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Los Angeles County's Criminal Street Gangs: Does Violence Roll Downhill?

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S CRIMINAL STREET GANGS:
DOES VIOLENCE ROLL DOWNHILL?

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Criminal Justice

by
Jasmin Brianne Randle

March 2014

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ABSTRACT

According to the 2011 National Gang Threat Assessment created by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, there are more than 33,000 gangs in the United States, cited as being responsible for nearly 48% of the violent crime in the country. Using information drawn from gang-related court cases, this study examines the nature of inter- and intra-gang violence occurring between January 1, 2002-December 31, 2011. An innovative application of network analysis will be used to hone in on rivalries, the existence of possible hierarchy, and the relational and structural characteristics of Blood and Crip gangs in Los Angeles County. Results show that the majority of gang-on-gang violence originates and targets individuals in the city of Los Angeles. Furthermore, more than two-thirds of the violence committed at the hands of Blood and Crip gangs is upon individuals that are not affiliated with a gang. Strategies are offered on how to improve the effectiveness of existing community-based policing or hot-spot policing in areas known to have violent gang-related incidents (Los Angeles City). Furthermore, the implementation of programs designed to assist and deter the formation and proliferation of gangs will result in less gang violence and therefore more time to be spent on creating law enforcement strategies aimed at quelling the more troublesome gang rivalries.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

The presence of gang members in the United States in 2011 has increased about 40% since 2009. In 2009, the Federal Bureau of Investigation suggest that there are 1.4 million gang members nation-wide. This number includes members from street gangs, outlawed motorcycle gangs, and prison gangs (FBI, 2012). The National Gang Intelligence Center indicates that the 40% increase since 2009 has been attributed to the significant increases in gang membership in Arizona, California, and Illinois.

As the number of gang members increase it appears that the frequency and number of crimes follows the same trend. It has been reported that gangs are responsible for more than 48% of the violent crime that occurs in the country, most of which occurs in major cities and suburban areas. And, trend research indicates that violent crime caused by gangs in Los Angeles County has increased by 12.4% from 2003 to 2005, accounting for 57% of the Los Angeles City's 515 homicides in 2005 (Winton, 2005). While many criminal street gangs are involved to some degree in the trafficking of illegal drugs and prostitution, criminal enterprise does not appear to be the sole impetus of inter-gang violence. For instance, while Bellair and McNulty (2009) indicate that gang members who sell drugs are significantly more violent than gang members that don't sell drugs;

Houston and Anglin (1995) show that less than 5% of the inter-gang-related deaths in Los Angeles, California were related to drug trafficking. This apparent contradiction raises questions about preconceived notions about violent inter-gang rivalry.

This thesis examines inter- and intra-gang violence between Blood and Crip subsets in Los Angeles County, California. Four specific research questions are answered: (1) is gang violence more apt to be directed upon a known or suspected gang member as opposed to non-gang members; (2) between the Bloods and Crips, which gang affiliation, and more specifically, subset tends to be more dominant, attacking others more than they are victimized; (3) are violent altercations among Blood and Crip subsets more apt to occur when the subsets “represent” or lay claim upon the same neighborhood, and (4) do these gangs exhibit structural differences in reciprocity and local hierarchy?

A directed network was constructed from information that was derived from violent crime occurring in Los Angeles County between 2002-2011. In total, 284 prosecuted cases satisfied the selection criteria: crime occurred in LA County and at least one of the defendants belonged to a Blood or Crip subset. Three key variables were extracted from court documents: defendants gang affiliation (if any), the victim’s gang affiliation (if any), and the location in which each gang subset identifies as their “territory”. The origin of the violence was coded as the defendant’s gang subset and the recipient was the victim. Up to four defendants and two victims were linked in each case. This violent crime

network includes 625 links, connecting 439 offenders (includes defendant and accomplices) and 384 victims.

The results of this study showed that more often than not, the victim of the violence between Blood and Crip subsets in Los Angeles County did not identify with a gang. Specifically, in less than one-third of the cases, the victim identified with a gang. Additionally, as expected and described in previous research, the violence between gang subsets seemed to be directly related to the rivalries between the two subsets (Tita and Radil, 2011). In other words, the violence was more apt to occur when subsets shared the same territory which was proven by the immense amount of violence between subsets that represented Los Angeles City. While not as prominent, the same held true in regards to gang subsets in Inglewood and Compton. The existence of reciprocity and hierarchy in the network was also present among several subsets. The reciprocity in violence between gang subsets was not as pronounced as was expected, nonetheless there were a few sets of dyads that follow that trend. In regards to hierarchy within the network, two gangs seem to offend quite a lot more than their counterparts. The Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips and the Black P-Stone Bloods, both representing Los Angeles City, are significantly more responsible for the offending within the network than they are victimized. Further detailed in the results section will describe the main difference between the offending of these two powerhouses.

Upon detailing the results, policy implications and a discussion on the best course of methods to combat gang violence is presented. The discussion takes into consideration previous attempts to resolve inter-gang conflict, and offers suggestions on how to fine-tune existing policy to generate more efficient ways to handle gang violence in Los Angeles County. Other than an ill-conceived attempt of fighting violence by increasing patrol units, it is suggested that community-based policing or hot-spot policing would be more beneficial after determining the areas in which gang-related crime is more apt to take place.

This research intends to fill gaps in knowledge about the structure of violent gang activity amongst two entrenched and public gang rivals in Los Angeles in order to delve more directly into the structure of conflict, particularly in relation to reciprocated attacks and local hierarchies of violence.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gang Violence

Gang violence has been a problem in the United States, dating as far back as the late 1700s. According to the National Gang Intelligence Center, it is estimated that there are nearly 1 million active gang members in the United States as of 2009 (Hegemann, Smith, Barbaro, Bertozzi, Reid, and Tita, 2011). As gangs continue to increase, the occurrence of violent activity, often attributed to involvement in criminal enterprise, appears to increase as well. Despite a plethora of research, violence continues to increase with no immediate answer or solution in sight.

General Context of Gang Violence and Prevention

Homicide is the leading cause of death in the United States. In 2003, the Center for Disease Center (CDC) reported that homicide ranked 20th for Whites, 6th for African Americans, 7th for Latinos, 11th for Native Americans, and 14th for Asians and Pacific Islanders in regards to the leading cause of death (Robinson, Boscardin, George, Teklehaimanot, Heslin, and Bluthenthal, 2009). While street gang homicides account for less than half of all homicide incidents in metropolitan cities, street gang violence still acts as the major contributor to the alarmingly high homicide rate. Statistics show that between 1994 and 1995,

gang-related homicides accounted for more than 45% of the overall homicides (Robinson et al., 2009).

Robinson et al. (2009) identified that the majority of gang-related violence occur during what can be described as retaliatory situations. The “perception of ‘threat’ by groups” is described as a major cause of gang violence. Because street gangs are territorial, the violence that occurs on the “stomping grounds” of certain gang subsets is likely to be labeled as gang-related violence. Robinson et al. (2009) referenced a study conducted in St. Louis, Missouri in 1999, which provided information that indicates gang violence is a direct result of the activities and intrinsic behaviors that occur from the spatial distribution of turf rivalries, rather than the common belief that gang violence is attributed to social and economic characteristics. In other words, gang-related homicides are best described as a result of the gang rivalries rather than the social and economic characteristics of the area.

There have been efforts to thwart the formation and proliferation of criminal street gangs. Efforts have included prevention programs such as Barrios Unidos, Homeboy Industries in East Los Angeles, and Community Self-Development Institute. These prevention programs contain mentors that assist in working with the troubled youth, provide education, tattoo removal, and job referrals, just to name a few (Rodriguez, 2005). In addition to the communities efforts to assist in gang prevention, legislature and law enforcement have

implemented practices and laws to deter the formation and the perpetuation of criminal activity of gangs as well.

In 2005, the “Gangbusters” bill was passed. The bill enhanced the consequences of gang-related activities. It modified several gang-related violent offenses into federal crimes, imposed mandatory sentences of 10 years to life, expanded the reach of the death penalty and allowed 16 and 17-year old gang members to be prosecuted as adults for federal crimes. Even as far back as 1988, with the implementation of the STEP Act, legislation have been putting forth effort to deter the formation of gangs and the engagement of criminal activity. The STEP Act allows prosecutors the ability to impose greater sentence enhancements on individuals involved in criminal activity if it is found that they fit the three criteria necessary to label them as gang members.

The three criteria established in the STEP Act is: “(1) the group must be an ongoing association of three or more persons sharing a common name or common identifying sign or symbol; (2) one of the group’s primary activities must be the commission of one of the specified predicate offenses; and (3) the group’s members must ‘engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity.’” (Jones, 2011)

So while there have been attempts to prevent the formation of new gangs and deter the criminal activity of already existing gangs, it would appear that such attempts have not had the desired impact as gangs continue to grow from 600

street gangs in California in 1986 to nearly 1,400 street gangs in Los Angeles County alone in 2000 (Jones, 2011; McCarty, 2001).

