal safety?" and "Some people say that gangs are the biggest problem in Colorado Springs facing people of your age. Are they?" The answers were collected but not discussed among the group (see Tables 3 and 4).

Finally, the groups discussed three local programs for youth: D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), P.A.L. (Police Athletic League), and Teen Night.

The focus group findings reflected the group consensus, as recorded by the notetaker and observer. They provided a means for obtaining a preliminary assessment of the impact of gangs and gang activity on area youth. Also, results identified factors that should be considered in developing programs for these youths. Individual statements quoted below are representative of statements made during the focus group sessions.

Table 3: Perception of the Gang Problem

Some people say that gangs are the biggest problem in Colorado Springs facing people your age. Are they?

	North		East		Central		South		Middle		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes, for sure	--	--	1	4	1	4	1	8	--	--	3	5
Yes, probably	1	10	7	30	3	43	6	50	4	44	21	34
Maybe	4	36	11	48	3	43	3	25	5	56	26	42
No, probably not	4	36	3	13	--	--	2	17	--	--	9	15
No, for sure	2	18	1	4	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	5

FINDINGS

The Gang Problem in Colorado Springs

Each focus group expressed concern with the growth of gangs in Colorado Springs. As one student from South High expressed it, the gang problem "is growing faster than anyone thinks." Students at North High, however, said that the threat of gangs has been "blown out of proportion" by negative media coverage. Students could identify eleven active youth gangs in Colorado Springs. Students from all four high schools concurred that gangs were most active on the south side of the city. As one North High student put it,

*It's not all that right to be alone on the south side.
That's when I begin to wonder about my safety.*

While each group expressed concern about the gang problem, this concern varied according to the school's location in the city (Table 3).

Students believed that most gangs were neighborhood gangs rather than city-wide, and that neighborhood boundaries were the principal determinant in the composition of gangs. They said that each neighborhood was like a separate little town, and that within these neighborhoods gang affiliations could be determined by graffiti that denoted ethnicity and territorial boundaries. They believed that gangs were segregated along ethnic lines, but some gangs had mixed membership.

Gang activity inside schools reflected the geographic concentration of gang activity on the south side of the city. At South High, students cited gang graffiti and students armed with switch-blades and guns as constant reminders of the gang presence. While students at East High did not believe that there was a gang problem in their school, seven students in the focus group knew of gang members in their school, and four students knew gang members personally. Students at Central High stated that there were gang members at their school, but that most gang-related activity

occurred outside of school. At North High, students said that there was not a gang problem at their school, believing that there were no real gang members among the students. Instead, self-proclaimed gang members were actually "wannabes," and they could be identified by their lack of specific knowledge about gangs.

All focus groups agreed that wannabes posed a special problem. Wannabes were perceived as more dangerous and more likely to start trouble than regular gang members. This is because of their desire to "advertise" themselves as "bad" to the real gang members. Some students also believed that wannabes were the most likely to get hurt.

Participants stated that gangs in Colorado Springs did not actively recruit young people to join them. Only occasionally did gangs ask someone to join them. Students agreed that if someone turned down gang membership, there was no pressure or retaliation from the gang upon refusal to join. One student stated that he had been offered gang membership, and his decision to decline was respected by the gang. Instead, a prospective member usually will ask to become a gang member. Prior to this request, prospective members will begin to hang around a gang and wear that gang's specific clothing. Some students also claimed that upon joining a gang, a person usually is "jumped" into a gang, meaning the initiation is to be beat up by the gang members.

The presence of gangs has increased concern for personal safety among students in the Pikes Peak region, especially among freshmen and sophomores at Central and East High Schools. Some students expressed these concerns in the general terms of being shot or stabbed. Others, however, explicitly made a connection between gangs and concern for personal safety. One student wrote,

My concern is that I might get killed or injured in a gang-related activity

they cited the south side as a center of gang activity, they also mentioned the southwest and northeast as other locations. Not surprisingly, these students' estimates of "students in gangs" at Middle High school ranged from 100 to 250 students, figures that must be considered excessively high.

Like the high school students, the Middle School students did not believe that gangs actively recruited their members. Instead, as one student put it, "You have to impress them first." These students also went into great detail concerning gang initiations. For example, one girl said that to join a gang, "you have to have unprotected sex with a lot of guys at once." They also considered gang membership to be a lifetime commitment.

Authority, Alienation, and Prevention

Many students, in both the high schools and the middle school, expressed anxiety and doubt with regard to their future prospects, and most felt that the problem of gangs could not be alleviated in the near future. Almost all of the students believed that police and school authorities can do little to prevent drug use and gang activity. Consequently, students expressed resignation, powerlessness, and a lack of control over their circumstances.

Students in each of the focus groups also exhibited considerable ambivalence toward, and a lack of trust in, the police and school authorities. Many students in these schools believed that policemen viewed them generally with suspicion, and often harassed them because of their age or their ethnicity. At the same time, students at Central High pointed out that the police in the school's neighborhood normally would ignore a group that exhibited characteristics of gang membership, and instead, they would approach and "pick on" individual youths.

A similar view prevailed concerning school administrators. As one student said, "They watch everything you do. They think everything is gang-related." Many students also expressed considerable indifference toward administrators who ran youth-oriented programs in schools. Youth workers and counselors, for instance, were considered out of touch with teenage concerns. Students at Middle School exhibited even stronger negative opinions toward school authorities, whom they complained would "call the cops for the littlest things." Consequently, these students claimed that they were required to make

unnecessary court appearances, pay fines, and do community service.

These attitudes toward authorities emerged most strongly in a discussion of "colors," especially at East High where all hats recently had been banned. The students felt that the "no hat policy" was an over-reaction, since very few hats were actually gang related, and they were angry that they could do nothing about it. This group agreed when one summed up the entire issue by saying, "A hat never shot anybody." Instead, these students expressed concern for their safety only when wearing certain colors in public.

Nonetheless, many students suggested that the authorities should take stronger measures against gangs. One student even suggested that the only solution would be to "lock them all up." A student from East echoed this sentiment by saying,

The police and the court systems should give them more than a slap on the wrist.

Many students also indicated that a lack of rapport with their parents increased the sense of uncertainty concerning the problem of drug use and gangs. Many students come from families where both parents worked, and often these teens came home to an empty house every day with nothing for them to do in the afternoon. For example, one student mentioned that parents who themselves abuse drugs and alcohol make poor role models for their children, and that "they need to quit if they want us to quit." Another student stated that "peer pressure to use drugs was especially strong when one's home life is bad."

Given such distancing between school and police on the one hand, and home and family on the other, it is not surprising that students cited both reasons for and against joining gangs. Students from North, East, and Central High Schools generally emphasized the positive aspects of gang membership. These students emphasized that gangs are "like a second family" to their members. Young people join gangs because they get more attention from gangs than from family members or because gangs offer a safe haven from problems at home. Likewise, gang membership provides participants with a greater feeling of acceptance and self-esteem. In general, the students believed that if you were experiencing problems, your gang would be there to help you. Finally, gangs provide

Table 4: Concern for Personal Safety

	How often (if ever) are you ever afraid for your own personal safety?											
	North		East		Central		South		Middle		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never	5	46	4	17	--	--	4	33	2	22	15	24
Rarely	3	27	10	44	5	71	2	17	3	33	23	37
Some days	3	27	8	35	2	29	5	42	4	44	22	36
Most days	--	--	1	4	--	--	1	8	--	--	2	3
Every day	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0	0

while another connected a fear for safety with the perceptions that gangs "travel in herds" and "think they can do anything."

While freshmen from South High expressed similar concerns for personal safety, these students did not express a specific fear of gangs, though feelings of uncertainty were more prevalent because students came from different neighborhoods. During their group discussion, they believed they were safe as long as they "minded their own business" and avoided contact with gang members. As a consequence, they were constantly on alert when at school.

Either due to their age or where they lived, seniors at North High expressed the least concern with violence or gangs in their neighborhood. For example, one student wrote,

I fear getting in a car accident more than I fear a violent act inflicted upon me.

These qualitative findings are corroborated by the focus group survey data (Table 4).

Students in each group considered the problem of drugs as largely separate from that of gangs, despite awareness that drug sales offer gang members the chance to make money. Students at Central High, for example, believed that gang members did not necessarily do more drugs than non-gang members, emphasizing that some gangs did not even use drugs. Indeed, as a separate issue, drugs and alcohol were listed in each focus group as a greater concern than gangs, crime, and violence (Table 2).

According to the students, drugs are readily available, especially marijuana and alcohol, and peer pressure was cited as the most important cause for the use of drugs. Furthermore, the students made a strong distinction between "hard drugs" and other drugs. One student wrote:

If someone offered me alcohol or a cigarette I

would probably immediately accept it. If it were an illegal drug, such as marijuana, I don't think I'd do a drug like that. Marijuana maybe, because it's not that harmful.

Gangs and the Middle School

The students of Middle School presented an interesting study in contrasts. These students argued that the media has exaggerated the violence of gangs and has made gangs in "scapegoats." They argued that kids knew more about gangs than the police, and many of their statements proved relatively informative. In their opinion,

the more you know about gangs, then you have less to fear—especially if you know the signals.

Yet much of their information was based on hearsay and rumor; often they would begin assertions with "a friend of mine told me." Consequently, many of their statements demonstrated a lack of direct experience with gangs. The findings from this focus group were therefore more indicative of the psychological impact of gangs on area youth than they were of gangs themselves.

In general, the nine students from Middle School expressed concern with the growing gang problem. Unlike the older students, however, they held an altogether negative opinion of gangs. In their opinion, gangs were more a show than a threat. However, these students had a greater difficulty distinguishing between gang and non-gang members than the high school students. For example, some students considered "skaters"—"grunge types" who ride on skateboards—to be a type of gang.

In discussing the city's gang problem, these students made numerous references to local members of Crips and Bloods, as well as to the Sons of Silence and the Hell's Angels motorcycle gangs. Furthermore, these students had difficulty in identifying the locality of gangs in the Colorado Springs area. Why

protection to their members in that gang's neighborhood.

Students from South High, as well as some from Central and East Highs, expressed the opposite opinion. They believed that gangs basically "want to gain control," and they emphasized that the purposes of gangs included acquiring drugs and money. They said that gangs provide greater freedom because their members can make more money through illegal activities than they can through employment.

Most of the participants expressed the opinion that the answer to the gang problem was education. However, they believed prevention programs like Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) were ineffective. Virtually all of the focus group members had participated in the program, and they explained that it was ineffective because the program was "too repetitive," providing insufficient information with which "to make decisions." They stated that they would prefer to have the curriculum delivered by peers with "real world experience" rather than a police officer. Furthermore, these students believed that both drugs and gangs were a part of growing up, and that these issues needed to be addressed throughout junior high and high school.

DISCUSSION

The Impact of Gangs on Youth

Findings suggest that specific neighborhoods determine the distribution and structure of gangs and gang activity. Based on student statements concerning gangs within their schools and neighborhoods, as well as elsewhere in the city, the typology developed by Feldman, Mandel, and Fields (1985) appears the most useful in differentiating gang activity in Colorado Springs. According to this typology, the majority of gang activity in the region can be defined in terms of neighborhood social or fighting gangs rather than entrepreneurial gangs with national affiliations (Feldman et al 1985).

In sections of the city characterized by lower levels of socioeconomic status, like those where South High is located, fighting gangs have emerged. These are the gangs whose names were well known and linked by focus group participants to those neighborhoods that local police officials have identified as the core of gang activity. Antagonistic toward other gangs and often engaged in drug use and selling, fighting gangs are the most

territorial type of gangs (Feldman et al 1985). This finding is consistent with Zevitz's study of Kenosha gangs (1993). Despite the existence of fighting gangs, incidents of gang violence appear to be comparatively isolated and sporadic. This finding is supported by Hughes and Dukes (1997). Gangs in more affluent sections of the city, however, are predominantly social gangs. Gangs in neighborhoods like those where North High is located are brought together for the purpose of engaging in largely recreational activities, with little or no evidence of fighting or violence, a finding consistent with the social type of gang (Feldman et al 1985).

Likewise, the data suggest that gang activity and violence have not been linked specifically to the sale and distribution of illegal drugs by broader-based, entrepreneurial gangs. Entrepreneurial gangs are concerned with attaining status by means of money through such illegal activities as drug dealing or theft. These gangs exhibit a higher degree of organization and their use of violence is more often instrumentally tied to the control and distribution of drugs and money (Feldman et al 1985). The lack of entrepreneurial gangs is also suggested by the fact that the focus groups sharply distinguished gangs and drug use as distinct problems; in each focus group, the students rated drugs and alcohol as the greater problem, and in three schools they did so by at least a 2-1 margin. (The local police department has also concluded that local drug sales are not controlled by gangs, as is often the case in other cities.) The lack of the entrepreneurial type of gang, with its need for carriers and lookouts, may help to explain the lack of active recruiting practices among gangs in the Pikes Peak region. While local gangs may use drugs, this use is not yet dependent upon gang activity. This pattern is in sharp contrast to gang activity in Chicago as described by Kotlowitz (1991).

In general, these findings reemphasize the importance of studying youth gangs and gang activity in specific social contexts that take into consideration local ecological factors, in both major urban areas and smaller towns and cities, as suggested by Curry and Spergel (1988, 1992). The differentiation of gangs in Colorado Springs, with fighting gangs emerging on the south side of the city, reflects social stratification processes that create poor, disenfranchised communities that are subjected to stigma and repression in a systematic fashion (Moore 1991; Padilla 1992; Vigil

1988).

Against this atmosphere of uncertainty, the focus group findings suggest that many area youths have nonetheless developed a capacity to adapt to the gang presence and to respond positively to the challenge presented by growth of gangs. Youths appear to be learning factually about gangs and how to deal with them. In general, students demonstrated that: 1) they had acquired a substantial amount of specific, everyday knowledge about gangs in the Pikes Peak region; 2) while students expressed concerns about being victims of violence, they did not specifically connect this fear with gangs; and 3) they showed considerable self-confidence in their ability to handle encounters with gang members.

Variations in these responses to the impact of local gang activity seem contingent upon geographic distribution of gangs and student age. The students at North High School, the only group composed primarily of seniors, believed that the threat of gangs has been exaggerated, and they disagreed most with the statement that "gangs are the biggest problem" for area youth (Table 3). Of all the groups, they demonstrated the most factual knowledge about gangs and the types of gang association, and they exhibited the greatest confidence in handling gang encounters. Perhaps most significantly, they displayed a strong desire to educate other youths concerning the dangers involved with gangs and drugs.

At the same time, the freshmen of South High School demonstrated comparable experience. Despite the location of their school within neighborhoods where gang activity is most pronounced, these students did not express a specific fear of gang violence. On the contrary, because of their first-hand knowledge of gangs and gang members, they considered themselves safe so long as they "steered clear" of gangs. Despite being younger than students at North High, these freshmen showed self-confidence in dealing with encounters involving gang members that was at least equal to that of the seniors at North.

In some respects, it is in the neighborhoods where Central High, East High, and the Middle School are located that the psychological impact of gangs apparently are felt most. These schools are located in a transitional zone between the south side neighborhoods where fighting gangs have emerged and the more affluent northern neighborhoods where social gangs are the dominant type. In

this part of town, the social gang continues to be predominant, but there is evidence of a growing influence and impact of fighting gangs. These neighborhoods are under the influence of two different types of gangs, with their different patterns of behavior and action. Consequently, unlike their peers at South High, the freshman and sophomores of Central and East High considered gangs to be a growing problem. They voiced the greatest concern for personal safety, and they most often specifically connected this fear to gangs. Finally, they demonstrated the greatest uncertainty about how to deal with gang situations.

Students at Middle School proved to be the least knowledgeable about gangs. These students were the least precise about the geographic location of gangs, had great difficulty distinguishing between gang and non-gang members, and often did not distinguish between youth gangs and older, motorcycle gangs. Not surprisingly, they exhibited the greatest apprehension at the thought of having to deal with gang members.

The data from these focus groups complement and advance findings in related studies on the perceptions of everyday youth toward gangs and gang activity. In some respects, the present analysis seems to confirm the findings of Takata and Zevitz (1990) and Pryor and McGarrell (1993). In general, the youths in our study identified gangs in their own neighborhood and other neighborhoods, had personal interactions with gang members, and identified differences in age and ethnicity among gangs. Similar to youths in Takata and Zevitz's Racine study (1990), the focus group participants seemed more sure about their knowledge of gangs in their own immediate school or neighborhood. And like Pryor and McGarrell (1993), exposure to gangs and gang activities in local neighborhood contexts seemed to decrease a youth's appraisal of potential gang-related danger, consequently leading to a less serious perception of a gang problem.

These findings, however, appeared varied according to age and to exposure with gangs that differed according to the type of gang and geographic location. While it is impossible to discriminate between these two effects within the limits of this study, the data draw attention to differential responses based on the youth's age and especially their definition of gangs and gang members, neither of which are fully accounted for in the two related

studies cited above. In their study, Takata and Zevitz (1990) concluded that youth's perceptions of gang members are much more "amorphous" when compared to the stereotypical adult perceptions reflecting "official" definitions of local authorities and the media. Their data illustrated how most young people observe collective delinquent behavior as more of a near-group occurrence, and how young people may find it easier to recognize certain activities as gang-related because they see the gang as an ephemeral group.

Based on the present analysis, however, these "amorphous" perceptions may actually reflect a greater understanding of different types of gangs, gang members, and gang activities – an understanding that appears in stark contrast to the monolithic conception of gangs implied by local authorities and the media, a conception that these students rejected on the basis of their personal experiences. This analysis suggests that future studies on the impact of gangs on everyday youth may yield more fruitful results if they employed alternative conceptions and definitions of gangs and gang membership.