Gang Violence in California and Los Angeles County

The United States Census of Population and Housing (2000) identified Los Angeles County as the largest county in the United States in terms of population, acting as resident to more than 9.5 million people and one of the largest counties in terms of land area, garnering more than 4,000 square miles (Robinson et al., 2009). According to the CDC, homicide is the second leading cause of death for individuals between the ages of 15 and 24. The CDC has determined five cities that have high rates of gang murders; three of which are located in California (Oakland, Long Beach, and Los Angeles) (Weiss, 2012). Furthermore, it was found that in Los Angeles the deaths of those between the ages of 15 and 24 were gang-related deaths 61% of the time; in Long Beach the same holds true for 70% of the deaths (Weiss, 2012). While it is not clearly stated what the CDC defines as “gang-related”, one would assume that it includes deaths in which the offender was a gang member. The CDC is not the only organization that has recognized gang violence as a growing problem. The California Department of Justice published “Homicide in California 2007”, in which indicates that the majority of male homicides (37.5%) are gang related. Additionally, homicide victims between 5 and 17 years of age (57.7%) and

between 18 and 29 years of age (47.2%) are killed as a result of gang or drug related activity (Violence Policy Center, 2009).

In Los Angeles County gangs have become known as quite a large contributor to the violent crime in the area. According to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, there are more than 1,400 criminal street gangs that exist in the county. Street gangs are territorial, making it quite difficult for 1,400 gangs to coexist peacefully. Gang-related homicide and assault may be increasing due to heightened competition for limited resources or criminal enterprise opportunity. Some criminologists attribute much of the increase in gang violence to the fact that veteran gang members are beginning to be released on parole or have maxed out their sentences, therefore adding to the already present danger on the streets. According to the California Department of Corrections, there are 100,000 gang members that are currently incarcerated; yet they are being released at a rate of 3,000 a month. As senior gang members return to their neighborhoods, disputes over leadership are inevitable (McCarthy, 2005).

Bloods and Crips

The current study will focus on the violence between two of the most well-known, predominantly African American street gangs rivals: the Bloods and the Crips. There have been multiple stories surrounding the creation of the two notorious Los Angeles street gangs. Stories range from troubled urban youth

“looking for fun” to young African Americans looking for family ties after being disenfranchised and excluded from what were known as white organizations, such as the boy scouts. These gangs and their intense rivalry originated in Los Angeles in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since then the gangs have branched out, with subsets claiming multiple areas and the rivalry becoming stronger and more pronounced. According to *Gangs in America’s Communities*, there was a 1994 survey that estimated that there are more than 1,100 gangs in 115 cities throughout the nation with “Blood” or “Crips” in their name (Howell, 2012, p.13).

As the Crips and Bloods became larger, the subsets became more prevalent. Territory began to hold quite a bit of weight in regards to the increase in power and respect. It came to a point in which Bloods were no longer fighting against only Crips, rather they were fighting amongst one another as well. Bloods attacked Bloods and Crips victimized Crips. It has become evident that the group cliques and brotherhood that was created to unite African Americans and provide a familial bond later became the same institution responsible for taking the greatest number of African American lives in regards to death and incarceration. Howell quotes Alonso (2004), “as white clubs began to fade from the scene, eventually the black clubs, which were first organized as protectors of the community, began to engage in conflicts with other black clubs. Black gang activity soon represented a significant proportion of gang incidents” (2012, p. 18). The Crips and the Bloods are the two largest predominately African American gangs in Los Angeles County, claiming multiple territories, represented by

various subsets. As the formation of gangs increase, the likelihood of violence also increases due to the inevitable confrontation regarding territory and respect (Howell, 2012, p. 18). While some studies examined the prevalence of violence in relation to gang presence (Robinson et al., 2009) other studies sought to determine the impact of geography on gang rivalries (Tita and Radil, 2011).

Characteristics of Rivalry Violence

In 2011, Tita and Radil examined the nature of gang violence in Hollenbeck, a neighborhood in Los Angeles, known for violent gang rivalries (Tita & Radil, 521, 2011). This study, consisting of 29 criminally active street gangs, found that neighboring groups were not solely responsible for the violent crime levels; rather, violent gang rivalries involved groups claiming turf in noncontiguous areas (Tita & Radil, 2011). Contradictory to most studies, neighboring areas do not have as much of an effect on crime statistics as hypothesized. Results showed that gang rivalries had a greater contribution towards gang violence than geographic proximity. Furthermore, the impact of rivalries extended beyond the simple contiguity of neighboring areas. Tita and Radil recognized two consistent findings: (1) young urban minority males tend to be the subpopulation at the greatest risk of homicide victimization and (2) homicides tend to follow a pattern of non-randomization of spatial concentration, showing that areas that have similar occurrences of violence tend to cluster (2011). The latter of the two findings coincide with research conducted by

Brantingham et al. (2012), which show that inter-gang violence is concentrated in what can be described as “hot spots” that are located between the two competing gangs.

Brantingham, Tita, Short and Reid (2012) extended research of territorial behaviors of street gangs by postulating that the conflict and competition between rival gangs generates territories within the neighborhoods in which gangs reside. Brantingham et al. (2012) used information about inter-gang violence that occurred among 13 street gangs in the Hollenbeck Policing Division in Los Angeles County. The 13 of the 29 street gangs from the Hollenbeck Policing Division were representative of the gangs that claimed territory within Boyle Heights. The authors’ intent was to examine the Lotka-Volterra competition model (Gilpin and Ayala, 1973) and determine how different factors affect the outcomes of competitive interactions. The Lotka-Volterra competition model suggests that two species (gangs in this case) with similar characteristics should have a territorial boundary, which is equal in distance from each gang’s set space (Brantingham et al., 2012).

The 1,126 events that occurred during the period of this study were examined to determine if the event took place in the territory belonging to the focal gangs (1 of the 13 gangs residing in Boyle Heights) or that belonging to the rival gang. Results were equivalent to the theoretical perspective of Lotka-Volterra (1920), in that the violent crimes occurring among gangs tend to occur along the predicted boundary between the two gangs. These results show that

violent crime in Hollenbeck acts as a predictor of boundaries through the competition between gangs (Brantingham et al., 2012). The results of this study suggest that the competition of inter-gang interactions does well to determine the territories in which gangs tend to frequent. Information such as this can be used as an tool for departments when assigning beats to officers. Los Angeles County acts as residence to over 1,000 gangs and the Lotka-Volterra competition model would do well in assisting to decrease the criminal activities of gangs.

Robinson et al. (2009) conducted a study in Los Angeles County in which was designed to determine the impact of gang rivalries on a community in reference to homicide rates when controlling for other factors that are known to influence homicide rates. They hypothesized that communities in Los Angeles County that have a higher density of nearby potential rival gangs would also have a greater number of homicides. The study was representative of 255 out of the 289 zip codes in Los Angeles County (the study excluded the zip codes with low populations and vast university campuses in which had their own zip codes) and was comprised of 98.9% of the entire population of Los Angeles County in 2000 and 98.9% of all homicide victims in the country during the time period of the study. Robinson et al. (2009) used the eight Service Planning Areas (SPA) identified by the county in an effort to easily identify the different areas. Results showed that of the 10,880 individuals killed during the time period of the study, the area identified as the South SPA accounted for the majority of the homicides (40 per 100,000 persons). The results suggest that areas with higher

concentration of street gangs were a direct result of the elevated levels of homicides. Furthermore, the study showed that zip codes that contained more than 10 street gangs in a 2-mile radius of that particular zip's center accounted for 40% of all the homicides in Los Angeles County. The victims represented in that 40% was representative of 16% of the County's entire population (Robinson et al., 2009).

Using Social Network Analysis

The use of social network analysis allows for the detailed examination of the relationship between objects or categories. According to Wasserman and Faust (1994), there are several principles that clearly separate social network research from other research approaches. Social network theory assumes that the actors and the relationships between the actors within the dataset are interdependent as opposed to independent. Additionally, the relationships created between the actors act as channels for the contiguous flow of information, action, or material. When a network is based upon the individual, the network structure can act as an opportunity for further expansion of the individual or as a constraint and lack of expansion for an individual. Finally, social network theory argues that the relationships created between these actors constrain or shape the behavior of actors in the network (Wasserman and Faust, 1994, 3-4).

As mentioned earlier, social network analysis does not use the same principles as other research methods. Wasserman and Faust (1994) provide the

example of analyzing why a county would choose to invest in one non-profit organization over another. A standard approach to this inquiry would consist of sampling a portion of the population of corporations interested in non-profits and then measuring certain characteristics of each corporation. In the standard method, it is assumed that each corporation is independent and therefore has no impact on one another. On the contrary, when using social network analysis, it is believed that each corporation has a relationship with one another, such as the possible relationship between board members or business ventures, therefore having an effect on the overall decision as to which non-profit organization one would choose to invest in (Wasserman and Faust, 1994, 7).

There are several methods available to use when analyzing a group using social network analysis. Among these methods are sociocentric networks (full), snowball networks, egocentric network with alter connections, and egocentric networks without the focus of alter connections, just to name a few. The main difference between these four above-mentioned methods is the amount of detail that is gathered on each actor (ego and alter) and the number of links that the research uses to expand the relationship. The sociocentric method is known for its focus on the quantification of relationships between people within a defined group (i.e., gang members in a gang subset). Sociocentric networks look to discover structural patterns within a dataset that may not have otherwise been noticed. In using this method, the researcher collects information about each actors' (gang members) ties with other actors. This method uses the entire

population as opposed to a sample of the population (Hanneman and Riddle, 2005). In this study events are used to generate information about offenders (egos) linked to victim(s) or alters.

Once relational information is collected on the actors, a measured network must be generated. Links between interdependent actors can be valued indicating the number of interactions or strength of the tie or the links could be binary. Binary ties identify whether the relation is simply absent or present, which is a dichotomous code. These links may also be directional if one set of actors is sending or imposing something on another. Deciding between these options is in part based on the research question.

A study conducted by Maoz, Terris, Kuperman, and Talmund (2007) utilized social network analysis to determine the relationship of international relations to direct relations (i.e. “the enemy of my enemy” and “the enemy of my friend” to “my friend” and “my enemy”). This particular study is large scale. In this study it is assumed that states/countries that shared common enemies would be allies and therefore, not fight one another. As an example, if France disliked Germany and the United States also disliked Germany, then it would be assumed that France and the United States are allies and therefore will not fight each other. However, such a premise can be applied on a smaller scale to cliques and gangs.

Maoz et al. (2007) used the terms of “Balanced Relationships” and “Imbalanced Relationships” in a network analysis to determine the likelihood of

the initial hypothesis being correct based upon prior history of enemies and allies. A balanced relationship in a triad is defined as “wherein we can infer the relationship in a dyad given information about the relationship about the two other dyads”. So, if state *a* likes state *b* and state *b* likes state *c*, then it would be assumed that state *a* and state *c* would also be allies. If the relationship of the dyad does not follow this pattern, it is defined as an imbalanced relationship. The study conducted by Maoz et al. (2007) used a dataset in which represented the actual rivalries between states over the last 186 years in order to determine the validity of the hypothesis posed earlier.

Results both favored and discredited the initial hypothesis. Results showed that international interactions used in this dataset showed a significant amount of imbalanced relationships. It was shown that states that have the same allies and enemies were likely to be both allies and enemies at the same time. While this study did not result in a complete acceptance of the original hypothesis, it was able to show that social network analysis can be used to examine the relational ties and connections between enemies.

Research Questions

The current research will examine inter- and intra-gang violence committed by Blood and Crip subsets within Los Angeles County to determine whether such violence is more likely to occur when the rival gangs share a neighborhood. Specifically, the research questions this study will answer are: (1)

is gang violence more apt to be directed upon a known or suspected gang member as opposed to non-gang members; (2) between the Bloods and Crips, which gang affiliation, and more specifically, subset tends to be more dominant, attacking others more than they are victimized; (3) are violent altercations among Blood and Crip subsets more apt to occur when the subsets “represent” or lay claim upon the same neighborhood, and (4) do these gangs exhibit structural differences in reciprocity and local hierarchy?

In addressing these questions, results may make it possible to better predict gang violence, thereby improving the likely success of intervention strategies. Capturing the inter- and intra-gang nature of violent attacks will reveal the structural characteristics of group rivalry that will help law enforcement gauge where the problem areas are. While research studies of gang violence primarily focus on the overall violence of all gang in a particular area, few studies have focused on two major rivals with a particular interest on territorial boundaries and the use of violence that is popularly assumed to stem from conflict arising from criminal enterprise.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Case Generation

This study uses data generated from publicly available sources.

Information was retrieved from California court cases in which the defendant was a suspected or known Blood or Crip gang member that was arrested and prosecuted for a violent crime. For the purpose of this study, a violent crime includes assault with a deadly weapon, attempted homicide and homicide.

The first step in generating a list of eligible cases required developing a current list of active subsets of the Bloods and Crips. Several sources were used. The Los Angeles County Street Gangs website was used to create an initial list of the active Blood gangs and Crips gangs in Los Angeles, California. Then, Detective Daniel Milchovich of the Inglewood Police Department and Detective Keith Chaffin of the Hawthorne Police Department provided a list of active Blood and Crip subsets within their respective jurisdictions. The subsets provided by the detectives were amalgamated with the initial list. This triangulating process ensured that only current, active subsets were included.

After the list was compiled, each gang subset was searched on LexisNexis, an electronic library that provides federal and state cases and statutes, including U.S. Supreme Court decisions. The cases that were selected for use in this study were those in which the offender belonged to a gang that is

representative of the Bloods or Crips and the violent event occurred in Los Angeles County between January 1st, 2002 and December 31st, 2011 (a period of 10 years). While the search did not exclude females from the research, few female offenders were uncovered; thus, the results can only be construed to apply to male gang members. Additionally, this study only included offenders that were tried as adults; juveniles were excluded from this study due to the lack of detailed information provided by Lexis Nexis in juvenile cases. This search protocol uncovered 284 cases, which generated 439 offenders (includes defendant and accomplices) and 384 victims.

Network Generator and Network Description

A network was generated to model inter- and intra-gang violence by aggregating events to the subset associated to each offender and accomplice to the victim. There are cases in which the parties to the violence are not associated with a gang. For the purpose of the dataset and to provide an accurate depiction of the network, the non-gang affiliation will be replaced with the victims' names. However, the name will not be visible in the sociogram. This strategy has been used previously to ensure that all non-gang members are not treated as a single group as this would bias the centrality statistics generated (see Malm et al., 2011). The software used to create the networks and calculate the statistics to be presented in this study is NetDraw and UCInet. This network is a directed, valued network linking multiple sets of dyads to one another. In

other words, the link (acting as a violent event) between a set of nodes (acting as the gang affiliation, subset, or location) has a specific direction. In all cases, the linkage originates with the defendant and ends with the victim. The link between the sets of nodes is weighted in the sense that the greater the frequency of connections between the two nodes, the thicker the visual representation of the link will be.

Variables

Attributes

All attributes of individuals (otherwise referred to as independent variables in conventional research methodology) were extracted from the information provided in the court cases. Attributes include: gang affiliation of the defendants, accomplices, and victims, the detailed subsets associated with each person, and the location in which is determined to be the “home territory” of the gang subset. A detailed explanation of each attribute follows.

Gang Affiliation. Gang affiliation for offenders (the defendant prosecuted and the accomplices) and victims identifies the gang that each individual belongs to. Gang affiliation is coded as a multinomial variable with four categories to identify with: Blood, Crip, neither or non-gang. Bloods are coded as “0”, Crips as “1”, Non-Gang as “2”, and Neither as “3”.

Gang Subset. Gang subset is also a multinomial variable distinguishing the subset to which the individual is reported to identify with. In total, there are 38

Blood subsets, 109 Crip subsets, and 10 subsets with no Blood or Crip connection.

City. The geography variable is indicative of the location (city) in which the gang subsets (defendant's, accomplices', and victims') report to be the territory in which they lay claim to. The city is a multinomial variable as well; fifteen cities are included in this study: Altadena, Antelope Valley, Athens, Carson, Compton, Florence, Gardena, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Lynwood, Pasadena, Pomona, and Santa Monica.

Structural Position

Centrality. The degree centrality statistic is used to determine the positional importance of specific subsets and cities in the network of inter-group violent activity. Degree centrality is an actor-based statistic that captures the number of links that each actor possesses. As mentioned above, the links (connections or relationships) between the nodes are directed; meaning that the offender's subset "extends a relation" by attacking the other group (victim). This means that two different types of degree centrality can be calculated; the indegree and outdegree centrality. The difference between the two is that the indegree centrality statistic provides the number of links that have been directed toward any particular node, whereas the outdegree centrality statistic is the number of links that the node directs to others. As used here, high outdegree centrality scores indicate that the subgroup in question initiates more attacks than others; whereas, subsets with high indegree centrality are victimized more

often and/or by more groups. Since violence may occur within a group among subset members, reflexive ties capture intra-group violence.

Hierarchical and Reciprocal Violence. Reciprocity occurs when the node, (e.g. victim gang subset in this network), in a particular dyad later becomes the ego (offender gang subset) in another dyad. The Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin' 30's Crips are rivals. In an effort to provide an example of reciprocity, if a member of the Black P-Stone Bloods committed a violent act against a member of the Rollin' 30's Crips (making the Black P-Stone Bloods the ego and Rollin' 30's Crips the alter), the Rollin' 30's Crips would make it a point to later victimize the Black P-Stone Bloods as a form of revenge, which would indicate that the relationship is reciprocal.