Policy Implications

Further growth of gangs in Colorado Springs may result in the transformation of social or fighting types of gangs into the entrepreneurial type with stronger affiliations to national gangs. Findings suggest that gangs and gang activity represent a challenge not only to police or school administrators, but to entire communities regardless of size and demographics. Programs to reduce the impact of gangs on area youth should most immediately address issues of practical education regarding gangs, alcohol and drugs, disarmament of youth, and improving police-youth relations. Programs should also emphasize the role of knowledge and education, both as a meaningful experience and as the power to advance up the socioeconomic ladder. Programs should emphasize the development of vocational skills and the creation of future job opportunities that will strengthen the economic self-support of youth and provide recreational opportunities that offer a positive alternative to the perceived "benefits" of gang membership. Above all, policy directed at both gang and nongang youthful offenders must consider the finding that emphasizing education can insulate youth from gangs and from deviance. Education provides opportunities

for achievement, promotes an identity as a valuable member of society, and can preclude involvement in serious deviance, delinquency and crime (Dukes et al 1995).

Data from this and related research suggests that special attention needs to be directed toward wannabe gang members, not only because they provide the basis for the rapid growth of gangs in the region, but also because wannabes are a significant problem in their own right. While many of the focus group participants demonstrated considerable self-confidence in their ability to handle encounters with gang members, they exhibited less confidence concerning wannabes. In fact wannabe gang members emerged as a distinct variation of the gang problem in Colorado Springs. Students in each school stated that wannabes are more likely to engage in violence. Consequently, the students believed that wannabes represented a greater threat than gang members. This inference may be of special interest to research on gangs in smaller communities where the lack of a criminal subculture discourages the emergence of more organized gangs.

This finding also supports an interpretation of why wannabes are more deviant than nonmembers, though not as deviant as active gang members, as indicated by a survey of area youth (Dukes et al 1995). As part of a process of anticipatory socialization, wannabes attempt to gain respect from gang members or to cultivate the style of life and behavior necessary to prepare them for gang membership. For this reason, wannabes may engage in specific and openly public displays of deviance, thus conveying the impression to nongang youth that they are unpredictable and prone to violent, criminal activities, and so represent a higher risk of personal injury than do active gang members. By contrast, active members may no longer need to engage in such dramaturgical performances for the benefit of fellow gang members. Further research is required, however, to better specify the role wannabes have as a part of the overall impact of gangs and gang violence on everyday youth.

More immediately, practical education concerning gangs should be directed toward middle-school students. Data from this focus group research indicate that area high school students have already developed a degree of "street smart" knowledge that has allowed them to cope with the impact of gangs and gang activity. Inevitably, such knowledge

learned from practical experience has both its strengths and its weaknesses. As this study suggests, middle-school students demonstrate a growing but very incomplete knowledge of gangs on the one hand, and a nearly universal negative opinion about gangs on the other. This combination may provide an ideal point to intervene with a preventive program that can build upon, focus, and direct the "street smart" learning that the region's youth is already acquiring in their everyday experience.

A caveat to any policy recommendation must be the apparent distancing effect between students and authority. In marked contrast to their self-reliance concerning gangs, students in the focus groups exhibited a considerable lack of trust toward local police and school officials, believing that neither group could (or would) effectively confront the growing problem of gangs. They particularly felt harassed when police mistook them for gang members or when school authorities "clamped down" on gangs or "gang-related" stuff. It also is clear from the focus group discussion that interactions between local teens and police frequently produced resentment. Here their reliance upon their everyday knowledge and experience of youth gangs may contribute to a distrust of authority, a distrust that is also evident in their belief that even youth counselors are out of touch with teenage concerns. These students emphasized that, to be effective, any preventive educational program must be presented by persons who have actual experience with gangs, drugs, and violence.

The extent to which this resentment is directed toward all adult authority figures is unclear. In general, these students demonstrated a contradictory attitude toward authority. (Ironically, despite resentment toward police and educational administrators, a majority of students suggested that federal and local governments should increase their police force and punish gang members more severely. Thus, these students appear to have made a distinction between the abstract level of government, which should enact more policies aimed at confronting the gang problem, and the immediate level of everyday experience with local policy enforcement, which was viewed as ineffective and often the source of harassment.)

Consequently, middle-school programs concerning gang awareness should involve senior high school students to present important portions of the curriculum. This approach

to a preventive program is supported by the stated preference for peers as mentors by students in the focus groups. Such an interactive education would also reinforce the social responsibility of senior high school students by enabling them to act as role models for other students. This recommendation is supported by research that has concluded that the most successful drug education programs for adolescents are those "interactive" ones in which older adolescents present the curriculum (Tobler 1986).

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STREET VS. "MAFIA" GANG PURSUIT: THE SOCIAL RACISM OF CONTEMPORARY CRIMINAL JUSTICE GANG POLICY

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ABSTRACT

Absent from the vast literature on gangs are the dynamics of racial and class centered policies of criminal justice gang punishment and pursuit. Scholars involved in gang research presume the objectivity of street gang policies today. The bias of the nation's gang policies appears unjustified given the failure of social policy and the high priorities which law enforcement agencies and the courts have applied to minority street gangs. The same institutions give relatively low priority to enforcing criminal laws against organized, rich, typically white, syndicate criminal gangs. In the absence of any credible basis for this dichotomy of gang policy today, we present an argument for "social racism" as the principle framework guiding this nation's criminal justice gang policies.

INTRODUCTION

Gangs, as an often deviant aspect of social structure, have been the subject of social research for at least the last seventy years (Yates 1995a). Thrasher's (1927) original insights on juvenile gangs during the 1920s provided not only a successful framework for studying the dynamics of these groups, but also helped stir public debate, social curiosity, and broad academic interest in the phenomenon of gangs. Gangs have evolved to an unprecedented level and range today. The early "near-group" structures, which defined most of the groups Thrasher studied, have given way to much more complex social and structural dynamics within gang groupings. The institutionalized arrangements defining more than a few urban gangs today are characterized by a level of group dimension that would be hardly recognizable to the early writers on metropolitan social gangs (Yates 1995a).

The irony of law enforcement agencies' aggressive and punitive approach to pursuing "street gangs," while at the same time relishing in a policy of toleration and quiet disregard concerning the offenses of powerful "Mafia" gangs, is that much of the basis for the harsh policies of street gang pursuit today find so little evidence justifying such policies. While law enforcement openly operates under the banner of seeing a strong connection between escalating violence among juveniles and the proliferation of youthful street gangs, the vast empirical scholarship establishes no strong link between juvenile gangs and the recent sharp increases in criminal violence among some juveniles (Fagan 1989; Howell 1994; Miller 1982).

Similarly, the popular images of street gangs spreading and expanding their numbers—and equally frightening for the public—expanding their trade in illicit drug operations, have also constituted a basis for the current

aggressive policies of street gang pursuit. When these images are matched with the evidence of gang migration and its alleged connection to an expanding urban drug trafficking network, the correlation fails to find any considerable basis in fact (Howell 1994; Miller 1982; Skolnick 1989). Most studies on street gangs find little evidence of gang unit relocations as a robust dynamic of inner-city urban neighborhoods in the 1980s and the 1990s (Hagedorn 1988; Howell 1994; Huff 1989; Maxson, Klein 1993; Miller 1982; Rosenbaum, Grant 1983). Further, what evidence there is of new drug satellite markets following migrating gang members to new locations has shown that these structures are tied largely to individuals and groups other than gangs (Goldstein, Huff 1993; Hagedorn 1991; Johnson, Williams, Dei, Sanabria 1988; Klein 1995; Skolnick 1989). While acknowledging gang involvement in drug trafficking at some level, the general consensus of the research is that drug trafficking involving gang members predominantly involves individual gang members in drug distribution networks which are neither gang-controlled nor reflective of organized gang activities (Decker 1993; Esbensen, Huizinga 1993; Fagan 1989; Goldstein, Huff 1993; Hagedorn 1991, 1994; Joe 1994; Klein 1995; Mieczkowski 1990; Williams 1989).

Street gang policy today, appears inspired by yet other images of high rates of homicidal violence on inner-city streets being largely a result of disputes involving street gangs over drug distribution territories (Howell 1994; Miller 1982). Prevailing evidence discredits the image of high incidences of inner-city homicide violence and its connection to drug trafficking street gangs. Most studies have simply failed to document extensive involvement of gangs in drug trafficking as an organizational activity (Bryant 1989; Howell 1994; Klein, Maxson, Cunningham 1988, 1991;

Miller 1982, 1994). Most salient to explaining homicidal violence involving street gangs are the disputes that revolve around gang turf, rather than notions of violence induced by gang-related street drug sales (Block, Block 1993; Howell 1994; Skolnick 1989).

On the other hand, the activities of large, rich, typically White, powerful "Mafia" and other syndicate criminal gangs have seemed more the deserving object for the tough law enforcement policies targeting the nation's gangs today. With an extremely efficient and secure hierarchy and structure to run the illicit trade generated by an unparalleled level of gang organizational activity and force found today, "Mafia" and other syndicate-style criminal gangs have clearly warranted the most intense surveillance, police pursuit, and criminal court scrutiny employed in the policies directed toward gangs and other organizationally-related criminal activities. Yet criminal justice agencies have not given priority to the pursuit of prominent syndicate gang structures. Why this is the case may be found in answers that go beyond the often superficial and empty rhetoric of public officials' alleged claim of the invincible power of organized syndicate criminal gangs.

APPLYING THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL RACISM TO THE POLITICS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE GANG POLICY

George M. Fredrickson introduced the concept of social racism having constituted an experience for early African-Americans—unique and separate from their history in encountering ideological racism. He defined social racism as the treatment of blacks as if they were inherently inferior for reasons of race. Social racism is racist behavior that can be inferred from actual social relationships which can thrive long after ideological racism has been discredited in the educated circles of a dominant group (Fredrickson 1971). Such a concept as distinct from its ideological derivative, finds considerable credibility in both historic and current patterns of social interactions that involve people of color in their relations with whites in American society. Social racism, as distinct from ideological racism, has been successfully presented as originating in the late 17th century, well before 19th century based ideological racism (Fredrickson 1971). America was not originally racist, but became racist gradually as a result of a series of crimes against African-American humanity stemming

primarily from selfishness, greed, and the pursuit of privilege (Fredrickson 1971).

In the late 17th century, social racism is thought to have been born out of changing laws with regard to interracial marriage, the denial of the right of free blacks to own property or vote, and other restrictions meant to subordinate blacks racially to whites (Russell 1913; Twombly, Moore 1967; Wright 1921). The origins of ideological racism on the other hand—the more direct and explicit rationalized racist ideology—is viewed as a response to 19th century North American humanitarianism, and its campaign of abolition against economic systems based on the use of slaves (Fredrickson 1971).

Social racism is characteristically present, then, with any pattern of social relations where a dominant white majority will treat a subordinate black minority as if they were inferior on the basis of their race. Such patterns of racially-motivated social behavior are arguably present today in institutionalized arrangements of structured social inequity manifested in a variety of ways suggestive of social racism. The pervasiveness of minority salary and wage differences relative to those of whites when that disparity cannot be explained by some objective condition—i.e. region, age, education, or some other justified cause—illustrates social racism in this example (Currie, Skolnick 1988). Even when an historically oppressed gender group, such as working women, find within the structure of women's pay a pervasive pattern of black and Hispanic women earning less than white women, and where this disparity also cannot be explained by a set of objective conditions, therein lies the presence of social racism as a governing force regulating wages and salaries as they are paid to female workers.

There's no huge leap in scientific logic from the illustrations of structured social subordination relating to the inequities of wages and salaries based on race cited above to patterns of racially-biased public policies, when those policies have the effects of disallowing people of color equal social opportunity to participate in the privileges, rewards, spoils, advantages, equal treatments, protections, and other benefits of societal membership. Such is the case with criminal justice policy governing gangs today. The inequities highlighting the policy of criminal gang pursuit and punishment in the United States today may very well find their most credible analysis in

explanations consistent with an ideology of social racism. Such a condition will mean, for minority street gangs and other group structures that are the objects of such social racism, relegation to a position of inferior social standing relative to Mafia and other largely white, syndicate gang structures, based solely on the racial composition of members of street gangs. Such a principle would explain the pervasive racial inequities of gang policy today.

ORGANIZED "WHITE COLLAR" GANGS, AND THE POLITICS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE GANG POLICY CORRUPTION

Large, rich, typically white, powerful "Mafia" criminal gangs have been comparatively immune to police raids, arrests, scrutiny, and other law enforcement devices in its war against criminal gangs. The central question that stands out as critical for law enforcement, the courts, and other authorities within the criminal justice system is why this pattern of differential treatment of criminal gang structures exists today? Clearly, the power and wealth of organized syndicate gangs have been critical in helping shape current criminal justice system policies away from interrupting this group's activities and financial interests (Yates 1995a). Organized crime has infiltrated legitimate industries, including construction, waste removal, the wholesale and retail distribution of goods, hotel and restaurant operations, liquor sales, motor vehicle repairs, real estate, and banking (Yates 1995a). By one report alone, organized syndicated crime's infiltration of the U.S. construction industry nets organized crime more than \$45 billion in new income each year (President's Commission on Organized Crime 1986).

The financial power of organized crime groups has allowed them to purchase a large degree of freedom from the "burdens" of aggressive law enforcement. The reach of organized crime into the policy decision-making networks of officials in law enforcement, the courts, local government, and the private sector is readily apparent when we see in the midst of a few cursory successful prosecutions of big-time racketeers and drug kingpins, organized criminal groups' continuing hold on their mega-billion dollar financial enterprises in the United States and abroad (Carlson, Chaiken 1987; Manson 1986). The primary law enforcement tools against organized crime today, the enactment of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act,

and specifically for control of illicit drugs, the Continuing Criminal Enterprise (CCE) Act, as currently enforced, place only a minor dent in the formidable armor of organized crime. Criminal and civil prosecutions under both the RICO and CCE Acts in the period since the mid-1970s have been largely confined to garden-variety commercial fraud cases and the most humdrum and routine of drug distribution networks (Dombrink, Meeker 1986). These acts have been as controversial for their erosion of certain civil protections as they have been for their failure to control organized crime. Dombrink and Meeker (1986), have shown that the recent statutes produce, a far more dramatic effect on the legal system and the relationships of key actors in the criminal justice system, perhaps, than they will affect the amount of drugs entering the country.

A number of criminologists have noted patterns of similarities and interrelationships between organized syndicate crime and white-collar crime (Simon, Eitzen 1990; Spitzer 1975; Szasz 1986; Tabor 1971). The relationship between organized syndicate crime and white-collar crime has been presented as one of mutual beneficial interdependence (Martens, Miller-Longfellow 1982; Szasz 1986). Andrew Szasz (1986), for example, has suggested that legitimate corporations that generate hazardous waste may in fact benefit quite extensively in expenditure savings from the illegal disposal of hazardous waste, generated by elements of organized crime active in industrial waste disposal. Mery Morash (1984) has offered the theory that the strongest connections between organized crime and legitimate business are found in businesses characterized by low technology, the sale of uniform products, and rigid markets where increases in price will not result in reduced demand. Critical theorists have historically pointed out the corrupt connections between organized syndicated criminal gangs and local police groups, politicians, and private businessmen (Chambliss 1976, 1978; Gardiner, Lyman 1978; Hills 1971; Potter 1994; Potter, Jenkins 1985). Local politicians have been prime benefactors of organized syndicated criminal gangs. In the 1960s, it was estimated that \$2 billion annually was given by organized crime figures to public officials each year in the form of campaign contributions (King 1969). Estimates today are that this figure in the 1990s may have tripled or quadrupled (Potter 1994).

The Presidents Commission on

groups are more problematic for the nation's largest cities than gangs. In surveys from 13 cities, including the largest in the U.S., seven times as many communities reported problems with disruptive youth groups as reported problems with gangs (Howell 1994; Miller 1982).

Field studies in the 1980s failed to confirm the presence of migratory satellite gangs in distant locations. Gangs new to localities, when they have been found, are observed to be the result largely of family migration and recruits from local neighborhoods (Hagedorn 1988; Huff 1989; Rosenbaum, Grant 1983). Gang involvement in violence and homicide is often turf-related than drug-related. In a study of Chicago's four largest and most criminally-active street gangs during 1987 to 1990, only 8 of 288 gang-motivated homicides were related to drugs. The larger gangs were extensively engaged in acts of instrumental violence—theft, burglary, or possession or sale of drugs (Block, Block 1993).

Empirical research reveals no extensive involvement of street gangs in drug trafficking as an organizational activity. Instead individual gang members engage in freelance drug sales (Esbensen, Huizinga 1993; Hagedorn 1994; Howell 1994; Klein et al 1991; Mieczkowski 1990; Moore 1978; Williams 1989).

In Los Angeles, researchers concluded that the connection between street gangs, drugs, and homicide was weak and could not account for the increase in Los Angeles homicides during the 1980s (Klein et al 1991). An analysis of Los Angeles homicides occurring between January 1, 1986, and August 31, 1988 did not support the theory that a substantial proportion of homicides are attributable to gang involvement in narcotics trafficking (Meehan, O'Carroll 1995). In Pasadena and Pomona, California, a similar study found gang members involved in only 5 percent of all violent homicides involving the sale of drugs between 1989 and 1991 (Maxson, Klein, Cunningham 1993). Indeed, local police recommended a move away from gang specialization in narcotics enforcement as a policy change for these two communities (Maxson et al 1993).