Dominant relationships can be identified by comparing the outdegree centrality statistic and the indegree centrality statistic of one node amongst the others in the network. Such an examination will show which subsets are offending more often than they are being attacked, therefore showing dominance in the network. While that is one way to determine dominance within a network, an alternative method would be to examine the transitivity of the nodes within the network. Transitive ties include the existence of two-star formations that will highlight the presence of local hierarchies within the network. Transitive ties will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter and in the Discussion. The perception of power can be viewed one of two ways, through the entire network of 625 links or through the network of gang-affiliates only (205 links). Dependent

upon which way it is looked upon, the power in regards to the frequency of offending is deceptive.

Analytic Strategy

The method used to test each of the aforementioned research questions is dependent upon the questions. While most of these questions can be addressed with simple contingency tables and analysis of variance, network analytic techniques allow for a more precise examination of the origin of the violent activity and as well as offering a mechanism to study the problem as a whole. A contingency table, also known as a cross tabulation table, is used to display the frequency distribution of nominal and ordinal variables.

Research questions 1 and 2 will be answered by constructing a contingency table. To address research question 1, the contingency table using variables “offender gang affiliation” and “victim gang affiliation” will show whether the victims of gang violence also identify with a gang. Research question 2 will examine the direction of violence committed by Blood subsets versus Crip subsets using outdegree centrality. A network sociogram can be used to provide a visual showing which subset is more violent and towards what group of individuals (gang vs. non-gang).

The third research question examines the geographic pattern of violence using a directed network constructed by linking the city associated with the home turf of the defendants’ gang subset to the city associated with the victims’ claimed gang territory. As an example, if an individual that identifies with the

Black P-Stones attack the an individual that identifies with the Carver Park Compton Crips there will be a link between Los Angeles City and Compton; as the Black P-Stones represent Los Angeles and Carver Park Compton Crips represent Compton. Since both the offender and victim must be associated with a gang to be included in this analysis, only 205 links are included here. These ties represent the total number of gang-on-gang violent incidents (non-gang victims are excluded from this analysis). Again, in- and outdegree centrality identify the recipients and exporters of violence. Reflexive ties are indicative of within city conflict. A sociogram helps to illustrate what the statistics tell us; the sociogram visually identifies the city in which the violence is originated and the city in which the violence is subjected upon in regards to the territory each gang subsets represents. The third research question will provide the greatest detail and information towards creating policy implications and possible changes in policing habits within Los Angeles County because it does well to address the problem areas in terms of gang-on-gang violence.

The final research question regarding the presence of a hierarchical and reciprocal relationship is examined three ways. First, a network sociogram provides a visualization of which gangs are most involved, as both victims and offenders, the existence of gang rivalries and violence that stem from them, and the occurrence and organization of gang hierarchy upon all the gang subsets in Los Angeles County. In examining the existence of a hierarchical relationship, the sociogram constructed will look to highlight gang subsets that tend to offend

in a significantly greater manner than they are victimized. Second, cases of reciprocity will also be identified. Finally, the presence of two-star formations, also known as potential transitive triads, will be tabulated. Two-star formations expose the local hierarchies that may be overshadowed by the larger picture. Two-star formations are formed in multiple ways, which will be discussed in greater detail in the final chapter of this thesis.

Combined, these analytic strategies will provide information as to which gang subset is the most responsible for causing crime, which subsets and cities appear to have the greatest control and most frequent violent acts within the entire network, the frequency of revenge violence, and the overall pattern of gang violence occurring in Los Angeles County between Bloods and Crips.

Methodological Limitations

As mentioned earlier, the data collected for this study was provided by a very credible source, therefore making the validity and reliability of the data quite solid. However, because of the disparities present in the way in which court reporters dictate information, the information gathered by officers and detectives, and the information given by the defendants and the victims, the maximum amount of data that could have been collected for this study was not achieved. It could be the possibility that some instances of gang affiliation were not clearly defined, therefore not allowing 100% accuracy within the data represented on Lexis Nexis. Also addressed earlier, juvenile cases and female defendants are

not present in this study due to the lack of detailed information and the nonexistence of such cases in Lexis Nexis, respectively. So while the data that is currently used in this study is valid and reliable, it is also limited. However, once presented with the findings of the current data, it may be obvious, that even with greater inclusion, the results would still appear to be the same. The specific limitations associated with each research question are examined in greater detail in the discussion chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

The current study sought to provide additional knowledge to the ongoing violence between gangs; specifically, Blood and Crip gangs in Los Angeles County. The intention is for the results to yield additional policy implications that may help to deter gang violence in the future. This study uses social network analysis to provide an alternative visual amongst the common use of tables and bar graphs. For the simplicity in the presentation of these results, each research questions will be addressed separately in this chapter.

Research Question One

The first research question postulated as to whether the victims identified with a gang. Depicted below, Table 1 is a contingency table that has the gang affiliation of the offender matched with the gang affiliation of the victim.

Table 1. Association between Defendant and Victim Gang Affiliation

Defendant Gang Affiliation	Victim Gang Affiliation				
	BLOODS (N)	CRIPS (N)	NEITHER (N)	NON-GANG (N)	Total (N)
BLOODS	52.7% (39)	24.1 % (28)	25.0% (3)	35.3% (146)	35.1% (216)
CRIPS	47.3% (35)	75.9 % (88)	75.0% (9)	64.7% (268)	64.9% (400)
Total	100.0%(74)	100.0%(116)	100.0%(12)	100.0%(414)	100.0%(616)

Note: 9 co-defendants were not included in this analysis as they were neither affiliated with Bloods or Crips

Including all offender-victim dyads (625 links between all possible offenders and victims), reveals that only 33% of victimizations (206 links) involved victims whom identified with a gang. Comparing victims from the Bloods versus the Crips, it is clear that intra-group violence predominates among the both gangs. Among non-gang victimizations, a much greater percent of non-gang victims were attacked by Crips (64.7%) than Bloods (35.3%). It should be noted that some of these non-gang related victimization incidents can be intentional (gang initiation or intimidation tactics) while others may be unintentional (bad intelligence or inaccurate aim). This is not identifiable from the information provided in the court cases. Figure 1 provides a visual to illustrate the magnitude of intra-gang violence (depicted with reflexive or looped ties). Each node is representative of the four categories of gang affiliation. The links between the nodes are the attacks that took place between each dyad; the darker the line, the more attacks that occurred. Arrowheads reflect the direction of the attack, pointing from offender to victim.

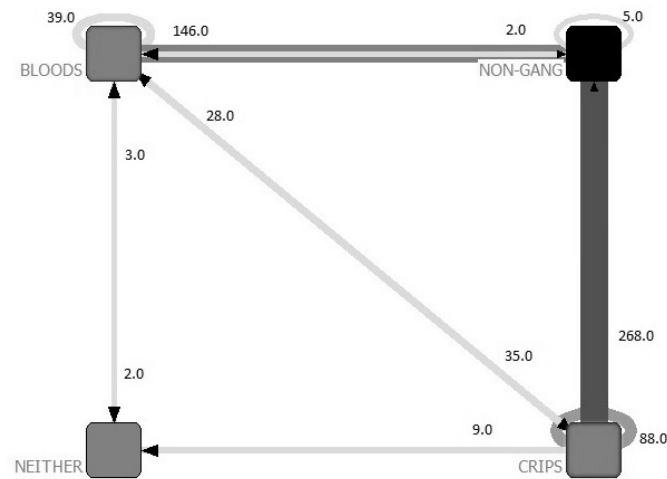


Figure 1. Depiction of Violence Among Blood and Crip Gangs in Los Angeles County

Research Question Two

The answer to the second research question is going to identify which gang affiliation tends to be the most dominant in regards to offending. Table 1 (depicted earlier) is also able to answer this question as it is seen that Crips were responsible for 64% of the gang violence within this entire dataset (including non-gang affiliated victims). Figure 2 is similar to that of Figure 1, with the exception of the fact the size of the symbols varies to reflect outdegree centrality scores. The number of relations originating from each particular node is indicated by the width of the line. While Figure 2 suggests that the Bloods and Crips both victimize three other nodes, around the same level, a closer inspection of subset-initiated violence reveals important variation.

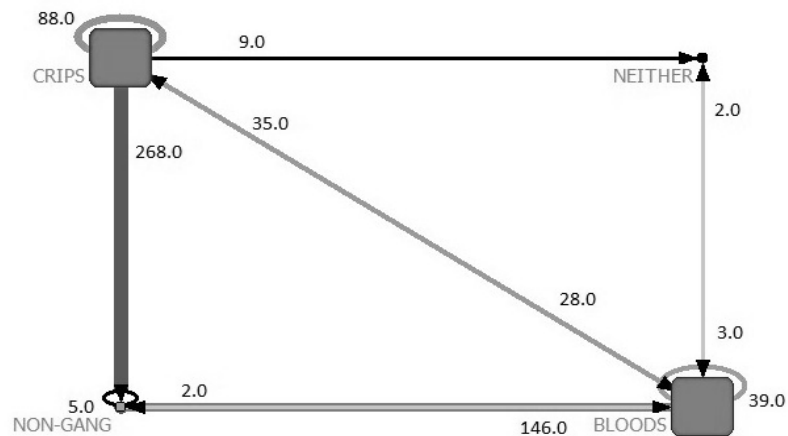


Figure 2. Depiction of Violence Among Blood and Crip Gangs in Los Angeles County (Outdegree Centrality Statistic)

Table 2 and 3 report the five highest scoring gang subsets on two measures of centrality – indegree and outdegree. Normalized values (standardized scores) are used so that the results may be compared to other networks. These tables provide a depiction of the gang subsets that are the most victimized (Table 2) and those that offend most often (Table 3). Table 2 depicts that the Black P-Stone Bloods, Bounty Hunter Bloods and the 83 Gangster Crips are the most victimized gang subsets within the dataset (with the inclusion of individuals that are not gang affiliated). Oddly enough, the Black P-Stone Bloods is also the gang subset that offends the most as well, followed by the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips. These tables clearly show the power the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips seem to have within the dataset. The Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips appear to be one of the least victimized gang subset within the dataset, yet they are the greatest offenders.

Table 2. Top Five Gang Subsets per Affiliation in Entire Network (Indegree Centrality)

Rank	Bloods		Crips	
	Subset	Nrm Indegree	Subset	Nrm Indegree
1	Black P-Stone Bloods	.247	83 Gangster Crips	.288
2	Bounty Hunter Bloods	.247	Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips	.144
3	Pasadena Squiggly Lane Bloods	.103	Grape Street Watts Crips	.123
4	West Side Piru	.082	Rollin 20s Crips	.123
5	Family Swan Bloods	.082	Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips	.103

Table 3. Top Five Gang Subsets per Affiliation in Entire Network (Outdegree Centrality)

Rank	Bloods		Crips	
	Subset	Nrm Outdegree	Subset	Nrm Outdegree
1	Black P-Stone Bloods	.926	Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips	.741
2	Bounty Hunter Bloods	.391	Insane Crips	.432
3	Inglewood Family Bloods	.350	Grape Street Watts Crips	.370
4	Pasadena Denver Lane Bloods	.247	East Coast Crips	.247
5	Pueblo Bishop Bloods	.247	Tragniew Park Crips	.226

Figure 3 illustrates the inter- and intra-subset violence. This network is directed (arrows point to victims). It contains 405 unique entities joined through 625 ties and clustered into 43 different components. Blood subsets are shown in red and Crip subsets are shown in blue. Black nodes are individuals (rather than subsets) and grey nodes are gangs (non-Blood or Crip). Node size varies according to outdegree centrality. Outdegree captures attacking behavior. Two Blood subsets are highly aggressive and Crip violence is primarily instigated by two subsets. Comparatively, the Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips are the dominant gang subsets.

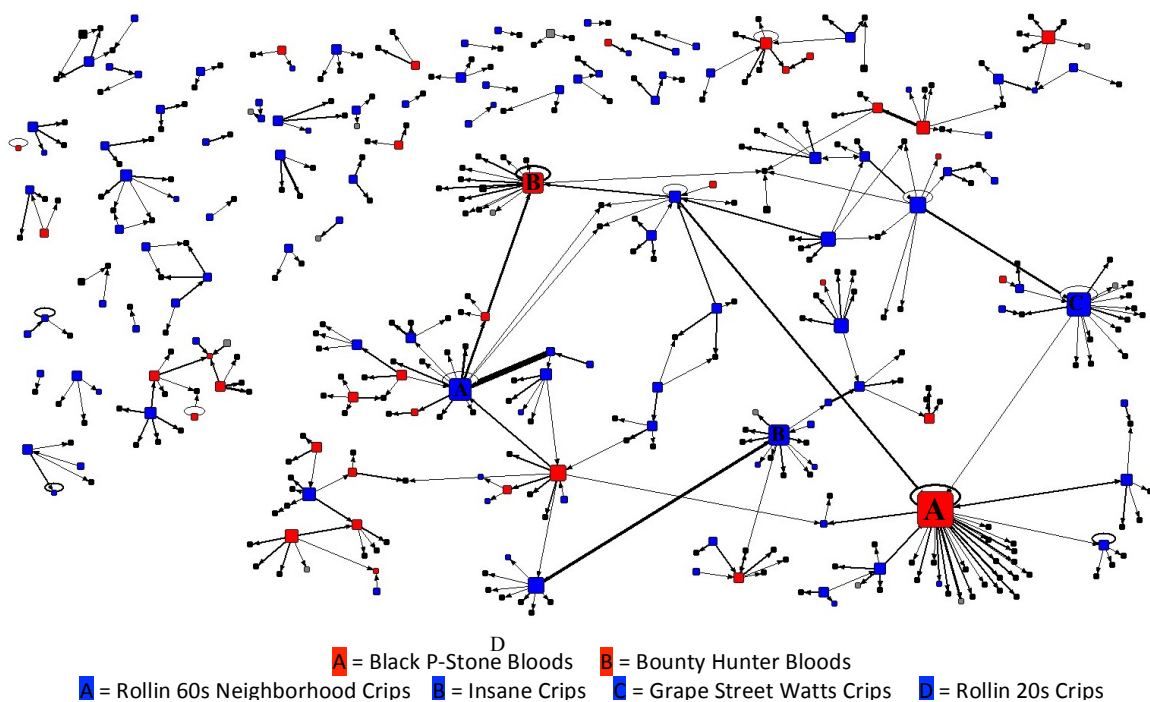


Figure 3. Offending Subsets with Outdegree Centrality

Research Question Three

Unlike the first two research questions, the third research question does not use the complete dataset. Here, the focus becomes gang-on-gang violence; therefore any individual that does not identify with a gang was excluded from the dataset for this analysis. Specifically, this question looks to examine if Blood and Crip gang subsets only victimize other gang subsets that lay claim to the same territory. Figure 4 illustrates the city-to-city violence. This network aggregates the offender-victim dyads to the city associated with the home turf of each group. The resulting network contains a single component made up of 12 nodes (cities). It is worthy to note that in this actual dataset, there are actually 15 cities that are represented in the data, however only 12 are represented in the sociogram because Blood and Crip initiated violence by subsets of 3 of the cities (Hawthorne, Santa Monica, and Gardena) victimized only non-gang members.

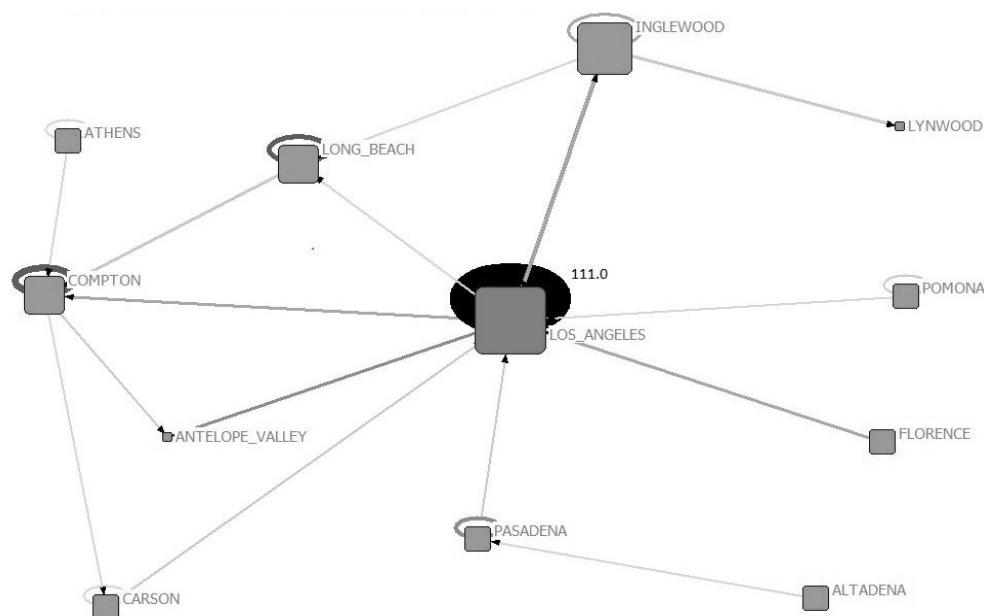


Figure 4. Subset Location to Subset Location with Outdegree Centrality

Figure 4 includes 33% of the dataset (206 links). Like previous figures, the outdegree centrality statistic is depicted. The most important link is emphasized by the thickness of the line wrapping around the node of Los Angeles. As indicated by the weighted link, 111 links (attacks) of the total 206 attacks represented in this dataset originate and end in Los Angeles City. This indicates that more than half of the violence occurring between gang subsets in Los Angeles County happens in the city of Los Angeles. Ties between cities indicate the direction of exported violence: while Compton, Long Beach and Inglewood have the tendency to produce problems, it is evident that the main problem lies in the city of Los Angeles.

Table 4 reports the number of Blood, Crip, and other gang subsets that are located in each city represented in this dataset. The detailed depiction of gang-subset inhabitation provides reason as to why the violence in some cities is more pronounced than in others. Carson, Compton and Los Angeles are the only cities that are likely to host Crip-Blood rivalries, as there are several subsets of each group claiming home turf in each city.