Interviews with 151 gang members from Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Diego, for the purpose of learning about their involvement in drug dealing and whether or not violence was associated with drug sales, turned up little association between these groups and violent incidents (Fagan 1989; Howell 1994).

Some investigations of street gangs have turned up gang specialization in drug trafficking (Chin 1989; Dolan, Finney 1984; Phillibosian 1989; Virgil 1988), still the prevailing view of the researchers of street gangs, drugs, and criminal violence is that the most common experiences involved individual gang members in drug distribution networks that are neither gang-controlled nor organized gang activities (Decker 1993; Goldstein, Huff 1993; Hagedorn 1991).

In casting an empirical spotlight on the policy-generating myths of drug distribution and its connection to criminal homicide and other violence in Asian communities, Joe (1994) concluded that the connections between Asian gangs and organized crime operations are not at all clear and are best conceptualized as associations between individuals in groups and not as criminal conspiracies.

In spite of this range of evidence calling into question the recent campaign of raising street gangs to the level of this country's most menacing pariah, we see a pattern of quiet acquiescence to the privileges and power of syndicated criminal gangs displayed by established law enforcement, the courts, and private businesses, as these groups tolerate and even participate in the offenses of syndicated criminal gang structures.

THE RACISM OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE GANG POLICY

Racism and class prejudice define gang policy in this country when, in the absence of an objective basis for the dichotomy that governs pursuit of gang groups today, we have the practices of a severely prejudicial gang policy. Given organized syndicated crime's superior success in influencing the mental, social, physical, and emotional health of the general public, this gang structure's injury to the overall well-being of this country's children, young adults, and elderly greatly exceeds injury inflicted on the public by street gangs. Because street gangs consist mostly of the poor and of people of color, the policy of criminal justice authorities treating street gangs structures more harshly than syndicated gangs, clearly invites an analysis of racial status, and to a lesser degree, class status as guiding principles in setting contemporary gang policy.

The American Criminal Justice System's war on drugs is not a neutral war, for example. The poor and racial minorities have unsuspectingly been its most active targets. While,

Organized Crime (1986) reports that organized syndicated criminal gangs closely match the popular images of mob, underworld, Mafia, wiseguys, or La Cosa Nostra in their empirical essence. Organized syndicated criminal gangs have, further, been characterized by law enforcement as the elite element of organized crime in America. They, more than any of the other gang structures in America, are responsible for the estimated \$90 billion gross earnings of the illegal activities of organized crime's enterprises. They, more than any of the other gang groups, monopolize the infiltrating of legitimate as well as illegitimate businesses. They, more than any of the other gang groups, monopolize the unlawful services of gambling, prostitution, drugs, loan sharking, racketeering, laundering money, land fraud, and computer crime (President's Commission on Organized Crime 1986).

The law-enforcement perspective on organized crime provides the clearest distinction between the huge financial reserve of large, syndicated, affluent, criminals gangs and the street gangs of largely inner-city socially-depressed urban America. While syndicated criminal gangs enjoy a high degree of affluence, the indulgences of street gangs more closely parallel the activities of popularly acknowledged street crime—including gang-related assaults, robbery, burglary, larceny, drug use, gambling, and other offenses and self-indulgences of more immediate consequence and pattern to its victims and perpetrators (Hagedorn 1994; Howell 1994; Joe 1994; Kelly, Chin, Fagan 1993). Street gangs are also disproportionately made up of the socially displaced young among African-American, Latino, Jamaican, Chinese, Japanese, and increasingly today, Vietnamese populations (Kenney, Finckenauer 1995).

While the wealth and power of organized syndicate gangs may provide an explanation for the relative freedom with which syndicated gangs operate across the United States today, criminal individuals or street gangs have been powerless to avoid arrests and convictions against those who violate this country's laws (Browning, Garassi 1980; Hoffman 1987; Ness 1987; Petersilia 1983). The critical question remains, why the differential treatment in policies governing criminal gangs within the criminal justice system?

STREET GANGS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY

U.S. criminal justice policy today remains quite uneven in the pressures it exerts on gang units in this country (Yates 1995a). Street "gangs," mostly of young African Americans, Latinos, and other young people of color, are the targets of the most intense and persistent law-enforcement efforts (Yates 1995a). By contrast, rich, powerful "Mafia" and other organized criminal syndicated "gangs," have largely escaped any comparably sized police scrutiny and pursuit (Simon, Eitzen 1990). Well-known to the general public are the media-covered police "gang" sweeps in racial and ethnic minority neighborhoods (Hagedorn 1991), while it is very rare for similar raids to be perpetrated against powerful syndicate-style gang and group structures. While tough court punishment and imprisonment of members of racial and ethnic minority gangs have indicated the policies of big city police districts and departments, only very recently have a modicum of punitive measures to halt the pillage of large-scale organized criminal gang structures been instituted (Dombrink, Meeker 1986; Kenney, Finckenauer 1995).

Organized syndicate gangs have in the past engaged in an almost unlimited advertising and selling of their products and wares to a generally receptive public. What makes syndicate gang structures different from street gang units is their level of commitment to the goals of advancing and participating in an illegal economy of improperly obtained, procured, and sponsored consumables. Organized syndicate-style criminal gangs, further, are more thoroughly locked into collusive relationships with legitimate businesses, and outside specialists—including pilots, chemists, arsonists, corrupt police and politicians, as well as corrupt officials in private business than is the case, generally speaking, for minority street gangs (Block 1982; Dombrink, Meeker 1986; Report to the Nation on Crime and Justice 1988; Thomas 1977).

Considerable evidence points to most serious urban crime being at the instigation of non-gang youth and/or law-violating youth groups acting outside the organized activities of a gang (Howell 1994; Miller 1982, 1994). Except in a few of the largest U.S. cities experiencing the most severe gang problems, problems with nongang youth groups were generally considered to be more serious than problems with gangs. Unaffiliated disruptive youth

proportionately, African-Americans made up 12 percent of the regular drug user population in the late 1980s, and 16 percent of the regular cocaine-using population for the same period, 48 percent of those arrested for heroin or cocaine drug charges in 1988 were African-American (Meddis 1989).

The behavior of the nation's juvenile courts in adjudicating juvenile cases brought before it also provides evidence of racial bias in the decisions it makes in meting out justice. The nation's juvenile courts in the 1980s were more likely to suspend drug offense cases involving white youth charged with illegal possession than minority children charged with the same offense (*Juveniles Taken into Custody Annual Report* 1990). Between 1984 and 1988, youthful drug offenses involving white youth retained for court review declined by 2 percent, while over the same period these same cases increased more than 260 percent for minority youth (*Juveniles Taken into Custody Annual Report* 1990).

Sentencing decisions in the American criminal justice system indicative of social racism show that race and class conditions influence the treatment received from the nation's courts and jurists in criminal case processing, criminal sentencing, decisions to incarcerate, plea bargaining outcomes, and capital case sentencing (Bell 1973; Gerard, Terry 1970; Howard 1975; Kleck 1981; *Mandatory Minimum Penalties* 1991; Petersilia 1983; Silverstein 1965; Thornberry 1973; Wolfgang, Riedel 1973).

Racist practices in plea bargaining, as a component of the "get tough" policies on minority drug offenders, appear to increasingly pervade the implementation of federal mandatory sentencing statutes in drug-related and other federal crimes. In a special report by the U.S. Sentencing Commission to the U.S. Congress, federal prosecutors regularly applied plea bargaining in sentencing decisions in a way that appears related to the race of the defendant (*Mandatory Minimum Penalties* 1991). In examining the behavior of federal prosecutors for a period between October 1, 1989 through September 30, 1990, the Commission reported that a greater proportion of black defendants was sentenced at or above the indicated mandatory minimum (68%), followed by Hispanics (57%) and Whites (54%) (*Mandatory Minimum Penalties* 1991).

The Commission reports that plea bargaining practices of federal prosecutors favor

white defendants in narcotics cases over black and Hispanics, most actively at minimum sentences of 120 months. Even after conviction in cases that carry a 120 month federal mandatory minimum sentence, white defendants (54%) were considerably less likely than either black (at 65%) or Hispanic (at 65%) defendants to be handed this mandatory minimum sentence (*Mandatory Minimum Penalties* 1991). Examining racial disparities in federal drug sentencing over time, the Commission pointed out that the differences found across races appears to have increased since 1986. The racial disparities are observed by the Commission to have first developed between 1986 and 1988, after implementation of mandatory minimum drug provisions, and it remained constant ever since (*Mandatory Minimum Penalties* 1991).

CORRECTING GANG POLICY TODAY: REMOVING THE VESTIGES OF A RACIAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE GANG PURSUIT

On the other hand, marginal economic status, poverty, unemployment and underemployment, social and economic dislocation and all the clustering of social problems associated with the "underclass" of public housing abandoned, inner-city urban neighborhoods create a common dynamic in the social experiences of members of minority street gangs (Huff 1989). Deindustrialization in the 1970s and 1980s added mightily to the stress placed on traditional institutional structures of social control in our urban neighborhoods: families, good jobs, schools, churches, and other historically-anchored agencies to guide the behavior of the community's young (Hagdom 1991; Jackson 1991; Ropers 1988). During the 1970s at least 38 million jobs in the industry were permanently lost (Ropers 1988). Deindustrialization would affect minorities more than whites. A study by the U.S. Department of Labor (1985) found that, between 1979 and 1983, a total of 11.5 million workers lost jobs because of plant closing or employment cutbacks. The study focused on the 5.1 million workers out of the 11.5 million displaced workers who had worked at least three years in their jobs. Among this sample of 5.1 million displaced workers, the Labor Department found that about 600,000 were black and less than half of them (42%) were reemployed when interviewed (Ropers 1988). Hispanic workers accounted for about 280,000 of the displaced. The proportion of them reemployed (52%) was

higher than blacks but considerably lower than for whites (Ropers 1988). Of whites who had been displaced, over three-fifths were re-employed and less than a quarter were unemployed (Ropers 1988).

Black and Hispanic teenagers in urban centers in the Midwest have not been immune from the economic consequences of lost industrial jobs. In Milwaukee between 1979 and 1986 over 50,000 jobs, or some 23 percent of Milwaukee's manufacturing employment, were lost to deindustrialization (Hagedorn 1991; White, Zipp, Reynolds, Paetsch 1988). African-American workers suffered the worst job losses in Milwaukee. While 40 percent of African-American workers were concentrated in manufacturing in 1980, by 1989 research in five all-black Milwaukee census tracts found that only about one-fourth of all black workers were still employed in manufacturing (Moore, Edari 1990). This social experience of economic unrest has continued with Milwaukee's African-American community experiencing official unemployment rates of close to 30 percent in recent years (Hagedorn 1991).

Not all the central cities' woes of recent times can be attributed to deindustrialization. Public policies during the 1980s were particularly belligerent in ignoring the financial and social needs of the cities. Because of industry deregulation and tax policies favoring the rich, now cash-heavy industry would be inspired to leave the central cities during the decade. Tragically, no meaningful public policy for the central cities would be erected by either Ronald Reagan or George Bush to make up for capital flight from urban areas during the period. The economic base of the cities, which once included the opportunity for secure work and meaningful jobs, would fall victim during the 1980s to an urban policy heavily favoring high-income, suburban corporations (Yates 1995b).

In the face of such recent economic demoralization and public policy vacuum for urban neighborhoods, street gangs in the nation's largest cities have reemerged as a direct response to what may well be regarded as a renewed pattern of social oppression against this country's racial minorities and poor. The solutions to the problems of street gangs are not likely to be found in policies that ignore conditions of social despair, hopelessness, blocked opportunities, urban blight, and ignored urban neighborhoods and their residents. The social racism of street gang policy

today is to be found in local, state, and federal government, and private business toleration of inner-city social institutional structures that are made to remain less effective, in the face of a bounty of public dollars, that over the course of the 1980s, would be redistributed from the neighborhoods of the working poor, and the poor, to the rich (Yates 1995b).

Public policy needs to address the social disorganization of urban neighborhoods found in less-than-effective family lives, schools, churches, neighborhood groups, community centers, and other structures that normally provide a sense of neighborhood social integration. Public policy needs to construct opportunities for community cohesion, solidarity, concern, care, and neighborhood order found in successful businesses, good jobs, meaningful industry, inclusive services, and training centers offering opportunities for the community's members to contribute to the productivity of American society and life. The empowerment of urban residents themselves becomes, then, the key to erecting a successful urban policy to accomplish the goals of removing street gangs and building social organization for the central cities of this country.

This direction to an effective urban policy has already been urged by leading theorists who see the need to divert public dollars from what has been well-intentioned, but failed, programs run by middle-class white providers, connected to a self-preserving welfare establishment (Hagedorn 1991). Rather, as many of these scholars have offered, public dollars earmarked for urban neighborhoods should be spent mainly on programs physically located in underclass neighborhoods, run by people with ties to the neighborhoods they intend to serve (Hagedorn 1991; Lipsky 1980; Pfohl 1994). Still others have identified the importance of large public bureaucracies becoming more neighborhood-based and more open to input from clients and the neighborhoods they serve as part of any successful remedy for the social disorganization of inner-city urban neighborhoods today (Chubb, Moe 1990; Figueira-McDonough 1991; Hagedorn 1991; Kammerman, Kahn 1989; Lipsky 1980).

Eliminating the social racism of street gang policy requires an acknowledgment of the connections between the recent history of a racially-biased public policy, as evidenced by this country's ignoring of the nation's urban neighborhoods, and the bold reemergence of urban centered street gangs. The to-date

unwillingness of public officials and policy makers to allow any alternative to the ever-expanding harsh rhetoric and dehumanizing experiences of longer and more violent prison stays as a main response to the disorder of members of street gangs, illustrates as much as any behavior has, the racist color of today's criminal justice gang policies.

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THE EFFECTS OF GANG MEMBERSHIP ON DEVIANCE IN TWO POPULATIONS: SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ADOLESCENT SERIOUS HABITUAL OFFENDERS

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ABSTRACT

The effect of gang membership on deviance was examined in two populations: students (N=13,949) and youthful serious habitual offenders (N=171). Among students, 14 percent were gang members, former members or wannabes. The serious offenders averaged twenty arrests, and 47 percent were gang members. Among students, gang members were between three and twenty-one times more likely to use drugs, be delinquent, injure someone, become injured, and carry a weapon. Among the students deviance was more strongly associated with gang membership than it was among the serious offenders.

INTRODUCTION

Although there is consensus in research findings of a strong relationship between gang membership and rates of delinquency and drug use, there are substantial differences in explanations of this relationship. Three recent studies illustrate these competing explanations.

Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, and Chard-Wierschem (1993) employed a longitudinal research design to compare rates of delinquency, drug use and drug sales for male gang members and non-members. Three hypotheses were tested. The first hypothesis, *selection*, was supported if differing rates of offending were found between gang and non-gang youth but no difference in rates of offending was found for individuals when they were (and when they were not) members of a gang. This hypothesis is related to "kinds of person" theories, which suggest that individual propensity to offend is the same with (or without) gang influence (Blumstein, Cohen, Farrington 1988; Gottfredson, Hirschi 1990; Nagin, Farrington, Moffitt 1995).

The second hypothesis, called *facilitation*, was supported if gang youth reported higher rates of offending when they were members versus the time before they became gang members or after they quit the gang. This hypothesis is related to theoretical explanations emphasizing group dynamics, interaction, social learning, and status threats (Short, Strodbeck 1965) and to some learning theories (Akers 1985). The hypothesis argues that gangs escalate rates of delinquency and drug use among youth who are no more inclined toward (nor more involved in) these behaviors than are other "non gang" youth.

The third hypothesis, designated as *enhancement*, was a mixture of both selection and facilitation. It was supported if youth were

more delinquent when they were gang members than when they were not and more delinquent when they were not gang members than youth who never became gang members. Thornberry et al (1993) did not relate enhancement to an existing body of theory, leaving readers to infer that they saw it as a residual category. Enhancement as an explanation of delinquency and drug use can be inferred in a wide range of analyses of the behavior of gang members, for example those of Brown (1965) and Goldstein (1991).

Thornberry et al (1993) interpreted their findings to be most consistent with the facilitation hypothesis for general delinquency, person crimes, drug sales, and drug use. The facilitation explanation was not supported for property crime. A close reading of Thornberry et al (1993) also reveals support for selection, but the support is neither as consistent nor as strong as the support found for facilitation. By implication, enhancement is at work, with facilitation explaining more of the variance than selection. Even though they gathered longitudinal data, since their study measured only the simultaneous occurrence of delinquency and gang membership during co-terminous time periods, it was impossible to determine which came first: an increase in delinquency and drug use or gang membership. Furthermore, their study did not distinguish between offenses which were "gang motivated" (and therefore support facilitation) and offenses that were committed by "gang members" but not in the context of gang activity, a distinction emphasized by Maxson and Klein (1990), which would support enhancement.

Another approach to explaining the relationship of gang membership to delinquent behavior and drug use was developed by Fagan (1989). Members of gangs in South

Central Los Angeles, the University Heights section of San Diego, and the west side of Chicago were interviewed to obtain measures of delinquent behavior, drug use and drug sales. Cluster analysis produced four different types of gangs, and each one exhibited a significantly different pattern in the nature and extent of delinquency, drug use and drug sales.

Members of *social gangs* (28% of respondents) were

involved in few delinquent activities and little drug use other than alcohol and marijuana...low involvement in drug sales...[P]atterns of use reflect[ed] general adolescent experimentation in drug use and delinquency.

A second type of gang, termed the *party gang* (7% of respondents) had few members involved in criminal behavior that was not drug-related or vandalism. In the party gang affiliation was "based on mutually supportive patterns of drug use and dealing to support group and individual drug use."

A third type of gang was termed the *serious delinquent gang*, (37% of respondents). Members showed

extensive involvements in several types of delinquent acts, both serious and nonserious, and both violent and property offenses...[D]rug use is most likely recreational or social in nature.

Finally, in the *criminal organization* (37% of respondents), the pattern differed from the serious delinquent gang in the "extensive involvement in serious drug use and higher rates of drug sales." Furthermore, rather than social drug use, drug use and selling in the criminal organization reflected a "systemic relationship with other criminal acts."

Fagan (1989) observes this diversity of behavior:

also exists among general adolescent populations...which suggests that gangs reflect patterns of affiliation and collective behavior that are similar to those of other adolescent subcultures. Accordingly, violence, which historically has been taken as a defining feature of gangs, and drug involvement may more accurately be conceptualized as contingent behaviors among adolescents.

Clearly, both facilitation and selection were implied in Fagan's findings. No doubt,

youth selected the type of gang they joined, and they partially determined the kinds of behavior which were identified with the gang while they were members. Clearly, gang membership does not unilaterally produce elevated rates of all types of delinquency and drug related behaviors among gang members, and the diversity among types of gangs provides an opportunity for youth to select types of gangs which mirror their propensities; therefore, gang membership *enhances* delinquency.

In the third study, Esbensen, Huizinga, and Weiher (1993) compared rates of involvement in delinquency and drugs for three groups: 1) gang members, 2) youth who were not gang members and who were not "street" offenders, and 3) youth who reported involvement in street offenses but were not gang members. This investigation controlled for the possibility that rates of delinquency, drug use and drug sales among non-gang youth might have been artificially inflated by a small group of young "career offenders" (as described by Tracy, Wolfgang, Figlio 1990) who were not members of gangs.

The rate of offending by the non-gang street offenders was three times the rate for the non-offenders, but the rate for gang members was twice that of street offenders (Esbensen et al 1993). This finding supported the enhancement explanation, and so did the findings from the measurement of key social-psychological variables that represented five theoretical perspectives.

Research Hypotheses

The literature suggests that the relationship between gang membership and rates of delinquency, drug use and drug sales is mediated by both the type of gang to which one belongs, and by rates of offending regardless of gang membership. These factors figure prominently in our analysis.

In the present study we accounted for the possible influence of different types of gangs on differing dimensions of deviant behavior by asking respondents to identify the "type" of gang (if any) to which they belonged. Following Fagan (1989) we assumed that there were different types of gangs, and that each type had a distinct relation to the nature and extent of delinquency among its members. We identified five categories: 1) confirmed non-member, 2) wannabe, 3) former member, 4) member of a local or neighborhood gang, and 5) member of a local set of a

national gang. We hypothesized that rates of delinquent and deviant behavior would increase for each category beginning with category 1 (lowest) and ending with category 5 (highest). Using these categories we sought to compare the explanations of facilitation and selection by asking respondents about gang membership in the past (former members) and desire to become a member in the future (wannabes).

Additionally, we provided a direct and important test of the impact of gang membership on delinquency among a group of 178 youth identified by the police as the "most serious" juvenile offenders. We also hypothesized that among these serious offenders, gang members would show higher rates of delinquency and deviance than youth who were not.

METHODS

Student Population

The population of 13,949 secondary school students from seven school districts in the Pikes Peak Region of Colorado reported on attitudes and behavior. In contrast to many studies of gang behavior, this one was completed in a suburban county of 450,000 people, with less than 20 percent minority membership.

Instrument

Students completed a questionnaire that contained approximately 100 items. On the instrument, students reported on demographics, gang membership, use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, orientation toward education, involvement in delinquent activities such as trespassing, fighting, stealing, selling drugs and getting into trouble. Also, they reported on how often they felt that someone might try to harm them and how often they carried a gun or knife for self defense.

Scores from similar items were added together to form a scale of use. For instance, frequency of use of beer (and malt liquor) was added to frequency of use of wine (and wine coolers), and to frequency of use of liquor to form a scale of frequency of use of alcohol. Likewise, frequency of use of cigarettes was added to frequency of use of smokeless tobacco to create a scale of frequency of use of tobacco.

Analysis of covariance was used to examine the effect of gang membership on deviance. Previous analyses (Dukes, Martinez,

Stein 1995) showed that gang membership and deviance were related to social background variables such as gender, grade in school, racial group, father not a high school graduate, and respondent not living with at least one parent. This analysis was consistent with that of Fagan (1990). These background variables were used as controls in the present analysis.

Two additional controls were used: Self Concept of Academic Ability (Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, Wisenbaker 1972) and Emphasis on Education. Typical of the four items on the scale of Self Concept of Academic Ability was the following one: "When you finish high school, do you think you will be one of the best students, about the same as most, or below most of the students?" Responses were recorded on the following five-point scale: "one of the worst" (1), "below most of the students" (2), "same as most of the students" (3), "better than most of the students" (4), "one of the best" (5). Emphasis on Education was made up of three items. One of the items asked, "How much education would you like to complete?" Answers were recorded on a six-point response scale that ranged from "grade school or less" to "graduate school (doctor, lawyer, Ph.D., etc.)." The other two items asked, "How important to you is getting good grades?," and "How important to you is a successful career as an adult?" Answers were recorded on a five-point response scale anchored by "not important at all," and "very important."

Gang membership was measured by an item that asked, "Would you consider yourself to be a member of a gang?" Responses were recorded using the following categories: "No, never, and I would not like to be a member" (1), "No, but I would like to become a member" (2), "No, not currently, but I was a member of a gang in the past" (3), "Yes, I'm a member of a local or neighborhood gang" (4), and "Yes, I'm a member of a local set of a national gang" (5). The "wannabe" response may "stand in" conceptually for the "party" and "social" gangs in Fagan (1989), while the "local gang" and "national gang" categories may be similar to his delinquent gang and criminal organizations respectively.

Racial categories were recoded using the logic of an "underclass." Native American, Black, and Hispanic were recoded "1," and Asian, White, and Mixed were recoded "0."

Table 1: Adjusted Mean Scores for Substance Use During the Last Thirty Days by Category of Gang Membership: Student Population

	Number	Percentage	Alcohol	Marijuana	Other Drugs	Tobacco
PART A: Rate						
Confirmed Non-members	9477	86	3.23	.62	1.45	2.29
Wannabes	434	4	6.71	1.14	3.62	4.50
Former members	513	5	7.79	1.05	3.22	4.92
Neighborhood Members	251	2	11.24	2.28	6.40	6.15
National Members	348	3	18.78	5.99	26.95	10.39
PART B: Multiplier						
Wannabes vs Confirmed Non-Gang			2.08	1.83	2.50	1.97
Former Members vs Wannabes			1.16	0.92	0.90	1.09
Neighborhood Members vs Former Members			1.44	2.17	1.99	1.25
National Members vs Neighborhood Members			1.67	2.63	4.21	1.69
Total: National members vs confirmed non-gang			5.81	9.66	18.58	4.54

RESULTS**Student Population**

Analysis of covariance was performed on the dependent variables. It allowed the examination of the effects of the categorical independent variables of gang membership, gender, racial minority status, and father as less than high school graduate on deviance.

Variables of grade in school, self concept of academic ability, and emphasis on education were interval scales, so they were treated as covariates in the analysis. Due to the large number of cases, statistically significant interactions were observed for almost every measure of deviance; however, compared to the *main effects* they were very small, so they were eliminated from further consideration.

Analyses showed that being a gang member was associated strongly with every measure of deviance. Furthermore, gang membership was a stronger predictor of deviance than being male, older, or a member of a racial minority group. The only variable that came close to (or exceeded) gang membership in strength of prediction was the variable, emphasis on education. While gang membership was associated with increased deviance, emphasis on education was associated with decreased deviance. The effects of emphasis on education are not shown in the analyses below. The effects of the other variables are not shown either. Rather, Part A of Tables 1-3 shows the effects of gang membership after the effects of the control variables have been removed. Specifically, on each table, mean scores have been presented for each category of gang membership. These mean scores were adjusted for the effects of all of the other

variables. Since the other variables explained some variation in the dependent variable (males fight more), when they were controlled the mean fighting decreased (mean number of fights by national gang members). In Part B of Table 1, the multipliers for each type of gang membership are presented in the order they were hypothesized.

On Table 1, column 1, the mean number of times in the last thirty days that non-members used alcohol was 3.23 times. The reader should note that the way the scale was constructed meant that if a student drank a beer and then drank a wine cooler, this activity would be counted as two occurrences. On the table, the mean alcohol use increased for each gang category. National gang members reported a mean use of alcohol of 18.78 times. Dividing 18.78 by 3.23 gave a dividend of 5.81. This *multiplier* meant that to arrive at the frequency of use of alcohol by national gang members, one would multiply the reported frequency of alcohol use of confirmed non-members by 5.81. A multiplier of less than 1.00 indicated that the group had a lower rate of deviance than the one to which it was compared.

While the multiplier of 5.81 was high, the overall use of alcohol by secondary school students also was high. Among confirmed non-members the adjusted mean of 3.23 meant that on three occasions in the previous month the respondent drank alcohol. The adjusted mean was 18.78 instances for national gang members. While the figures for both confirmed non-members and national gang members seemed high, compared to national studies the rates of alcohol use by youth in the Pike Peak Region were lower (Dukes, Matthew

Table 2: Adjusted Mean Scores for Delinquency During the Last Year by Category of Gang Membership: Student Population

	Serious		Hurt			Sold
	Physical	Group	Someone	Shoplifting	Trespassing	
PART A: Rate	Fight	Fight	Badly			Drugs
Confirmed Non-members	.65	.31	.35	.92	.65	.19
Wannabes	1.43	.82	.80	1.91	1.34	.36
Former Members	1.88	1.43	1.17	1.74	1.27	.71
Neighborhood Members	2.23	2.14	1.94	2.42	1.84	.91
National Members	2.85	2.68	2.36	2.72	2.25	1.97
PART B: Multiplier						
Wannabes vs Conf. Non-members	2.02	2.65	2.29	2.08	2.06	1.89
Former Members vs Wannabes	1.31	1.74	1.46	.91	.95	1.97
Neighborhood vs Former	1.19	1.50	1.66	1.39	1.45	1.28
National vs Neighborhood	1.28	1.25	1.22	1.12	1.22	2.16
Total National to Non-gang	4.38	8.64	6.74	2.96	3.46	10.37

Hughes 1994).

On another matter, the reader might think that other variables were involved in the relation between gang membership and drinking. Perhaps, national gang members were older than confirmed non-members. Since older students tend to drink alcohol more frequently, maybe it was not gang membership *per se*, but age that was the reason for the dramatic difference in frequency of drinking between confirmed non-members and national gang members; however, age was controlled, so the means on Table 1 for each group were adjusted for differences in age *before* the group means were compared to each other.

On Table 1 the pattern for the other substances was similar to the one for alcohol except that wannabes reported using marijuana and other drugs at a rate that was slightly higher than former gang members. Nevertheless, comparing confirmed non-members with national gang members showed clearly that the frequency of use of these substances was much higher for gang members. Looking at the total row multiplier, national gang members reported 9.66 more instances of marijuana use than confirmed non-members. They reported 18.58 more instances of using other drugs than confirmed non-members, and they reported 4.54 times more instances of using tobacco than confirmed non-members.

The multipliers in Part B of Table 1 show a strong and consistent progression in rates of substance use in the direction hypothesized. Each increasing "level" of gang membership was associated with an increasing rate of use of alcohol and drugs. Only two exceptions were found. Former members showed slightly

lower rates of use of marijuana and other drugs than wannabes. This finding is consistent with the findings in the literature review that youth who left gangs showed a decrease in the rate of drug use that was greater than the decrease in all other types of deviance.

The highest single multiplier on Table 1 is the one for the difference in the use of other (hard, illicit) drugs by members of national gangs compared to those in local/neighborhood gangs (4.21). This comparison shows the extent to which drug use is much more characteristic of some types of gangs than others. Finally, attention is directed to the sharp increase in rates indicated by the multipliers ranging from 1.83 to 2.50 between wannabes and confirmed non gang members. Clearly wannabes were much more involved in the use of alcohol and drugs than confirmed non-members even though these respondents were not members of a gang at the time of the study.

On Table 2, adjusted mean scores for measures of delinquency are presented. The patterns of means matched those on the previous table. National gang members reported having gotten into 4.38 times as many physical fights as confirmed non-members. National gang members reported 8.64 times more group fights than confirmed non-members, and they reported hurting someone badly enough to need bandages or a doctor 6.74 times more often. National gang members reported 2.96 times more instances of shoplifting than confirmed non-members, and they reported trespassing 3.46 times more often. Finally, national gang members reported selling illegal drugs 10.37 times more often than confirmed non-members.

Table 3: Adjusted Mean Scores for Getting Into Trouble During the Last Year by Category of Gang Membership: Student Population

	In Trouble with Police	In Traffic Ticket	In Trouble at School	Been Injured with Weapon	Drank Prior to Trouble	In Trouble Due to Gang	Felt Threatened	Carried Weapon ^a
PART A: Rate								
Confirmed non-members	.37	.14	.77	.20	.30	.14	12.11	1.71
Wannabes	.94	.35	1.55	.61	.75	.72	19.04	3.40
Former Members	1.19	.32	1.68	.90	1.01	1.36	21.16	6.19
Neighborhood Members	1.49	.59	2.02	1.28	1.33	1.97	23.35	9.24
National Members	2.22	1.07	2.35	1.76	2.82	2.90	43.21	13.95
PART B: Multiplier								
Wannabes vs Non-gang	2.54	2.50	2.01	3.05	2.50	5.14	1.57	1.98
Former vs Wannabes	1.26	.91	1.08	1.48	1.35	1.89	1.11	1.82
Neighborhood vs Former	1.25	1.84	1.20	1.42	1.32	1.45	1.10	1.49
National vs Neighborhood	1.49	1.81	1.16	1.38	2.12	1.47	1.85	1.51
Total: National vs Non-gang	6.00	7.64	3.05	8.80	9.40	20.71	3.57	8.16

^aA single item was used to measure emphasis on education. Time frame is thirty days, not one year.

Once again the multipliers showed consistent increases in the rates of deviance across the different dimensions of gang behavior. Similar to the finding of Thornberry et al (1993) that was discussed above, the impact of gang membership on rates of delinquency were more modest than the one for alcohol and drugs, but it still is substantial, and it is in the predicted direction with the same "exceptions" as for alcohol and drug use, i.e., former members showed lower rates of two offenses—shoplifting and trespass—than did wannabes. Similar to the pattern for using drugs, the rate of selling drugs increased most for members of national gangs. The multiplier was 2.16 compared to local/neighborhood gang members, and it was 10.17 compared to non-members.

Similarly, group fights and "hurting someone badly" showed greater multiplier effects than those for serious physical fights, shoplifting, and trespass. Except for selling drugs, the rates for all offenses were only slightly higher for members of a national gang than they were for members of neighborhood gangs.

On Table 3, national gang members reported 6.00 times more trouble with police because of "something they had done (not including a traffic ticket)." National gang members reported 7.64 times more traffic tickets than confirmed non-members. They reported 3.05 times more trouble with school authorities. National gang members reported having been injured with a gun or a knife 8.80 times more often than confirmed non-members. Compared to confirmed non-members,

national gang members reported that they had been drinking prior to getting into trouble 9.40 times more. On an item that was a direct reflection of gang activity, national gang members reported that they had gotten into trouble as a result of gang activity 20.71 times more often than confirmed non-members. Specifically, fewer than 1 in 7 non-members had gotten into trouble this way (adjusted mean = .14), but national gang members reported almost three instances per respondent (adjusted mean 2.90) during the last year.

All multipliers on Table 3 (except the one for former gang members compared to wannabes for traffic tickets) were in the predicted direction, and the rate of increase across all categories of behavior was consistent. As shown on Tables 1 and 2, the largest increases in rates of trouble also were found on Table 3 between wannabes and non-members. The multipliers for these two categories ranged from 1.57 to 5.14.

Respondents were asked how often they felt that someone might try to harm them a school, going to and from school, while out with friends, and at other times when they were not at home. Responses to these items were added together. Adjusted mean scores are reported on Table 3. Results were surprising. Confirmed non-members reported approximately one dozen (adjusted mean = 12.11 instances per month). National gang members reported 43.21 instances. This figure shows an average of more than one instance per day. The national gang members reported 3.57 times as many instances, but the means fo

Table 4: Average Number of Arrests by Offense Category and Police-Defined Gang Membership for SHO/DI Youth

	Number	Percentage	Part One Offenses	Other Offenses	Total Arrests
PART A: Gang Affiliation					
Non-members	96	53	8.03	10.14	18.18
Affiliates	47	27	6.96	10.66	17.62
Presumed Members	11	6	6.18	14.09	20.27
Confirmed Gang Members	23	13	7.34	13.17	20.52
Total SHO/DIs	171	100			
PART B: Multiplier					
Affiliate Members vs. Non-members			.87	1.05	.97
Presumed Members vs. Affiliate Members			.89	1.39	1.15
Confirmed Members vs. Presumed Members			1.19	.97	1.01
Total: Confirmed Members vs. Confirmed Non-members			.91	1.30	1.13

both groups indicated that the students as a whole did not feel safe from physical harm.

The students were asked how often during the last month they had carried a gun or a knife for self defense. Surprisingly, the mean score for confirmed non-members was 1.71 times. For national gang members the mean was 13.95 times. While the multiplier was 8.16, all groups carried weapons at an alarming rate.