Table 4. Number of Blood and Crip Subsets Involved in Violence in Each City

Location	No. Crips Subsets	No. Bloods Subsets	Other Gangs
ALTADENA	1	0	0
ANTELOPE VALLEY	0	1	0
ATHENS	8	0	0
CARSON	2	2	1
COMPTON	13	8	0
FLORENCE	3	0	0
GARDENA	2	0	0
HAWTHORNE	1	0	0
INGLEWOOD	2	6	0
LONG BEACH	11	0	1
LOS ANGELES	62	18	7
LYNWOOD	1	0	0
PASADENA	1	3	0
POMONA	2	1	1
SANTA MONICA	1	0	0

Table 5 provides the recalculated outdegree centrality statistics based only on gang-on-gang violence. Recall that when all victimization is considered (Figure 3 and Table 3) it appeared that the Black P-Stone Bloods was the aggressive subset in Los Angeles County. Removing non-gang affiliated victims, the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips are identified as the more dominant offending subset when controlling for non-gang affiliated individuals and rather specifically focusing on gang-on-gang violence. The Black P-Stone Bloods shift one position down on the ranking.

Table 5. Top Five Offending Gang Subsets Controlling for Non-Gang Individuals (Outdegree Centrality)

Rank	Bloods		Crips	
	Subset	Nrm Outdegree	Subset	Nrm Outdegree
1	Black P-Stone Bloods	1.016	Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips	1.423
2	Inglewood Family Bloods	.474	Insane Crips	.745
3	Fruit Town Pirus	.407	Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips	.474
4	Bounty Hunter Bloods	.339	East Coast Crips	.474
5	Crenshaw Mafia Gangster Bloods	.271	Acacia Block Crips	.271

The difference made when controlling for non-gang affiliated victims is quite large. Not only did it alter the outdegree centrality for the most dominant gang in the subset, but it also altered the top 5 offending gang subsets of both the Bloods and Crips in comparison to what was shown in Table 3.

Research Question Four

The final research question investigates the hierarchical structure and reciprocity of violent attacks. Table 6 displays the sets of dyads that were identified as reciprocal sets in UCInet.

Three sets of reciprocal dyads are identified in Table 6. In this dataset, there are a few more reciprocal relationships, however the aforementioned three were worthy of attention due to the frequency of violence that occurs between the sets. Specifically, the Insane Crips and the Rollin 20s Crips have a rivalry that

Table 6. Reciprocal Violent Relationships

Set	Gang Subsets Involved	No. Reciprocated Links	Outdegree (N)	Indegree (N)
1	83 Gangster Crips	13	1	12
	Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips		12	1
2	Insane Crips	7	2	5
	Rollin 20s Crips		5	2
3	West Boulevard Crips	3	1	2
	Black P-Stone Bloods		2	1

would be considered stronger than the others due to the fact that each subset has attacked its rival on more than one occasion. Since the Rollin 20s Crips instigated more attacks (5 compared to 2 instigated by the Insane Crips), it would appear that the former is more aggressive. The conflict between the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips and 83 Gangster Crips is decidedly one-sided with the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips being the clear aggressor. This finding suggests that rather than reciprocity, the inter- and intra-gang conflict occurring in Los Angeles County may have a greater tendency to exhibit local hierarchies.

To investigate the existence of local hierarchical structures in this subset, a more detailed view on the main component within the sociogram is needed. While there were 43 components in that initial sociogram, Figure 5 below depicts the main or principal component; this is the component containing the majority of the connections and nodes within the network.

Two patterns predominate, suggesting the presence of local hierarchies. First, there appears to be many chain-like formations among gang subsets where one subset victimizes another, who in turn attacks a third group. Second, there are many two-star formations where a group attacks two other groups or alternatively, two subsets attack the same victim. Combined, these patterns suggest that within local circles, some groups are more dominant than others. Given the lack of reciprocated ties, the idea of gang rivalries being equivalent conflicts is not supported. The presence of the two-star formations among multiple triads is representative of potential transitive triads. Transitive triads are described by Holland and Leinhardt (1975) as a set of three nodes in which each node is connected to one another by at least one link. Potential transitive ties, ties in which two nodes are connected by at least one link; therefore providing the possibility of the third link connecting all three nodes, provide a glimpse into what can possibly be a hierarchical structure in the making as offending increases and the links between nodes become more pronounced. To be more specific, a triad in which has two out of three links between three nodes is actually described as a “two star” or two-path triad and such a triad gives the impression that there may be one node amongst the three that may have more influential power within the network. In this case, it may be assumed that one node of the set of three is responsible for offending on a greater occasion than the other two nodes. However, because this is a directed network, that notion can work in the opposite manner as well. That is to say that one node (out of the

set of three) may be more frequently victimized than the other two nodes. Upon running a triad census on this data set, there will be a better understand as to the possible hierarchy that is present within this network. Greater examples of transitivity and the results from the triad census will be presented on the next page following Figure 5.

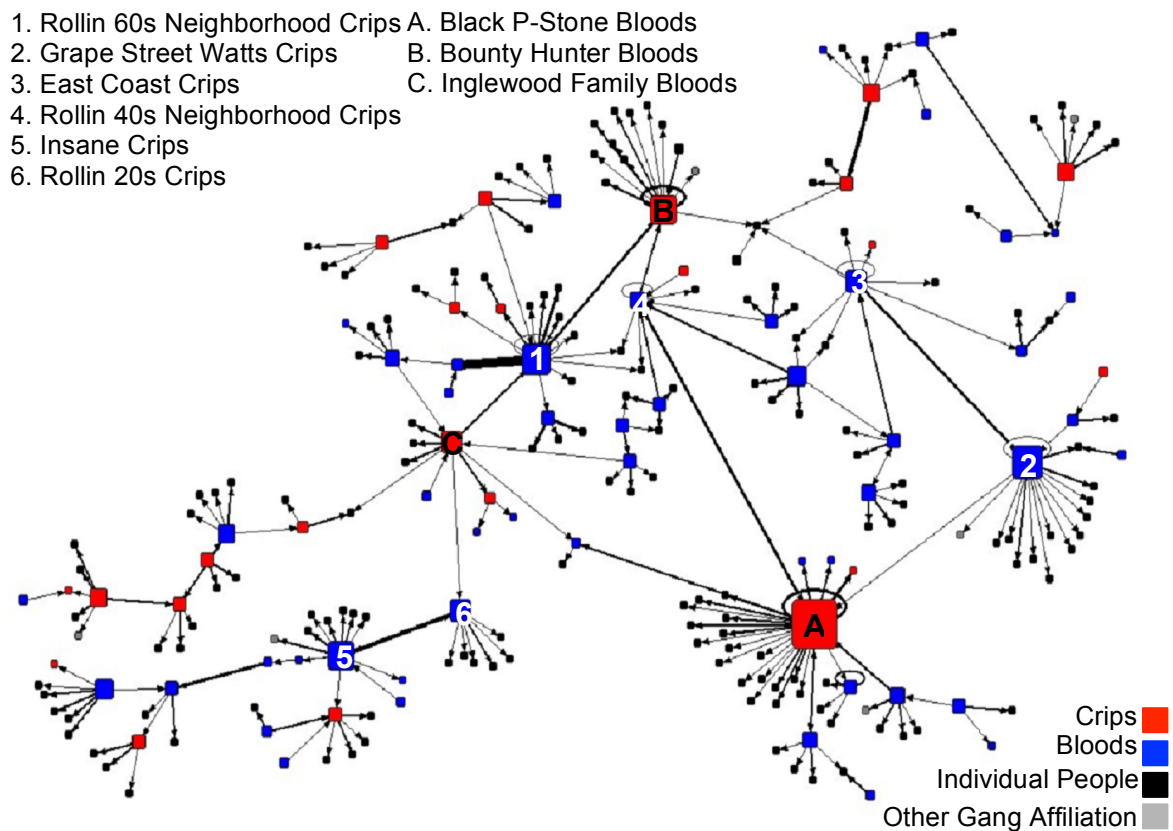


Figure 5. Subset Initiated Patterns of Violence

Using UCInet, the triad census was conducted on this dataset to determine the existence of local hierarchies within this network as it has been determined that reciprocity is not as prominent as it was expected to be. Upon the construction of the network, primarily the focus on Figure 5, it is apparent that there are several different two-star triads present within the larger component of the network that would create the notion that there are certain gang subsets that may hold greater power and control amongst the others in the network as it would appear that some subsets are responsible for a lot of the offending and are rarely victimized. Below, Figure 6 shows the examples of two-star formations in which the Triad Census will highlight in this network (Holland & Leinhardt, 1975). There are a total of six two-star formations that are possible within a directed network. Of the six presented below, five were present within this dataset but the focus will be on three located at the bottom of Figure 6; the out-star, the in-star and the directed line.