The multiplier for national gang membership for each type of deviant behavior illustrated clearly that gang members had higher rates on every measure, and the rate increased consistently across the five categories of gang membership. But a summary of the influence of gang membership would not be complete without noting that the multipliers were much greater for some types of behaviors than others. The differences provide insight into the nature of behavior within gangs and attraction of gang membership.

For alcohol and drug use, the greater the degree of deviance represented by the drug, the higher was the multiplier (Table 1). Use of alcohol and tobacco are legal for adults. The multipliers for these substances were lowest between gang members and other groups. On the other hand, use of the most serious drugs (labeled "other" in the table, included cocaine, crack, speed, tranquilizers, etc.) was increased the most by gang membership. Overall, gang membership was associated more strongly with high rates of use of the more serious and illegal substances.

Rates of crime and delinquency showed a similar pattern. The greatest difference in rates between gang members and non-members was found for selling drugs. Additionally,

group fights and fights involving injury were substantially higher for gang members than for non-members. The smallest differences were observed for self-reported traditionally delinquent offenses of shoplifting and trespassing. In general, the greatest impact of gang membership appeared to be involvement in drugs and fighting, and not participation in property crimes.

The self reports of "trouble" presented in Table 3 confirmed the general observation that the greatest influence on deviant behavior by gangs was found in behavior that specifically was related to gang membership, such as trouble due to gang involvement, carrying and being injured by weapons, and drinking and getting into trouble. The specific behaviors which were least influenced by gang membership were having gotten into trouble with the school or police. The rates of having been in trouble with the police were comparable to those found by Tracy et al (1990). About one-third of their sample of Philadelphia youth had contact with the police, and among respondents having contact, most of them reported only one or two contacts. Less than seven percent of their respondents reported having five or more arrests. Gang members in the present study appeared to have rates of police contact that were about the same as those for career delinquents in Philadelphia in the 1960s and 70s (.37 for non-members indicates that on average, about 1 youth in 3 had some "trouble" with the police).

However, the key theoretical conclusion from the data in Table 4 is that among career offenders, as Blumstein et al (1988) correctly note, membership in a gang does not increase rates of serious personal and property crimes,

but it does seem to elevate rates of "other" crimes, which in the main are presumed to be drug law violations. These data are entirely consistent with the summary of findings by Thornberry et al (1993) presented above, which showed that as "stable" gang members remained in the gang over time, rates of property crime decreased, and rates of drug use and drugs sales increased substantially. Finally one should note this analysis also supports qualitative field work on gangs, notably that of Hagedorn (1988) and Moore (1991).

SERIOUS HABITUAL YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS

The analyses above showed that gang members were involved in rates of deviance that were three to twenty-one times higher than rates for confirmed non-members. These data were gathered from students who were in school, and only a small proportion of these youth were serious offenders. Clearly, many serious offenders were not gang members (Dukes et al 1995) and many of the serious offenders and gang members can be assumed to be not in school.

To get an additional estimate of multipliers, rates of deviance were compared for gang members and non-members among a population of young, serious habitual offenders. These data were based on arrest information that was collected by the Colorado Springs Police Department to identify Juvenile Serious Habitual Offenders. Points were assigned for each arrest. The most serious offenses such as murder, sexual assault, and robbery were scored 6 points. Other offenses were scored lower. Serious Habitual Offenders in need of Directed Intervention (SHO/DIs) were defined as persons between fourteen and eighteen years of age who had accumulated more than sixty points. Unfortunately, no self-report data were available for these youth, but some of them may have been included in the student survey when it was distributed in the schools.

METHODS

Population of Youthful Serious Habitual Offenders

The population was 171 young people 14 through 18 years old who were classified as SHO/DIs in 1994. Compared to the students, a greater percentage of SHO/DIs were Native American, Black, or Hispanic (56%) versus (17%). Also, a greater percentage of SHO/DIs

were connected with a gang (see below).

Measures

Using police intelligence data, four categories of gang membership were examined: Non-members, Affiliates, Presumed Gang Members, and Confirmed Gang Members. Non-members had no known connections with gangs. Affiliates were known to associate with gang members. Presumed Gang Members were thought to be gang members by data analysts at the police department, but the analysts could not positively identify the teen as gang members. Finally, Confirmed Members had been positively identified by police members of a particular gang. The non-members are conceptually equivalent to the "street offenders" defined in Esbensen et al (1993).

In the SHO/DI population, 53 percent were non-members. This figure compares with 14 percent of the students who were non-members, and did not want to be. Therefore, gang membership played a much larger role in this group of highly delinquent youth, but the central question to be answered by the analysis was, within the SHO/DIs what was the effect of gang membership on delinquency.

Arrests were coded into Uniform Crime Reports, Category One offenses versus other offenses. Category One included crimes against persons such as aggravated assault and property offenses such as burglary and larceny. Offenses classified as "other" included simple assault and narcotics violations. Results are presented on Table 4. This showed that Confirmed Gang Members had slightly lower rates of arrest for Part One Offenses (7.34) than Non-members (8.0) and they had higher rates of arrest for other offenses (13.17 versus 10.14). Overall, average Total Arrests were 13 percent higher for Confirmed Gang Members (20.52) than they were for Non-members (18.18).

As expected, the differences in arrest rates among SHO/DIs were much smaller than were differences among the students. This finding was expected because all SHO/DIs were identified as very high rate offenders. Recall that national gang members in the student population reported a rate of getting into trouble with police that was six times the rate for non-members. Therefore, gang membership discriminated much more clearly among the population of students than it did among the population of highly delinquent adolescents.

Among the SHO/DIs no uniform progression in rates of deviance was associated with increasing levels of gang membership. Indeed, confirmed gang members showed lower rates of part one offenses than did non-members. Other offenses, most probably drug related ones, showed an increase among gang members. However, the patterns of behavior for each category of gang membership, among the most serious habitual offenders, were similar to those found by Fagan (1989). The non-members among the SHO/DIs were similar in their pattern of deviance to the "serious criminal gangs" which Fagan described as having high rates of serious crime, and relatively low rates of drug use. The gang "affiliates" among the SHO/DIs showed similar behavior patterns to the "drug oriented gangs", with relatively lower rates of crime and relatively higher rates of drug use. Presumed gang members among the SHO/DIs had the lowest rates of part one offenses, but they had the highest rates of other offenses, similar to Fagan's "party and drugs" type of gang. Finally, confirmed gang members among the SHO/DIs had high rates for both serious and other crimes, similar to Fagan's "criminal organization." In fact, police may have made distinctions similar to those of Fagan (1989) in classifying serious offenders as gang members.

COMPARISON OF THE TWO STUDY GROUPS

Because the SHO/DI group was comprised of young offenders who were known by the police to be the most criminal and delinquent youth in the city, the findings regarding their involvement in gangs was especially instructive. It is noteworthy how extraordinarily criminal the SHO/DIs were in an absolute sense as well as in comparison to national gang members in the student population. Since the SHO/DIs averaged almost 20 arrests, the 171 serious offenders accounted for almost 3500 total arrests! By contrast, the national gang members in the student population reported 2.22 police contacts in the past year. SHO/DIs averaged about 7 arrests for part one offenses alone, and they averaged an additional 12 arrests for "other" offenses. Clearly, national gang members who were in the school population were dissimilar from the small group of known serious youthful offenders who were gang members. Alternatively, among the SHO/DI group, gang membership was less

associated with part one offenses, and it was more associated with "other" offenses than was true for non-members. In conjunction with findings from the student survey, this finding suggested that gang membership elevated drug use and potentially violent offenses to higher levels than it elevated property offenses. More importantly, less than half of the SHO/DIs were identified by police as having been involved with a gang. This finding is surprising because generally, it is assumed that intelligence methods used by police are likely to include incorrectly many non-members or pseudo members as true gang members.

In comparison to the school survey group, non-members in the SHO/DI group may have belonged to any of the non-member categories: confirmed non-members, wannabes, or former gang members. However as the police observed and recorded their criminal and delinquent behavior, there was no basis to assume that these youth had participated in gangs at the same time they were accumulating their extraordinary criminal records. This distinction clearly demonstrates the existence of a small subset of very high rate offenders among youth who are not gang members, a finding similar to that of Esbensen et al (1993).

DISCUSSION

The fourteen percent of youth in the school survey who identified themselves as actual or potential gang members was both surprising and disturbingly high. Although only about one-third of this 14 percent of students claimed to be active members, the estimate was much higher than official appraisals of gang presence in the schools. Conversely, the extent of problem behavior by non-gang students serves as reminder that crime, delinquency, drug use and drug sales are not problems restricted to gang members.

Data from the student survey clearly demonstrated the interaction between "selection" and "facilitation" of crime and delinquency/deviance in relation to gangs. Because age, gender, class, and other factors were controlled statistically, the differences in rates of behavior which varied with gang membership could not be accounted for by simple maturation or mere correlation. For instance, the argument that wannabes were less delinquent than gang members because they were younger was precluded by the statistical analyses. So as young people became more

involved in gangs, they also became more involved in crime, delinquency, and deviant behavior. However, the increase was more pronounced for deviance and gang specific behaviors such as involvement with drugs and fighting. An increase in delinquency due to gang membership (measured by getting into trouble with the police) and property crime (measured by trespassing and shoplifting) were less pronounced.

Greater involvement in gangs was associated with higher rates of deviance of all kinds, and vice versa, suggesting that enhancement was the most appropriate explanation of the relationship. Although wannabes were more involved in deviance than confirmed non-members, they were less involved than former or current members; therefore, the influence of gang membership was explained best by the enhancement model in contrast to Thornberry et al (1993) who favored facilitation. Unfortunately, the data do not allow the tracking of wannabes over time, and we cannot predict if wannabes will revert to a "confirmed" non-member status, or will eventually become gang members. Selection and facilitation (enhancement) also can be seen in the differing rates of deviance between members and former members. Former members have not abandoned substantial involvement in deviance. Their lowered—but not low—rates of deviance may represent a "reversion" to the rate of deviance which they would have exhibited without the influence of the gang and/or prior to gang membership.

The rates of deviance for members of "neighborhood" gangs were lower than those for members of local sets of national gangs. This finding is consistent with the patterns of delinquent behavior associated with "serious" offender gangs and "criminal organizations," respectively, as described by Fagan (1989); therefore, the finding is consistent with the enhancement explanation of the relationship between gang membership and delinquent behavior, drug use and drug sales.

Finally, it is clear that among the most serious and persistent young offenders known to the police (SHO/DIs), the majority had no known relationship to any type of gang. For this seriously delinquent population, a gang is not necessary to facilitate criminal activities. Among this group of very high rate offenders, gang membership was associated with an increase in drug use and sales and a decrease in personal and property crimes. Without doubt,

the sources of serious delinquent conduct and criminal behavior for the majority of these serious offenders, are not to be found in gang membership. The finding for both populations points to a very limited role for facilitation as an explanation of the higher rates of crime among gang youth. The analyses support enhancement as the most complete explanation of this relationship.

Our data also raise questions about how to explain delinquency, drug use and drug sales among non-members and the portion of similar activities among gang members that is not due to facilitation through gang membership. Similar findings led Esbensen and Huizinga (1993) to suggest that:

Since delinquent behavior precedes gang membership...it may well be that gang membership is but a formalized form of co-offending that was initiated within a delinquent peer group in prior years.

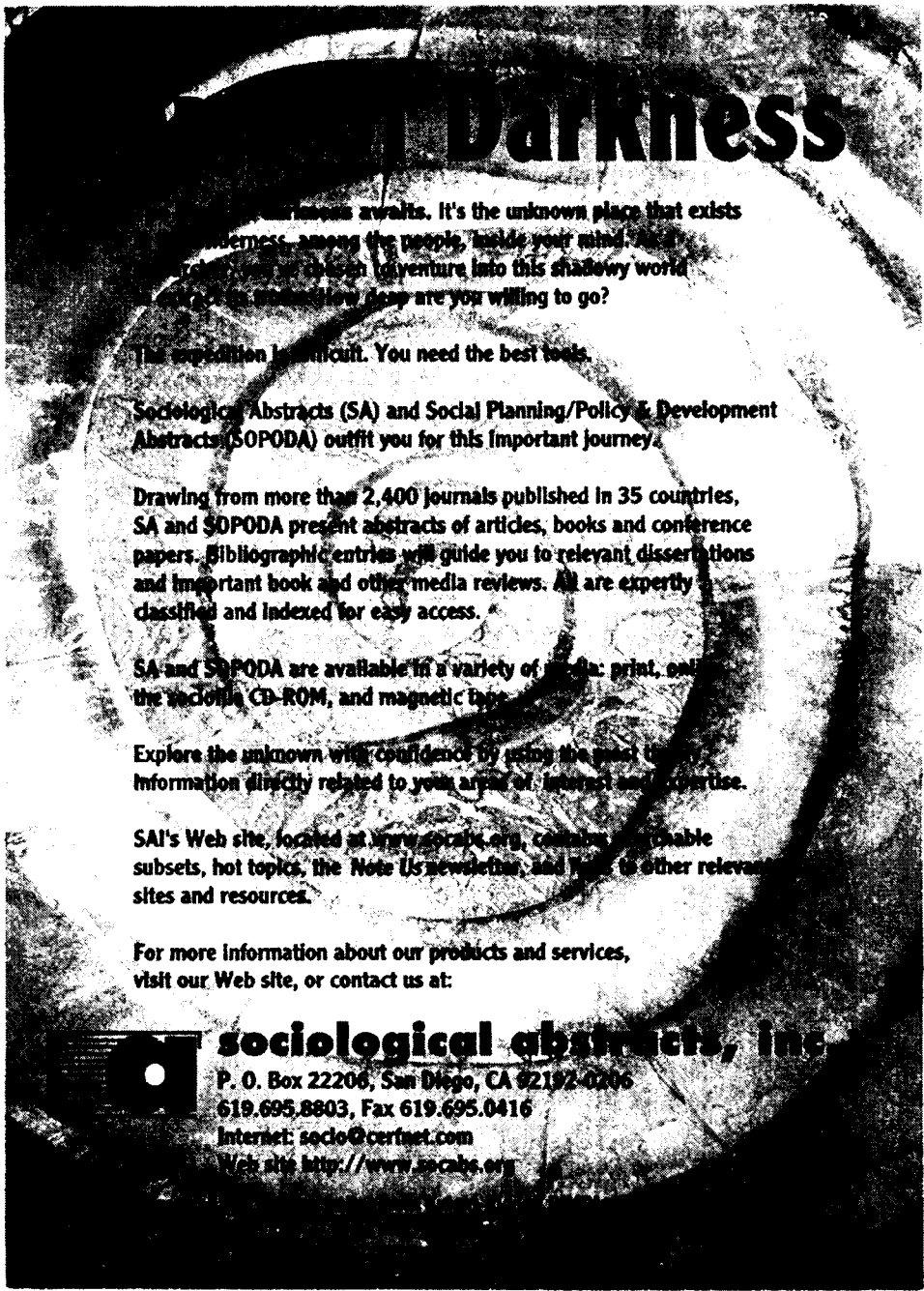
Our analysis of the SHO/DI youth are also similar to those of Esbensen et al (1993). They support the notion that gang offending and non-gang offending may grow from similar sources. They analyzed social psychological measures that represented five different theoretical perspectives. They found no statistically significant differences between the gang youth and non-gang street offenders (Esbensen et al 1993).

Our data support the observations of Fagan (1989) that gang involvement and drug involvement can be conceptualized as "contingent behaviors among adolescents." Those factors which might mitigate delinquency should also diminish the gang problem. Recalling that in the student population, commitment to education was an effective predictor of less gang membership and less deviant behavior, a pressing need is for the development of diverse and meaningful academic experiences, the creation of future job opportunities, and the strengthening of economic self support for youth (Wysong, Aniskiewicz, Wright 1994).

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Darkness

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DANGEROUS RELATIONSHIPS: EFFECTS OF EARLY EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE IN WOMEN'S LIVES

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ABSTRACT

Using the intergenerational transmission of violence theoretical framework, this paper examines the psychological, sociological and cultural factors that help explain the reasons why women remain in long standing relationships with abusive male sexual partners. A targeted sample of thirty-six women partners of injecting drug users in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, who were victims of conjugal abuse are used to test a number of psychological, sociological and cultural hypotheses of the existence of long term abusive relationships. All these women were involved with males who were still involved in Juarez street gangs. Qualitative data analysis revealed that all of their women's present relationships involved intimate partner violence, and that they had been subjected to some form of physical or sexual abuse while growing up. Gang violence also played and continues to have an impact in these women's lives. Most reported that their present intimate partners had been gang members in the past and that the women themselves may have participated peripherally in gang activities.

INTRODUCTION

Given the pervasive & extensive exposure to violence and related messages, children learn violence by the modeling of the violence around them (Bandura 1973; Goldstein 1980). Such learned behavior is carried into adult relationships, & the idea that violence begets violence makes intuitive sense. Children who have been victims of violence will later become abusers and violent offenders themselves with their intimate partners, their own children, and others in the community. Some authors refer to this process as the "cycle of violence" (Gelles 1976; Steinmetz 1977). Although the "cycle of violence" has gained much popular & practitioner acceptance, some violence researchers have examples of male violence being extended to young women (Gabarino, Gilliam 1980; Widow 1989b). However, contradictory to this notion is that not all abused children go on to become abusers. Many studies ignore key issues & dynamics shaping these young women's experiences with violence. Although some women are also violent & abuse their male partners (Flynn 1990; Mezey, King 1989), in the great majority of the cases, the victim has been a woman abused by a man. Many abused women do not go on to abuse their spouses or their children.

Intergenerational Transmission of Violence

The "cycle of violence" theory is based on the hypothesis that exposure to violence lays the foundations for violent behavior in later life. Researchers have examined several possible links between early exposure to violence and drug use (Rogan 1986; Worth 1991), sexual abuse (Matousek 1991) and becoming a perpetrator of violence in adult intimate relationships (Symonds 1979). Bandura's

Social Learning Theory (1986) has established that an important relationship exists between early exposure to violence and becoming a perpetrator of violent acts. He posited that by observing violent disputes between their parents, children learn and later model violent behaviors. This type of learning and modeling takes place not only in the home but also among the children in the "barrio" (neighborhood). In many low income "barrios," children see and experience interpersonal and street violence as the norm.

Concerns with one's peers, youth networks and related social worlds become a dominating force for these young women. Yet, here too, youth become concerned with intimate partner violence and street violence. In many of their barrios, youth gangs are a dominant social force—although they do not involve all youth in these barrios.

As shown in Table 1 the "cycle of violence" theory proposes that the abused child will become an abusive adult. The cycle of violence theory is based on criminal justice policies and records and primarily focuses in examining early exposure to violence of male perpetrators with little attention to violence's impact on young female's lives. Most studies do not deal directly with women and the consequences of violence in their lives. This perspective focuses little attention on the impact of either household or community violence on young and adolescent girls, or what impact this exposure may have on their future behaviors. It also suggests little in terms of early intervention, treatment, and follow-up.

We contend that most abused girls do not become abusive women, but are likely to become abused women. Widow (1989a) points out that the long-term consequences of abuse for females may be expressed in very indirect

Table 1: Comparison of Cycle of Violence & Intergenerational Transmission of Violence Theories

	Cycle of Violence Theory	Intergenerational Transmission of Violence Theory
Male	Abused Child --> Abusive Adult	Abused Child --> Abusive Adult
Female	Abused Child --> Abusive Adult	Abused Child --> Abused Adult

internalized ways. Women may suffer an increase in depressive episodes, instead of following the more male model of outward aggression. For some women, the internalized way of coping with abuse turns into situations which some have termed "learned helplessness" (Seligman 1975). The concept of "learned helplessness" was developed from observations of the behavior of laboratory animals put in painful situations without much possibility of escape. Eventually, when presented with possible escape routes, the animals would not take them. The animals' refusal to escape from the painful situations was a result of perceptual distortions brought about by the previous helpless situation (Walker 1984). Seligman (1975) suggested that the concept of learned helplessness could explain why women find it difficult to leave abusive relationships & settings.

The "intergenerational transmission of violence" (Curtis 1963) explains this event as a role modeling behavior that gets passed on from one generation to another. They recast the hypothesis stating that an individual violent response to a number of life situations tends to be passed from one generation to another by a process of behavior modeling (Gelles 1976) & unstated rules (Laing 1969). While holding that certain roles tend to become part of the individual's responses, they posit the notion that exposure to violence serves as a role model for the male perpetrator. But for female victims rather than becoming mostly abusive, they become abused females (Gelles 1976).

Staying in Abusive Relationships

Sex-role stereotyping & self-imposed difficulties seem to prevent abused women from viewing their situation clearly, or from making informed decisions about their futures (Ball, Wyman 1978). Walker (1984) suggests that abused women who remain in relationships tend to report that their childhood abuse was worse than that in their present domestic relationship. Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger 1957) suggests that when a victim cannot remove herself from the situation and has to live with limited choices, she rationalizes that her present situation is no worse than her childhood & therefore acceptable. Family

system theories explain the maintenance of abusive relationships as part of the dynamics of the family system. They also draw attention to the lack of psychological, social & economic resources; the lack of responsiveness of the police, courts, & welfare system, especially the insufficiency of protective orders & other court judgments. Other research suggests that women who have been involved in helpless situations many times are more likely to perceive their present situation as hopeless. They adapt instead of leaving or exploring meaningful alternatives. Many who are developing programs & innovations to help with the problem propose solutions which are obvious. However they fail to address the perceived & real difficulties of changing the internal dynamics of the family, the variability of social support, the lack of necessary social & economic resources programs for abused women & their children, & the lack of strict enforcement of existing laws (MacDonald 1989). These difficulties are compounded when one takes into consideration the legal, political, economic & cultural norms of the Mexican culture.

Cultural and Class Impact

In Mexico, as in all Latin American countries, gender defines the limits of power in a relationship and in society. The culturally sanctioned inequality of economic & political power between men and women, coupled with the socialization of women towards passivity and dependency on their partners, increases the probability of physical and emotional violence in relationships. The implied threat or actual act of violence, which appears to be condoned by societal norms, is used by their sexual partners to maintain their dominant position. The fear of being estranged from their partners and from the family's protective milieu, together with the lack of socially acceptable alternatives, causes women to remain in long term relationships which may be dangerous to their physical and mental health. Most of them never had an opportunity to tell their story, or to discuss their violent experiences with anyone else. This lack of self-expression leaves them out of touch with their feelings. They appear not to have a sound basis by which to validate their identities or to examine alternatives. They accept the violence as normal.

Many are not openly aware of the violence that has been committed against them when they were children by parents, siblings, or others. Men turn to external justifications, especially those related to their jobs, illnesses, financial strains & the use of alcohol, to explain their violent actions, while women tend to blame themselves for the violent abusive situation in which they find themselves. This situation heightens these women's feelings of low self-esteem, dependency, and learned helplessness (Overholser, Moll 1990). This is particularly true of women who are injecting drugs users (IDUs) or who are sexual partners of IDUs.

METHODOLOGY

The Setting and Sample Selection

Interviews were conducted in Ciudad Juarez, in the US-Mexico border state of Chihuahua. Juarez is the fifth largest city in Mexico, with a population of 1.5 million inhabitants, & is the center of a burgeoning "maquila" industry (factories that use primarily US raw materials to produce finished products for export back into the US). Despite the favorable circumstances created by the "maquiladoras," the level of unemployment and consequent poverty remains high. Social and educational services are lacking because of the high rate of population growth and the low rate of infrastructure development. A targeted sample was selected among women whose socio-demographic profiles closely matched those of the women participating in the National Institute of Drug Abuse and Prevention (NIDA AIDS Targeted Outreach Model—ATOM Project) funded study (ABT 1992), but who lived in different Juarez "barrios." They were recruited by trained fieldworkers familiar with the drug users' patterns and demographics of the different neighborhoods in Ciudad Juarez. The ATOM project's inclusion criteria was used to select participants: women, older than eighteen years of age, non-users of injecting drugs for the past year, and who had been sexual partners of male active drug users within the last 6 months to the past five years. Women not meeting these criteria were excluded from the study.

Data Collection

Modified ethnographic interviews were used in collecting the data. These are in-depth, semi-structured, single-encounter interviews using an open-ended interview guide containing a set of questions which are asked of all informants. This data collection technique was chosen because it takes place in a shorter time

frame than the conversational style of traditional ethnographic interviews. Prior to the interview, written informed consent was obtained from all informants. They were assured that their names would not be used in any publications or reports, nor would they in any way be identified to their partners or to any other women who were part of the study. They were also informed that their participation was strictly voluntary, & that they could leave the interview at any time or refuse to answer any questions. The respondents were paid a stipend equivalent to fifteen US dollars for the interview. Fifty modified interviews were considered enough to elicit the needed information. Interviews were conducted in Spanish by a female psychologist trained in ethnographic interviewing techniques. Beyond general socio-demographic characteristics, the interview guide included questions examining a range of experience & behaviors over the informants' lifetimes. They encompassed childhood experience; histories of physical & sexual abuse; family influences; what attracted them to their partners; the effect of drugs in their relationships; & why they stayed in abusive relationships. The respondent was at liberty to discuss any topic she deemed significant. The interviewer was instructed to elicit & probe into those areas that she believed were important to the respondent. The interview data were collected in homes & in a neighborhood center lasting approximately 2 hours. If deemed necessary, there was a subsequent interview. In most cases, & with the permission of the respondent, the interviewer used a tape recorder as a memory aid to complement the field notes. After the interviews were completed, the tapes were transcribed into text, augmented by the fieldworker's notes, & were subjected to a qualitative analysis.

FREE TEXT ANALYSIS

Only thirty-six of the fifty women who met inclusion criteria were used in the analysis. The interviews were translated from Spanish into English. They were analyzed using a text analysis software package called AFTER (Analysis of Free Text for Ethnographic Research) developed by the data management subcontractor to the larger study (NOVA 1990). The program was used to separate and categorize portions of the narratives into factors which respondents referred to as important "markers" in their lives. These markers' importance in the past were always in relation to their present circumstances. We concentrated on the chronology of violence experienced by

these women over their life courses. Four factors were mentioned frequently in relation to the violence experienced by these women: childhood abusive experience in the family, violence from the hands of strangers, attraction to "dangerous" sexual partners, and long-standing abusive relationships with these dangerous sexual partners.

RESULTS

Women's Characteristics

All thirty-six informants were born in Mexico; all but one, in Juarez. The age range was 15-45 years, with a mean of 27.9 years. This was substantially lower than the mean age of US & Puerto Rico women in the ATOM study. Only 14 respondents had an eighth-grade education or more. None had attended college. Reasons given by women for not completing their formal education were: 1) the necessity to help parents support the family, 2) having to stay home to care for siblings, and 3) the biological family's instability and violence. Their parents did not encourage schooling. One respondent said: "None of us went to school; my mother, she couldn't mind all of us because we were so many; that was her excuse." The level of instability reported by the respondents was a consequence of the violence at home, in the neighborhood, and in the school, especially where gangs were common. The home environment was so violent in some cases that for their own protection the girls were sent away by their mothers to live with a relative. Only 17 of the women were raised by both parents.

Nearly a fifth of the women were raised by their grandmothers. One woman stated that:

The only nice memories I have of being a little girl are of my grandmother. Although she was old and frail she was the only one that fought, took sides for my sister and myself.

In most instances who raised the woman was determined by a family crisis: the death of a parent, financial problems or abuse of the child by a male relative or friend of the family. For many who stayed with their parents after such a crisis, life became unbearable & many tried to move in with a friend or female relative. Many of the women stated that they had moved permanently to the house of an aunt or other relative.

Twenty one received most of their economic support from their intimate male

partners, and nineteen reported that they had to work to complement the household income and help the children and themselves. Their income was not steady, as these women's income was largely derived from the informal sector of the economy, e.g., selling and trading goods in neighborhood markets. None of the women stated that they earned enough income to be self-sufficient, or to be able to live without their intimate male partner's income.

Violence Exposed in the Paternal Family

Sixteen of the women reported violence in their biological families' households while they were growing up. This violence was directed against themselves, their mothers and siblings, and seven remembered seeing their mothers being physically abused by their fathers. Six stated that they themselves had experienced physical abuse as children at the hands of their parents. Many respondents reported having witnessed a severe beating of a sibling by the mother during their childhood or adolescence. Yet, most respondents were likely to charge their fathers with the most abuse and the most serious incidents of abuse. Nine attributed the violence in the household to the father's use of alcohol & other drugs. Only one woman attributed such alcohol & drug violence to her mother.

Some of the actual physical actions reported were extreme. One respondent reported being made to lie down and tied to a grate covered with broken glass as punishment for a minor transgression. Many witnessed the mothers being physically abused. When the mother was pregnant "he still hit her." Another form of paternal abuse was the open use of drugs in front of the children: "...he thought that if he and his friend went to the backyard we would not see... but they left all their drug paraphernalia laying around." Another woman reported that "Many times I saw my dad shooting drugs. My brother and I used to play at rolling joints. I was five; he was six." Besides the economic reasons mentioned above for not leaving an abusive relationship, these women also experienced the fear of their families' disapproval of the breakup. The social pressure to stay in the relationship, the fear of further social isolation, and the fear of having the full responsibility to care for themselves and their children alone was great. Many remained in the relationship to protect the family and their children's name. One respondent stated that she knew that,

he had other women [and] I know who they were [but] I was pregnant [and] I never told the kids he had another woman, so the children would not despise him.

History of Childhood Abusive

Experiences: Physical and Sexual Abuse

All informants mentioned that their mothers physically punished them for having failed to perform their household chores. Almost all reported that their fathers punished them for some violation of rules regarding haircut, makeup, or appropriate social conduct. Seven reported that in their parental homes, serious physical abuse was triggered by their transgression of some part of the parents' strict behavior code. Although the description of verbal and emotional abuse is not as clear or graphic, they do include cases of continued abuse for many years. For example, they report being told almost daily that they were crazy or that they were hated by other members of the family. The women's transgression of their father's or mother's strict code of behaviors, such as "no makeup" or "no talking with anyone outside the family circle" produced verbal references to loose morals. Many of these women remember being called whores for such minor transgressions.

Twelve women reported being sexually abused as children. One intriguing development during the interviews was that most recounted instances of sexual abuse involving penetration. Either these women did not experience non-penetrative sexual acts, or most likely they did not classify as abuse other sexual acts such as being touched, fellatio, fondling of male genitals, or lewd suggestions. With the premium placed on virginity in Mexican culture this makes penetration the only "true" sexual act (Ramos, Ferreira-Pinto 1997). All the others are seen as a preamble to penetration. As long as these women did not lose their virginity, they may not even have thought of the act as sexual abuse. In fact, most women related these acts as examples of the irrational behavior to be expected from Mexican males. This idea was tested & found to be true by Gallegos (1996) in unstructured interviews with women who had reported sexual abuse as children.

The women's responses to abusive episodes range from open confrontation to complete silence. Women who kept silent felt that other family members and friends would not be supportive of complaints about their plight. When a woman confronted her father about his sexual abuse of her, he only said: "It is that

I need it" without any guilt. Another respondent stated that after she denounced her father's sexual abuse, all her mother said was that "I was a liar." Given this non-supportive and threatening climate, the most common response to sexual abuse was silence, either to protect the mother's or the family name. One woman explained this protective attitude as a way to avoid upsetting the mother and make her mother "suffer more than she deserved." Even as children, women reported being depressed and feeling devastated by the lack of respect that the male abuser had shown herself, her mother, or her sisters as women.

Attraction to "Dangerous" Sexual Partners

Since their adolescent years, these respondents mentioned being associated with men who were full-fledged or surrogate gang members. Many of these males may be viewed by the respondents as "pelados, desobligados, vagos, callejeros, viciosos, o encarcelado" (in a nice translation: rascals or street hoodlums). Because of their involvement with "la bola" (the gang), these young women's association with these "pelados" was seen as affording them some form of protection from their families' chastisement, abuse and predation from a dangerous and violent community.

These women were attracted to and formed a bond with males whom many considered "dangerous, and would not dare to challenge." For these women, their relationship with these men provided them with an experience which they perceived as giving them a sense of freedom from fear, and a sense of respect and status among those that others viewed as dangerous and violent. One woman stated, "Nobody would dare say something to me, or insult me, because I was with [partner's name]." For both risk-taking women and women with low self-respect, the rewards brought about by bonding with these dangerous males was a powerful motivation for selecting sexual partners respected by those residing in dangerous & violent community and "barrio" settings. It is not uncommon for these women to select other males whose economic prospects are not much better than the current abusive partner, but who, because of their own dangerousness, appear to provide them a respite & asylum from their current storm of violence.

These women often enter into relationships quickly with idealized images of their partners. "I met a boy and ran away with him...I had known him for a week...he was very

handsome & strong...he treated me nicely." Many women had the perception that IDUs would "...understand them better..." since many, like themselves, were the product of troubled, abusive families. One woman stated that her partner told her that "my father would hit me when he got high." Some women stated that they knew that their partners "did not drink too much...[but they] did not know he was shooting up...I never thought that he would hit me."

The rationale used by these women for choosing their sexual partners became a major source of disappointment in their lives. This is particularly true for women with low self-esteem and little social support. They did not expect the violence displayed by these men to be used against them in a conjugal relationship. The women expected that their partners, most of whom had been products of abusive or socially drained families, would be understanding, empathetic and offer positive psychological support that was not available to them in their parents' homes. After the initial "honeymoon" period, the inverse of these expectations would become evident, to her circle of friends, her family, her personal work and social friendship networks, and to her.

Women reported feeling that they were being isolated from family and friends through social pressure: "You chose him, now endure him." Sometimes these "mujeres" isolate themselves—they feel humiliated by their partners behaviors, e.g., drug use, violent outbursts, womanizing. Womanizing partners make life particularly difficult for women in their communities—they try to hide their partners' womanizing from their significant others, especially their children.

Conjugal Abuse

Almost all (28/36) respondents met their partners through a family member, "una amiga" (a friend) or in the local "barrio" hangouts (a park, movie house, shopping center). Some of these women reported that they knew their male partners were part of a gang when they first met them. Others did not know of their partner's involvement with gangs until some conflict or some inadvertent remark revealed that they were part of a local or gang network. Even when making this discovery, they report that question about terminating the conjugal relationship was not even considered. Moreover, with many of these women, their men's participating in gangs was their least worry. For some it was the beginning of more stark

and startling discoveries, e.g., that her man was involved in using, dealing, transporting drugs; or worse, a violent, convicted drug offender. More often than not, evidence of street violence manifested itself on a friend of her partner when he was brought to her home wounded and where her role was to clean and tend the wound but not to question or discuss (Moore, Mata 1981).

While all of the women reported some type of serious abuse, only half of the women stated that they had been physically abused by their sexual partners. The pattern of abuse could start early in the relationship, in some cases, it started immediately: "Right away I started to get mistreated" stated an informant. Sometimes it would not start for several years. One informant reported that:

I knew him when I was 14...[but] he left for the US...when he returned I left my house and moved in with him. He left me at his parent's and went back to the US. He never hit me when we were living with his parents...The hitting started when we moved to our own house.