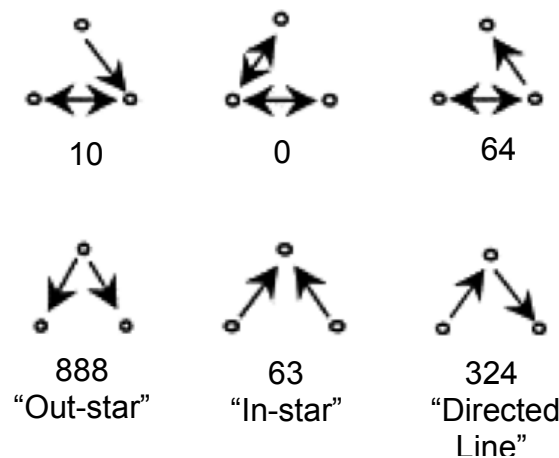


Figure 6. Triad Census: Two-Star Formations

The numbers beneath each triad is representing the number of occasions in which that particular type of triad was present in the network. As mentioned earlier, the focus will be on the three sets of triads at the bottom of Figure 6. The triad known as out-star is present when one node attacks two other nodes and is not attacked by either in return. The in-star triad formation is present when two nodes attack one node and the victimized node does not offend in either direction. And lastly, the triad labeled as directed line is when one node attacks a second node, and the second node attacks a third node. In this study, the out-star triad formation is present 888 times, the in-star triad formation is present 63 times and the directed line triad formation is present 324 times. The triad census does not identify each example of the triad formations, but it is evident by Figure 5 that the gang triad of the Bounty Hunter Bloods, the Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips is a prime example of an in-star triad as it would appear that the Rollin 40s and Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips are both attacking the Bounty Hunter Bloods, but the Bounty Hunter Bloods are not attacking either in return. An example of an out-star triad formation is the Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips offending the Black P-Stone Bloods and the Bounty Hunter Bloods. And an example of the direct line triad is when the East Coast Crips victimize the Grape Street Watts Crips and then the Grape Street Watts Crips victimize the Black P-Stone Bloods.

The overwhelming presence of two-star triads in this dataset would indicate that there is a local hierarchy among certain gang subsets as it is seen that some subsets victimize multiple individuals or gangs, but do not get victimized in return. It would appear that Los Angeles County contain gang subsets that hold the majority of the power and therefore instill the greatest fears in non-gang individuals and their gang counterparts.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

Gang violence in Los Angeles County has been an ongoing problem. Policies have been created and implemented in order to combat, deter and punish the violence and the proliferation of gang activity. However, it would appear that previous and current initiatives are not as effective as many would hope which is evident by the ever-increasing presence of gang subsets growing from 600 street gang in California in 1986 to nearly 1,400 street gangs in Los Angeles County in 2000. The purpose behind this study was to provide policy makers and law enforcement agencies an alternative view of the violence that is being perpetuated by Blood and Crip gangs in Los Angeles County. Similar to the way in which the results were presented in this thesis, this discussion section will address each research question separately in order to consider the unique policy implications accruing from each analysis.

Research Question One

Results show that more than two-thirds of the gang violence committed by Blood and Crips members in Los Angeles County during the ten-year period victimized individuals whom did not identify with a gang. The article written by Weiss (2012) addressed earlier in this thesis indicated that 61% and 70% of the deaths of individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 in Los Angeles City and

Long Beach, respectively, were gang-related. In combining that research with the research done in this thesis, it can be generalized that nearly 40% and 50% of the violence in these two cities were directed upon victims that were not affiliated with any gang. Violence against non-gang affiliated victims increase fear within the neighborhood where the attack occurs and fosters fear and unease more broadly in the region. While the presence of law enforcement has the ability to decrease the frequency of violence and deter the occurrence of gang related criminal activity, there are other solutions that have been implemented that may need to be revisited and altered in order to serve a better purpose for the safety of the innocent individuals in the community.

A gang injunction is “a court order that prohibits gang members and associates from engaging in specified behaviors within specifically designated geographical boundaries” (Caldwell, 2010). The first gang injunction was imposed in 1987 in the City of Los Angeles against the Playboy Gangster Crips. A recent census of gang injunctions shows that there are 43 permanent injunctions against 71 gangs in the city of Los Angeles alone (Caldwell, 2010). Arguments against the use of injunctions posit that these civil restrictions are served in a manner in which assumes guilt prior to providing proof, while arguments in support of injunctions posit that they restrict public association among gang members that intimidates other community members and engenders further criminal activity (Felson, 2006). In reference to the results of this study, it would appear that the effectiveness of injunctions should be

revisited so as to ensure that the most active groups are targeted; the groups targeted must present a problem to the community now. There are currently 17 Blood and Crip gang subsets in the City of Los Angeles that have been served with gang injunctions; included but not limited to Black P-Stone Bloods (as of 2005), Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips (as of 2003), Grape Street Crips (as of 2005), and Bounty Hunter Bloods (as of 2003) (Gang Injunctions, 2013). Two of the four mentioned subsets are responsible for the greatest amount of offending in regards to the Bloods and Crips subsets in this study.

Table 7 below displays 12 of the 17 Blood and/or Crip subsets that currently have a gang injunction filed against them. The table includes the date in which the injunction was filed and the percentage of links that occurred within this dataset prior to the filing of the injunction and after the filing of the injunction. Table 7 is used to provide a glimpse into the effectiveness of gang injunctions. Because some of the injunctions were filed earlier on (in comparison to this study) it is difficult to assume the effectiveness solely based on the table.

Table 7. Effectiveness of Los Angeles City Gang Injunctions

Subset	Date Filed	% of Links Before Filed	% of Links After Filed
42 Gangster Crips	7-Apr-05	0%	100%
43 Gangster Crips	7-Apr-05	0%	100%
48 Gangster Crips	7-Apr-05	0%	100%
Black P-Stone Bloods	21-Sep-06	76%	24%
Bounty Hunter Bloods	2-Dec-03	21%	79%
Geer Gang Crips	22-Sep-06	22%	78%
Grape Street Watts Crips	25-May-05	50%	50%
Main Street Crips	15-Dec-09	100%	0%
Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips	10-Apr-08	33%	67%
Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips	24-Nov-02	3%	97%
School Yard Crips	22-Sep-06	100%	0%
Swan Bloods	15-Dec-09	100%	0%

According to the table, it would appear that the gang injunctions had quite a positive effect on the deterrence of criminal activity among the Black P-Stone Bloods, as 76% of the events took place prior to the filing of the gang injunction while only 24% of the events occurred after the gang injunction was filed. Nonetheless, the same cannot be said for the Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips in which had 33% of the events occur prior to the gang injunction and 66% after the gang injunction. It would appear that the deterrent premise of a gang injunction did not have the same effect on the activity of the Rollin 40s Neighborhood Crips as it did the Black P-Stone Bloods. It can be said that the number of events increased after the gang injunction because officers became more focused on the criminal activities of this gang and therefore increased the level of patrol, resulting in a greater number of arrests. Unfortunately, the exact rhyme and reason as to the trends of arrests is not able to be determined simply from this data. Expanding the resources in which data is retrieved may do well in determining this in future research.

Since gang violence committed by these subsets is still a problem in Los Angeles one might conclude that the injunctions are failing. However, it is equally, if not more likely the case, that the high number of prosecuted cases indicates the opposite; that the gang injunction is working. Greater effort is extended to monitor the activities of these groups and thus, their criminal behavior is identified more readily and the associated supporting intelligence gathering apparatus provides sufficient information upon which to launch

successful prosecutions. In other words, the cases that were identified in Lexis Nexis may have been the result of the implementation of the injunction, therefore creating the increase in arrests of these particular gang subsets.

Additionally, it may be assumed that the creation of gang injunctions and the increase of law enforcement successes in the crack down on the criminal activity of gangs may indirectly perpetuate the cycle. As gang subsets fall under the hold of a gang injunction, individuals may branch from the larger gang to create yet another subset in order to continue their criminal activity without being under the scope of law enforcement. As an example, the West Side Crips (founded in 1971), one of the largest Crip gangs in Los Angeles County had members that branched out and created their own subset under the umbrella of West Side Crips. 83 Gangster Crips is a smaller subset of West Side Crips and is also one of the subsets identified in the research question regarding reciprocal violent relationships within the dataset. To fully understand how the injunctions are affecting gang activity more detail is needed than was collected in the current study.

The details and the specifics of each case examined were limited; with so many cases examined, it was difficult to investigate the factors leading up to the arrest. Consequently, it would be wise for future research to look into the purpose of the arrests made by contacting the arresting officers identified in the case study to determine whether it was an opportunistic arrest or an arrest that was pursued due to the issuance of the injunction. Due to the large number of non-

gang affiliated victims, it would be prudent to look into the effectiveness of the police injunctions that are currently in place. Further research into injunctions, their effectiveness, and the patrol resources that are put into current injunctions may assist in the reduction of gang violence, specifically violence against non-gang affiliated individuals.