The initiation of an abusive episode was generally drug and alcohol related—the partner reaching the point where he would lose control over his state of intoxication (Rosenbaum 1981). Many of these women reported that their partners appeared to derive pleasure from being violent. The violent episodes' driving motivation is "to show the woman her place" and have her "respect her man." Often the violence has the overall end of ensuring that the male's authority should never be challenged—in the bedroom, in his house, or among their family and friends.

Even in the most abusive episodes, many of these relationships persist for many years. The reasons for these "mujeres" to remain in these abusive relationships are many. For several of the respondents, economic pressure is the primary reason for staying. Twenty one report that their main source of financial support is their partner. Although nineteen of these women reported working, one should keep in mind that most of this work is part-time, unstable, and poorly paid. Formal prostitution or more "informal" exchange of sex for support, was an option that only one woman in the sample contemplated. Given their overdependence on their partners, their options for moving out to live with relatives or friends, or "permanently" leave this abusive relationship is practically nonexistent, nor do

other similarly viable options appear to them.

DISCUSSION

The cycle of violence model fails to address reasons why a large number of women who were abused in their childhood do not later become abusers, as the theory proposes. It may be useful to apply the cycle of violence notion to young gang members & young men, but our research demonstrates that it fails to attend to & address key issues in women's lives.

First, for most of these women, early exposure to violence is part of their family life and domestic routine. This abuse and violence is at the hands of their parents, siblings, relatives, and even very close friends of the family. In many of these communities, family norms beginning in their homes have many continuities and discontinuities with the larger community & to society's agents of social control. The acceptance of these norms can be seen in the day-to-day activities of local barrio gang members, the presence of strangers, & in the actions of law enforcement personnel. These women's conflicts with their intimate partners serve as a basis for family norms supporting the acceptability of abuse and violence.

The inability or unwillingness of others to intercede in these less than tranquil, stable, and nurturing relationships for some of these women and their children goes on to serve and to buttress local and family norms about the acceptability of interpersonal violence. For many of these women and children, the modeling of violence begins early. Some come to accept violence as a key technique for conflict resolution. Therefore, they seek and attach to other strong and dangerous men who have earned or can gain the necessary amount of respect to make them feel protected.

When studying the intergenerational transmission of violence, one should be cautious not to concentrate solely on internal factors. By not examining the external structural, situational, and culturally grounded perspectives, one can end up blaming the victim, that is, putting all the responsibility for this violence and efforts to ameliorate this violence on the woman herself. It is obvious that external environment, common poverty, and sexism in these women's lives should be focused upon and subjected to appropriate social policy and intervention. While there may be little in the short term that can be done about poverty, social and economic factors, there is much that can be done to increase support for these women to abandon violent relationships, and

to manage their lives.

The dynamic of the conjugal relationships reported by these women hinges on gender-related power structure. Many of these men try to control their female partners' physical movements, their interactions, their emotions, and even their sense of mental health and well-being by fits of rage, jealousy, and possessiveness. These struggles are focused on control issues. This scenario is played out constantly, and the behavior patterns experienced as children are reinforced through their adolescence, as these women come of age, and when they set up their own households.

The continuing acceptance of the situation will prove immobilizing, if not fatal. Without real change, these dynamics only serve to perpetuate the intergenerational transmission of violence. It must be important to understand that for most women, the selection of intimate partners has little to do with the factoring-in their partners' "dangerousness" to her, his friends, or family. His ability to command respect and fear so that she can be free from violence common in her home life, teen years, and her own outings in the "barrio" seem to loom over other considerations. If we are to provide these women meaningful information and alter norms and actions that narrow the acceptability of violence in the "barrios," the appreciation and grounding of their decisions in these local cultural contexts is essential. It is also important to teach them how to identify and avoid partners who have the potential to become seriously abusive and to avoid otherwise violent domestic relationships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the economic & social conditions surrounding these women, the most effective way for change to occur is not through programs that unknowingly set up a violent confrontation with their partners. In many of the "barrios," confrontations without adequate support has undesirable consequences. Learning new ways of dealing with their own internalized anger and frustration is crucial. They must also learn how to repair a damaged self-image. Social interventions must attend to the need for programs that promote a woman's attending to her own needs, particularly her need for safety and freedom from abuse.

Efforts to reduce the risk of serious violence in the short run must not lose sight of the need for transformative & long-term change. The public policy responses to violence against women should first take into account societal

issues of economic development. Nonetheless, programming efforts must address individual issues of education, health, and job skills needed for self-support. Many of these women are accustomed to self-sacrifice for the family. For these women to take advantage of programs, support for the children and their livelihood during this transition must be a primary consideration. Implementing effective service and support systems for women and their children, such as shelters & enforceable laws during crisis, is essential. But for the change to take hold, the possibility of meaningful training & jobs would serve to encourage these women to explore alternatives to the fear and threat of violence (Davis 1988).

Finally, in Mexico and the United States, policy makers and practitioners have been unwilling to address the power imbalance between intimate sexual partners, the class differences, the marginalization of large segments of society and how these factors intersect with episodes of interpersonal violence (Candib 1989). In Mexico, the therapeutic approach to crisis management of interpersonal violence must be implemented.

This does not mean that uncritical adoption of traditional family values is the answer. Promoting family values among the more marginalized in these communities without analyzing oppressive culturally prescribed gender roles can lead to development of interventions that promote, or perpetuate, women's subordinate role. Social intervention must have a sense of how to address family values & practices that do not serve to continue to promote family, conjugal, & societal abuse of these women. Further research on the topic should focus on children who have been exposed to violence during their formative years & attempt to predict who may be more likely to exhibit violent behaviors at a later date or will have the tendency to become victims of violence. These data should allow us to design better targeted interventions to teach men to better channel their aggressive tendencies; to change the women's self-images; to promote less revictimizing of abused women; & to expand the economic & social resources available for these women to be self-confident & independent.

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GANG PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

This article summarizes an evaluation of youth gang prevention and intervention programs across 33 Boys and Girls Clubs which were designed to implement strategies and techniques for reaching and mainstreaming at-risk youth or those on the fringe of gang involvement. Thirty Boys and Girls Club sites were funded as prevention program sites (of which eight received additional funds to develop youth gang prevention consortiums) and three were funded as intervention program sites.

This study, conducted from April 1991 to February 1992, was designed as a process evaluation, summarizing what happened across the club sites. The information collected and used for evaluation contained basic demographic descriptors, indicators of at-risk factors, and indicators of school performance. The evaluator was based on data obtained from case management information collected by Club personnel at all sites, on-site observations, and interviews by members of the research team.

The evaluation centered on actual program implementation in order to draw inferences concerning the degree to which gang prevention and intervention program objectives were achieved. In addition, the descriptive data suggests that some outcome objectives were achieved; however, the evaluation was not designed as a scientific outcome study. Overall, the results of this evaluation demonstrate that these programs were effective in reaching targeted youth and that some of the efforts implemented deserve consideration by those planning future prevention and/or intervention undertakings.

INTRODUCTION

The constellation of problems related to gang and group delinquency in the United States is growing. Besides direct costs to victims resulting from violent and property offenses, "the community as a whole" is paying significant monies for law enforcement, trials and other judicial proceedings, secure confinement, and correctional programs (Thompson, Jason 1988). Further, large numbers of America's youth, especially in public housing and inner city areas, are slipping into a quagmire from which return is extremely difficult.

With inner city conditions rapidly deteriorating, hundreds of thousands of young persons face desperate and largely hopeless lives. The problems one sees in inner city areas are coming home to all Americans either directly or indirectly as they emerge geographically, economically, politically and socially. Factors such as unemployment, underemployment, poverty, and the like have at one time or another been linked to increasing or decreasing rates of crime, delinquency, and gang activity. Often unable to subsist within the legal economy, many take refuge in the illegal subeconomy - engaging in prostitution, gambling, drugs and the like - and often express frustration in acts of expressive and instrumental violence as witnessed in the recent resurgence of youth gang activity (Hagedorn 1988; Huff 1990; Jankowski 1991; Klein, Maxson 1989; Vigil, Yun 1990). As a result, members of the underclass comprise the bulk of juvenile and adult institutionalized

populations. Thus, a significant number of American youth, especially inner city youth, are "at risk." In a country where tens of millions partake of abundance, these youth live in conditions where their access to developmental opportunities is much different than that of their more well-situated "peers."

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES: THE ROLE OF MEDIATING STRUCTURES

The problems of inner city poverty and deterioration are long-standing and complex. Obviously, attempts to address inner city conditions must proceed in several dimensions. Over the last several decades two strategic approaches have predominated in efforts to deal with inner city gang problems. As pointed out by Spergel and Curry,

the predominant strategy for dealing with the gang problem during the 1950's and 1960's was social intervention, whereas the predominant strategy during the 1970's and 1980's was suppression. (1993)

Elements of both strategies have carried forward into the 1990's (very heavy on suppression); however, there is increasing recognition of the need for strategic initiatives of a different sort.

As Spergel and Curry also inform us,

analysis of the data from the National Youth Gang Survey [Spergel 1991] produced little evidence of the efficacy of either approach [social intervention or suppression] as a primary

strategy for either chronic or emerging gang problem cities. (Spergel, Curry 1993)

Considering this, Spergel and Curry point to the need for "appropriate and complementary strategies," especially

the need for various community organizations, including law enforcement and youth agencies, to play important interactive and collective roles in both emerging and chronic problem cities. (1993)

Spergel's and Curry's analysis essentially results in a call for community mobilization. Introducing the basic notion that increasing gang activity may signify "a progressive weakening of the basic institutions of socialization, especially the family, but also the schools and other community organizations," they indicate that

secondary institutions in the community, particularly police, schools, and youth agencies must assume additional support and control functions that perhaps formerly were fulfilled by families. (1993)

In the image conveyed, there would be a need for a coordinated collective effort which may constitute a strategic dimension of initiatives to transcend suppression and/or social intervention "to nurture a coherent community in which problematic or at-risk youth can play a constructive and meaningful role."

More than fifty years ago, F.M. Thrasher (1927) described the work of voluntary organizations, such as ethnic clubs, churches, and others, in helping to shape the behaviors of gang members. Attention to the roles and potential of various primary and secondary organizations may have been diminished over time by emphases on mega-initiatives of relatively short-term duration. Studies and analyses of what has occurred/is occurring in inner city areas lead to the understanding that when essential primary institutions deteriorate, external mega-initiatives may miss, or perhaps more importantly, may misspecify their targets. A void is then present which must be filled in order to "carry out those functions critical to the youth socialization process," (Spergel, Curry 1993) as well as to integrate efforts and essentially create a more stable, if not empowered, neighborhood or community.

The notion of "mediating structures"

has been around for some time (Berger, Neuhaus 1977). Applied to consideration of 1990's strategic initiatives, one is directed to search for mechanisms by which support may be channeled to fill the void, utilizing organizations which contribute stability to neighborhoods or communities, provide an interface with larger institutions, and have the capacity to link local needs to initiatives of promise.

WEED AND SEED

While there have been some efforts at developing mediating structures to address the inner cities dilemma, little has been done with the focus and scope of Operation Weed and Seed. Operation Weed and Seed has involved a multi-dimensional strategy with a primary emphasis on addressing the problems of gangs, drugs, violence, crime and community recovery from drug problems and violent gang activity. The thrust of the overall strategy was based upon an awareness that in various communities a coordinated comprehensive approach was needed. The idea was to form partnerships among governmental and private organizations to significantly reduce criminal activity (the "weed" part) and promote community recovery (the "seed" part).

The four strategies of Weed and Seed included:

1. suppression — enforcement, adjudication, prosecution, and supervision targeting those "who account for a disproportionate percentage of criminal activity."
2. community-oriented policing — providing a "bridge" between law enforcement activities and "neighborhood reclamation and revitalization activities."
3. prevention, intervention, intervention, and treatment — focusing on "youth services, school programs, community and social programs, and support groups."
4. neighborhood reclamation and revitalization — focusing on "economic development activities designed to strengthen legitimate community institutions."

The overall idea was to concentrate resources in designated areas to provide a comprehensive approach.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS

As noted in a recent report:

For more than 130 years the Boys Clubs of

America has been working to prevent juvenile delinquency and develop productive citizens and leaders among our Nation's most vulnerable youth...The Clubs provide youth with alternatives to the streets that include activities that develop their sense of belonging, competence, usefulness and influence. (Sweet 1991)

With over 1400 local clubs operating in every major metropolitan area, Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) was an ideal partner to Weed and Seed efforts. Clubs typically provide recreational programming for youth as well as other services such as tutorial programs; field trips; craft programs; mentoring positive enhancements, such as SMART MOVES (a programming strategy which provides focused group discussions tailored to teens concerning such topics as drug use, sexual relations, and other matters); and the like. Moreover, BGCA has proven to be effective in servicing disadvantaged youth, with local club facilities often located adjacent to or within public housing (Feyerherm, Pope, Lovell 1992).

An evaluation conducted by researchers from Columbia University and the American Health Foundation (Schinke, Cole, Orlandi 1991) noted the following:

Social support services are critical for youth in public housing. Yet comprehensive and sensitive services for young people in public housing are practically nonexistent. Public housing communities urgently need the kind of attention, community organization, and carefully designed intervention programs that Boys and Girls Clubs offer.

The emphasis must be on coordinated efforts at community organization and recovery.

Similarly, a 1986 Louis and Harris Associates survey underscored the fact the BGCA have a positive impact on our nation's youth, especially those from disadvantaged families. Club experiences lay a strong foundation for success in later life. As noted by Sweet (1991), Boys and Girls Clubs has a lengthy and "strong record of positive involvement with children at particular risk - those in declining neighborhoods and in public housing..." As part of Weed and Seed, BGCA engaged in a targeted outreach program in order to reach those youth at risk of becoming involved in gangs and gang-related activity (eg. drugs, violence, and crime generally). The results reported

here represent an evaluation of this targeted outreach program. The main aims were to 1) assess the implementation of the programs, including a determination of efforts which worked well and could be replicated, as well as those efforts which fell short of expectations (problem areas) and 2) assess, to the degree possible, the programs' effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized here was designed to accomplish the objectives noted above and consisted of a "process" evaluation. As Patton (1980) observed:

Process evaluations are aimed at elucidating and understanding the internal dynamics of program operations. Process evaluations focus on the following kinds of questions: What are the factors that come together to make the program what it is? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program? How are the clients brought into the program and how do they move through the program once they are participants? What is the nature of staff-client interactions?

Central to a process evaluation is a detailed description of program operations which is ideally suited to a qualitative design. Thus, the assessment relied heavily on qualitative interviews and observations, which were supplemented by a limited quantitative component involving data drawn from case records.

BGCA PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The BGCA project involved 30 Clubs selected and funded as gang prevention sites, with a commitment to provide case management and services for 35 youth. Through a special grant from the Office of Health and Human Services, eight of these sites were selected to network with other community organizations or youth gang consortia to reach an additional 100 at-risk youth through community-wide events. In each of the sites *prevention* meant implementation of strategies to deter youth primarily aged 7 to 11, from becoming involved in gang or gang related activities. Three additional Clubs were selected as intervention sites. These Clubs received substantially more funding and were to develop and implement strategies to serve at risk youth (typically those on the fringes of gangs or "wannabes") in the primary target ages of 12 to 16. At least 50 youth were to be served in

Table 1: Gender and Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Program Youth

	Prevention		Consortium		Intervention		All Programs	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender								
Female	251	29	196	29	71	19	518	27
Male	593	68	468	70	301	81	1362	71
Missing	33	4	4	1	0	0	37	2
Total	877	100	668	100	372	100	1917	100
Race/Ethnicity								
White	94	11	130	19	25	7	249	13
African American	593	68	361	54	152	41	1106	58
Hispanic	114	13	151	23	167	45	432	23
Asian	18	2	25	4	22	6	65	3
Native American	0	0	8	1	1	0	9	0
Other Races	3	0	3	0	2	1	8	0
Missing	55	6	0	0	3	1	58	3
Total	877	100	668	100	372	100	1917	100

each gang intervention site.

All the participating local Clubs were selected through a process which included submission of an application for funding and a detailed plan for implementation. A committee comprised of directors of BGCA reviewed the proposals and made the actual decisions concerning which local Clubs would be funded. As implemented, the BGCA efforts fall within the general rubric of prevention.

Prevention and Consortium Programs

Fifteen of the prevention and consortium sites were included in the evaluation. For the prevention sites, the evaluation was based in part on data obtained from case management information collected by Club personnel at each site. All available program records were used to provide an assessment as comprehensive as possible. Using the case management data, analysis was conducted to provide information on demographic characteristics of youth served. In addition, site visits to selected programs were accomplished. On-site observation was combined with interviews of various persons arranged through the auspices of the local Clubs. These interviews were conducted with program directors, Club staff directly involved with prevention programming, program participants, school officials, local justice officials, and parents when possible. The evaluation centered on actual program implementation in order to determine strengths of implementation and areas of implementation needing improvement, and, draw inferences concerning the degree to which

program plans were achieved. The consortium sites were approached in the same manner - one visit was made to each of the selected sites by one member of the research team.

Intervention Programs

All three intervention sites were included in the evaluation. As with the prevention programs, available case management information was analyzed to provide demographic information, indicators of at-risk factors such as past and current school performance, as well as gang and justice system involvement. In addition, each of the intervention sites was visited twice by two members of the research team. Again, on-site observations were combined with interviews of various persons, as indicated above. In both the prevention and intervention program interviews, the evaluators use semi-structured interview schedules to obtain information on such issues as:

- the nature of the gang problem in the area
- club activities as part of the prevention/intervention efforts
- relationship to other Club programs and activities
- efforts in mainstreaming of participants and, among other items,
- relationships with other youth-serving agencies.

Beyond this, interviews were conducted with program participants for the three intervention programs using semi-structured interview schedules developed by the evaluation team.

Table 2: Factors Placing Program Youth at Risk of Gang Involvement

At-Risk Factors	Prevention		Consortium		Intervention		All Programs	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
"Wanna-Be"	85	10	0	0	19	5	105	5
Family Gang Involved	5	1	0	0	36	10	41	2
School Behavioral Problem	338	39	422	63	33	9	793	41
Failing School	309	35	246	37	37	10	592	31
Truant	133	15	136	20	15	4	284	15
Runaway	27	3	5	1	66	18	122	6
Abuse/Neglect	164	19	64	10	4	1	232	12
Substance Abuse	26	3	5	1	52	14	83	4
Parental Substance Abuse	177	20	98	15	4	1	279	15
In Custody	43	5	63	9	94	25	200	10
Other	84	10	113	17	98	26	295	15

Table 3: Discipline and Rewards for Program Youth

	Prevention		Consortium		Intervention		All Programs	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disciplinary Actions	229	26	121	18	7	2	357	19
Accomplishments								
In-Club	421	48	192	29	23	6	636	33
Outside	117	13	79	12	11	3	207	11
Volunteer	236	27	153	23	102	27	491	26
Other	51	6	3	0	183	49	237	12

FINDINGS

Selected Descriptive Information

A total of 1,917 youth were served by the project: 877 were served by the 22 prevention sites, 668 by the eight prevention consortium sites, and 372 by the three intervention sites. Schools served as the largest referral source (45%), followed by youth walk-ins (23%), juvenile justice agencies (9%), and youth agencies (9%). As defined in the program design, the prevention and consortium sites served youth between ages 7 and 11 (98%), while the intervention sites focused on older youth (85% were 12 through 18 years of age).

A substantial number of girls participated in the program, especially at the prevention and consortium sites (29% of all participants). At the three intervention sites, girls made up 19 percent of the total served. The greatest number of youth served by the project were African-American (58%), followed by Hispanic (23%) and Caucasian youth (13%). Asian youth accounted for 3 percent, while Native Americans and others made up 1 percent.

The greatest at-risk factors identified were school-related. Forty-one percent of the

youth exhibited behavioral problems in school, 31 percent were failing school, and 15 percent were chronically truant. Parental substance abuse and abuse/neglect were next in significance (15% and 12% respectively), followed by "other" factors at 15 percent (defined by Club staff as environment/neighborhood factors).

Once enrolled at the Clubs, most youth attended regularly. Ninety percent of the youth attended once a week or more, with 26 percent attending daily, 19 percent attending half of the available hours, and 19 percent attending at least twice a week. One third received recognition for in-club accomplishments, while 26 percent received recognition for volunteer work outside of the Club. Project staff used other agencies as referral sources, with 41 percent of all youth involved in the project receiving some form of referral to one or more community agencies.

Referrals to outside agencies for other services were highest among youth at intervention sites (73% of all intervention youth), followed by consortium sites (56%) and prevention sites (15%). It would be expected that the intervention sites would require the

greatest level of referral services due to the focus of the efforts.

Although this was a process evaluation, the descriptive data did suggest trends in the educational arena. School behavior showed the greatest level of improvement among the school risk factors, with 48 percent of the participants showing improvement; the highest (62%) were among the consortium sites where the established relationships with the schools was the strongest. Over one-third of the youth showed improved grades and another one-third improved their attendance. Less than six percent of the youth showed declines in any of the school risk factors during program involvement.

Strengths in Program Implementation

BGCA's and OJJDP's expectations of "success" for the various programs centered on accomplishing networking activities, actually implementing the specified efforts, recruiting and retaining the targeted at-risk youth, maintaining case management records, and attempting to "mainstream" the targeted youth during the program time period in order to 1) bring them together with other Club members for positive associations and 2) encourage the targeted youth to remain involved in the Clubs and other positive activities beyond the project time period. The various programs were envisioned as "demonstrations," with a relatively short-term focus and a primary interest in implementation. Little attention was given to conceptualizing, operationalizing, or measuring effects beyond those already described, or to any follow-up other than the one-shot evaluation immediately following program implementation and termination.

All programs met their overall goals to serve the designated numbers of targeted youth. This required each participating Club to staff its effort (for the prevention and consortium programs this generally meant reallocating time and duties for existing staff, and for the intervention efforts this meant both reallocating time and duties for existing staff and hiring new staff), engage in initial coordination with schools and other local agencies, and engage in recruiting targeted youth. As noted earlier, schools were the sources from which the largest number of youth were recruited. Across programs, recruitment was a program strength. Specific efforts varied, but most involved identifying at-risk youth directly through liaison with school or other agency

personnel; then contacting youth and parents, parent, or responsible adult; explaining the program and participation in the program; and formally enrolling those youth who desired to participate and whose parent(s) or responsible adult(s) consented. The structured, formal recruitment process supported directly the notion of targeted outreach and was a key feature of all programs.

Retention of youth in the programs was excellent over the project time period. More than ninety percent of those initially enrolled remained officially enrolled throughout the project period. As noted above, however, a sizable percentage (36%) attended sporadically, while a smaller percentage (26%) attended each day, 19 percent attended regularly and more than half of the available hours, and 19 percent attended regularly and approximately twice per week. In all programs, staff attempted both to motivate the targeted youth and to promote attendance through incentives. These incentives included awards and recognition based on accumulating hours and/or points for various activities, as well as other incentives such as special parties for targeted youth (e.g., pizza parties). Staff also sought to interest and motivate the targeted youth by mainstreaming them into general Club activities.

Mainstreaming, or integrating the targeted youth into the general Club population and activities, was an essential feature of all programs and was a strength of implementation. Mainstreaming required program staff to balance provision of specified activities to the targeted youth with ensuring that the youth could be integrated without identification as targeted youth. Across the programs, staff were sensitive to these requirements and generally were able to meet them by 1) keeping records separate and confidential to the extent possible and 2) providing explanations to targeted youth and other Club youth as necessary. Mainstreaming was essential, as well, in extending program resources. All programs utilized general Club resources in this way to supplement program funding. Actually, absent this strategy it would have been very difficult for most Clubs to provide sufficient activities and staffing to operate the programs. With this strategy, the efforts were viable.

Networking, building or utilizing relationships with other organizations and agencies, was a strong point in all programs, especially those designated to build a consortium.

Networking is an integral feature of Boys and Girls Clubs operations on a continuing basis, and it was not surprising to find that Club staff were skilled and knowledgeable in this area. Each Club was able to capitalize on established relationships, and many formed new sets of relationships relevant to their specified efforts. Across all sites there were strong efforts to establish or utilize existing relationships with schools (especially those immediately adjacent to the housing areas in which targeted youth resided and those they attended), law enforcement, juvenile court and juvenile probation agencies, and others. In some instances, the local Clubs were the only viable alternatives available within the program area. Even in these instances, staff coordinated and shared information with other organizations.

Eight programs were to build consortium efforts. All focused on building partnerships, especially with schools and other organizations capable of working together with the local Club to deliver activities and services and/or to directly support activities and services. Typically, program partnerships with schools involved development of a school liaison to assist in monitoring progress and determining needs for after-school tutorials and educational enhancements. The educational enhancements would involve such activities as computer-assisted learning and other learning activities to supplement classroom activities. The central idea would be to provide interesting, motivational learning activities which extended and supported classroom activities rather than simply retracing classroom activities. This focus was important and participants reported that their interest in both school and after-school learning activities increased as a result.

There were several other notable partnership ventures. Two were exemplary. In one of these, a local Club joined with an element of the United States Army from a nearby military installation to create and implement a leadership-training program for targeted youth. The program included a ten-week cycle of weekend instruction and activities in which military personnel provided seminar-type classroom activities and outdoor-skills activities such as map reading, compass orienting, and outdoor overnight camping and learning activities. The military personnel also obtained the participation of cadets from a nearby university R.O.T.C. detachment to act as volunteers at the local

Club for an array of additional activities. This partnership deserves careful consideration because of the possibilities for future efforts to bring to bear resources not usually included in designing or planning for gang prevention programs.

As well, the second exemplary effort involved a creative and very useful partnership. The local Club joined with an advertising agency in the area to develop what eventually became an award-winning print and television ad campaign against gangs. The ad agency provided guidance, technical expertise, and production facilities, as well as commitment of individuals from the agency to work with the targeted youth. The targeted youth creatively designed both the print ads and the television ads (30-second and 1-minute commercials) and were the actors in the television ads. These ads were powerful and showed the creative capabilities of the youth, given guidance and opportunity. It would be a large understatement to point out that the participants were motivated by this partnership — the targeted youth, the agency personnel, and the Club staff. Such partnerships may be possible in many areas and deserve careful consideration by those designing or planning gang prevention and intervention efforts.

Among other specified efforts across programs, basketball leagues and trips beyond central city neighborhoods were strengths of implementation. Boys and Girls Clubs operate with the rubric of recreation to provide activities designed to interest youth as the prerequisite for engaging youth with developmental opportunities. Basketball leagues were a staple across the programs, and these were designed to serve two obvious purposes. They were organized and operated to provide alternatives to the streets at times of day when youth typically are "hanging out" on the streets, and they were aimed at maintaining the participation of targeted youth by providing an activity of special interest to many of the program participants. All evidence indicated that both these purposes were achieved for most participating youth across the programs.

Trips beyond central city neighborhoods were another staple across programs. Those familiar with America's inner cities realize that many youth do not travel beyond their neighborhoods to see directly what many more well-situated youth take for granted. Trips to museums, state and national parks, and other places of interest were utilized to maintain the

interest of participants and to expand their first-hand knowledge of what things are like beyond their own usual horizons. The broader aim was to provide youth the beginnings of a way to locate themselves beyond a central city neighborhood. The project period was limited, but such activities should receive careful consideration by those designing more long-term efforts.

The intervention programs were implemented by three Clubs in which the usual scope of operations included reaching teenage youth. Even among Boys and Girls Clubs, reaching and retaining teens is known to be difficult, requiring experienced staff and efforts tailored to teens and the local situations in which teens are living. Not all Clubs extend their efforts to include teens. Among the noted difficulties is that of concurrently providing programming of interest to younger children and programming which will hold the interest of teens. Also among noted difficulties is the matter of providing space, staff, and time sufficient to provide programming and enough separation so that teens (especially) and younger children feel a distinction in age and activities.

The three intervention programs were very strong. The participating Clubs employed combinations of established programming (e.g., SMART MOVES) and creative activities of interest to teens. A normal policy of Boys and Girls Clubs is implementation of a guiding principle stressing that a Club is to be a safe haven from violence and any other undesirable conditions in the surrounding environment. The intervention programs were located in areas where actual gang activity and other problems, such as instrumental use of youth by adults as participants in drug dealing, were pervasive. Under sometimes difficult conditions, staff in these programs had maintained the Clubs as safe havens. The value of this situation is immeasurable, but its importance must be understood. Just as it is ridiculous to expect hungry children to function and learn at full capacity, it is unreasonable to expect youth to receive positive messages in situations which may be volatile. The intangible "respect" must be present. Across all the programs, staff observed and implemented the safe haven principle and adhered to the notion of "respect." With the intervention programs and attempts to deal with teens, establishing the threshold conditions appeared to be of great importance.

A final strength of note in the implementation of these efforts was the commitment of the various Clubs' staff to retaining the targeted youth beyond the project period. In each program evaluated, this aim was expressed and actions were observed which showed the research team that the commitment was genuine. With no follow-up and one-shot evaluation of limited duration it is impossible to determine the extent to which this aim was fulfilled. Boys and Girls Clubs have demonstrated their long term commitment to central city areas by being there for the long haul. "Programs" come and go, usually with limited project time periods of 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, or whatever. "Programs" often are implemented by organizations which come and go. Central city residents who are the objects of such "programs" understand this, realize that expectations may be created and then ended on project termination day, and often are reluctant to become involved. Long term commitment is necessary. The long term commitment of Boys and Girls Clubs to be there and continue the efforts beyond a discrete project period, to undertake more projects, and to genuinely attempt to retain youth in a developmental strategy provided the platform for this project and was the main strength of implementation.

Difficulties in Implementation

Each of the program staffs faced difficulties unique to their efforts. Most of these were overcome in creative ways. There were several ubiquitous difficulties in implementing these projects, and not all could be overcome. Four of these deserve direct attention by those designing or planning future efforts. These are not presented here to diminish the efforts of the Boys and Girls Clubs; rather, they are intended here to bring reality to thinking about such efforts.

First, each of the programs was required to keep extensive records regarding the targeted youth, their involvement, and the progress. Some programs managed to do more than others, but all programs had difficulty with this requirement. None of the programs had the luxury of providing staff personnel whose main duty would be record-keeping. Program staff all had an array of duties, and a few program staff were assigned only to duties involving the specified project. Beyond this, program staff had to cover more than one usual shift during days at work and were

required to have some means for monitoring activities and progress of 35 or more targeted youth who might at any given time be involved in activities in different places, perhaps supervised by staff or persons other than the program staff. The expectations for record-keeping, given the program staffing, were unrealistic. The data recorded were minimal in most cases, although program staff made genuine efforts. Consequently, data regarding the youth was inconsistent. Those planning future efforts should attend to developing case management realistically in line with staffing capacity. If there is to be evaluation, evaluators or the evaluation should be included in planning with the aim of specifying essential data collection relevant to the questions to be asked.

Second, all programs experienced difficulties in obtaining involvement from the parents of participating youth. At best, the involvement of parents for the duration of the project was very limited (i.e., a very few parents were involved consistently for the duration, most often where they were included as members of a program advisory committee). At worst, parental involvement was very limited and sporadic or nonexistent. Staff across the programs employed a variety of approaches to enlist and retain the involvement of parents. These approaches included home visits (which require a large amount of time for staff); regular meals held at Club facilities with parents and, most often, the participating youth invited, and, among other approaches, attempts to include a role for parents in ongoing program activities. Parental involvement is important, especially so because youth need encouragement and conditions at home which support positive activities taking place elsewhere. The problem of obtaining parental involvement is not unique to the programs undertaken by the Clubs. The problem is ubiquitous, one to be faced in the implementation of any effort targeting youth.

Third, across the programs there was one particular difficulty with school liaison. Liaisons were established, and these were a strength. However, those planning future efforts may expect to find, as with these programs, that issues of privacy and confidentiality of records require creativity and cooperation of school officials in providing substantive information for monitoring and determining progress of participating youth. This was not insurmountable for the Clubs in program implementation but did require development of viable working

agreements. This situation deserves careful consideration as a practical reality issue in designing efforts which require information on school progress.

Fourth, in some locations the Boys and Girls Club implementing the program was the primary resource in the area and was unaffected by other organizations and other efforts in its implementation. In some areas, "turf" became an issue and required the program staff to negotiate working agreements with other groups or organizations also operating programs or implementing efforts. With some groups, the working agreements required periodic negotiation and relations were often strained. Turf was an issue in regard to some resident associations in some housing developments where these resident associations wanted actual control of program resources and decisions or where these associations were committed to other ventures and the implementation of the Club's program was not initially welcomed. Also, some Clubs experienced a situation in which several organizations were all attempting to implement funded efforts targeting the same inner city population and were all attempting to make claims on or obtain resources from the same set of local agencies (i.e., schools, law enforcement, housing authority, among others.). Where these difficulties arose, program staff eventually overcame them, but these affected the nature and levels of implementation in some instances. Those designing or planning future efforts should attend to the context and politics of implementation in particular areas.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall conclusion of this evaluation effort was that the youth gang prevention and early intervention initiative of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America was both sound and viable in its approach. The neighborhoods and communities where many of the 1,450 Clubs are located, as well as the nature of the Clubs' programming, place them in position to serve the needs of youth at risk of gang involvement. All sites evaluated dealt with youth who were clearly at risk of gang involvement. As planned, the prevention sites clearly targeted a younger population, in which the risk factors were more along the lines of early warning signals (poor school performance, discipline problems, etc.). The intervention programs dealt with an older population, with a greater number of youth

with justice system contacts, substance abuse histories, and the like.

The level of attendance and involvement served as a clear indicator of the ability of Clubs to provide viable programming and activities which attract at-risk youth, bring them into the Clubs, and maintain their interest and participation in regular Club programming. Boys and Girls Clubs of America stands out as an exemplar of a national network of youth-serving organizations with the commitment to a nationwide offensive to counteract the problem of youth gangs in America. Given the scope of the gang problem nationally, and the need to reach youth before they become involved in gangs, more comprehensive, long-term efforts should be initiated utilizing organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs as the committed core.

This evaluation showed the need for long term efforts rather than short term programs. It also showed the need for multi-stage "full service" efforts in which youth are given a commitment from early years through teenage years, maintaining contact and providing developmental opportunities to escape the conditions in which they started. This requires changes in national priorities and in the prevailing strategy of funding many programs of short duration. Coordinated efforts with national scope, flexible enough to be tailored to local needs, with a "full service" developmental approach are necessary. This requires organizations such as BGCA and the affiliated Clubs - many more of them, and a reassessment of the role played by federal agencies. If, as a nation, we are not going to take the steps necessary to reverse the deterioration of inner city areas, then we at least must make it a national priority to support and expand the set of organizations and efforts in there for the long haul.

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