A second consideration is that these results might be distorted due to the enhanced penalties associated with being a known gang member (Jones, 2011; McCarty, 2001). It is plausible that the number of the non-gang member victimizations was inflated. Moreover, it is not possible to tell whether the non-gang victims were actually part of a new or emerging group that had yet to come to the attention of law enforcement. Further, some victims may have been in the early stages of joining the gang when they were assaulted/murdered; to join a gang, pledges are often forced to become involved in a violent altercation which may end badly for them (they are victimized) or the individual proves themselves (surviving and thus becoming the defendant). In some contexts, being a defendant in a homicide case that targeted a rival (though unknown gang member) or a general community member (to instill fear in the local area) may constitute a heroic act in the eyes of the group.

Since it is unclear as to the motive of the attack and nature of interactions between victim and offender leading up to the incident, little can be concluded at this juncture. However, one implication raised by this analysis is that greater effort is needed to ensure that CalGangs (California DOJ, 2013) and other gang

intelligence data gathering systems contain current, as well as historical information (knowing who recently left a gang is also important). Given that 66% of the people victimized were not known to be part of a gang, it is reasonable to assert that it may be time to overhaul the CalGangs system. If a significant number of gang members are able to avoid the enhanced penalties by masking their role within local gang activity, then the system is fundamentally flawed and in need of reengineering.

To test this possibility, future research must delve deeper into the avenues in which the data is retrieved. Extracting data from one source is not exhaustive and leaves room for an extensive amount of information left uncovered. Not only must future research expand on the number of resources, rather the researcher must also ensure the reliability of the resource, as it is conceivable that the source in which the information is obtained may be out of date or inaccurate. Similar to the earlier mentioned idea of gang subsets that branch from beneath larger gangs, it would behoove law enforcement agencies to detail the existence, formation and “birth” of gang subsets and gang members in order to maintain accurate information that will provide for a better tracking system.

Research Question Two

The violence between Bloods and Crips has been present since the 1960s. As time passes, the number of subsets appears to increase and the existence of all these splinter groups may have weakened the rivalry between Bloods and Crips. According to Table 5 and Figure 5 it is apparent that some

gang subsets garner more attention than others in regards to their contribution to the gang violence occurring in Los Angeles County. While there are more Crips subsets (70%) in this dataset than there are Bloods subsets (24%), each gang affiliation had a particular subset that stood out above all others as an instigator of violence. The Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips and the Black P-Stone Bloods were the dominating subsets; victimizing many others yet not being on the receiving end (low reciprocation of violence). Overall, the Crips were a greater dominating force than the Bloods. Nonetheless, certain subsets within the Bloods also did well in representing Los Angeles County in regards to contributing to the gang violence.

As mentioned throughout this thesis, the occurrence of gang violence often stems from the rivalries present among surrounding neighborhoods. Strategies to prevent the gang violence amongst Bloods and Crips are often suggested but not always carried out and fewer still have been evaluated with rigorous studies. The Gangbusters bill that was established in 2005 that was mentioned in the second chapter is an excellent example of implemented ideas and legislation that was posed to thwart the criminal activity and formation of gangs. However, there appears to be a substantial lack in statistical evidence showing that the creation of the Gangbusters bill in 2005 has proven to be an effective way to combat inter- and intra-gang violence. Several years ago, the Los Angeles Police Department partnered with community leaders and residents to create the Community Safety Partnership, in which the main goal was to

decrease the gang violence in Los Angeles City (Watts specifically) and increase the community efficacy between residents and officers (Buntin, 2013). The necessity of cooperation between community residents and city police will attribute to the omnipresent watchful guardianship of the streets of Los Angeles. In order to assist in the prevention of the Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips victimization among individuals within the community, I believe the programs that were instituted to curtail these problems need to be revisited, as it would appear that the successes of these programs are not evident. The increase of deterring tactics (Gangbusters bill) will only be as effective as the effort to ensure its proper implementation.

Due to the fact that Lexis Nexis does not clearly identify the criteria necessary to be included in the system archive, there is a possibility that there are events and cases that occurred yet that were not captured during the process of data retrieval in this study. Furthermore, it would appear that all cases that are present in Lexis Nexis are cases that went to trial before the appearance of a judge and appears to exclude cases in which may have been settled outside of the courtroom. With that being said, to expand the present study, it would be suggested that in the future, data should be gathered from a greater number of sources; those that are even more reliable and can provide additional cases and information that may be lacking in Lexis Nexis. Interviewing and working alongside detectives and police officers that work in the cities known for greater

gang violence may allow for uncovering subsets that may have been looked over while only using data that was present in Lexis Nexis.

Research Question Three

As mentioned in the literature review, a study conducted in St. Louis in 1999 stated that gang violence is a direct result of the activities and intrinsic behaviors that occur from the spatial distribution of turf rivalries (Robinson et al., 2009). In other words, gang violence is directly impacted by the altercations that are likely to occur in locations in which are shared or act as a border between two gang rivalries. The results presented here support this premise. As an example, Figure 4 and Table 6 provide a clear, distinctive focus on the frequency of gang violence amongst subsets that share the same neighborhood. Figure 4 details the cities in which each defendant subset within the data claimed as their territory. In the majority of the data, it was shown that the most violence was delivered by and inflicted upon gang subsets representing the City of Los Angeles. Furthermore, Table 6 illustrates the top three reciprocated dyads in the data set; showing that both gang subsets that are represented in each dyad are from the same city, proving further that rivalries within city limits seem to be a strong trend.

An article written in 1992 titled *8-Trey Crips Have Chilling Crime Record*, detailed the criminal history of the 83 Gangster Crips representing the City of Los Angeles (Sahagun and Chavez, 1992). In the article, the rivalry between the 83 Gangster Crips and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips is described as a rivalry

that has been active for at least 7 years. This current study is representative of the time period of January 2002 to December of 2011. It is clear that the rivalry between the 83 Gangster Crips and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips is still in existence more than 25 years later as this dyad is one of the top three in reference to reciprocating relationships in regards to gang violence. The results that were presented in regards to research question three falls directly in line with the examination of the Lotka-Volterra model addressed in the study of gang violence in Boyle Heights (Brantingham et al., 2012). Brantingham et al. (2012) provided similar results showing the likelihood of gang violence occurring in the area in which would be considered as a boundary line between two gang, therefore acting as a predictor of violence amongst gangs. The impact that gang rivalry and adjacent locations have on the occurrence of gang violence must be a policing priority and should be a consideration when drawing up patrol beats and assigning coverage, developing gang injunctions and pinpointing problem areas.

The data in this study illuminates 13 events that occurred between the 83 Gangster Crips and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips during this time period. However, one would likely assume that during this ten-year period, there were more instances of violence between these long-standing rivals. Future research should extend on the area of data collection to other sources in order to capture other events occurring between these rivals that are not published in Lexis Nexis. The collection of greater material may provide for a reason or mitigating

circumstance as to why the rivalry continues which can in turn lead to a way to deter the violence and possibly create a truce or cease fire between the subsets.

Research Question Four

The structure of the network created from this study shows the existence of reciprocated relationships between subsets and a slight hierarchical relationship amongst the network. Specifically, there were three sets of dyads that were identified within the network as reciprocal pairs: (1) 83 Gangster Crips and Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips, (2) Insane Crips and Rollin 20s Crips, and (3) West Boulevard Crips and Black P-Stone Bloods. Upon identifying the three dyads, it is clear that both subsets within each dyad were at one point an offender as well as a victim of violence. According to an article written by Nate Berg (2012) of *The Atlantic Cities*, gang-related homicides tend to differ across varying cities, but some characteristics remain the same: (1) they tend to involve firearms, (2) occur in public places, (3) victimize males between 15 and 19 and (4) often revolve around retaliation. The fact that it has been identified that gang-related violence is often based on retaliation, it proved beneficial to research the existence and frequency of reciprocated violence amongst Blood and Crip gangs in Los Angeles County.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the discussion of the first research question, the gangs that are identified in reciprocated relationships are also identified as gangs that are currently under gang injunctions in Los Angeles City. The 83 Gangster Crips, the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips and the Black P-Stone

Bloods each currently have a gang injunction in place. Additionally, the Insane Crips of Long Beach are also under gang injunction in the city of Long Beach as of 2003. Not present on the list of gang injunction is the Rollin 20s Crips. If it is assumed that there is a positive relationship between the existence of a gang injunction and that of the increase in the number of arrests amongst these subsets, it would behoove law enforcement to focus on the relationship between the Insane Crips and Rollin 20s Crips of Long Beach with the intent to file a gang injunction against the Rollin 20s Crips as well.

Upon establishing the fact that several of these gang injunctions were imposed nearly a decade ago, it would be interesting to see the difference or impact of such an injunction after the implementation. As the scope of this study does not cover cases prior to 2002, it would be interesting to determine if the filing of gang injunctions is effective in regards to the decrease in gang violence. An additional solution would be that of an agreement between two gang rivalries, similar to the Cease Fire Agreement that was drafted in 1992 amongst the Bloods and Crips. The effectiveness of this agreement would need to be further researched as well.

In regards to the presence of a hierarchy in the network, it would appear that the Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips have the greatest influence in violence amongst this network. Both gang subsets are representative of the city of Los Angeles and are no greater than five-miles away from one another. The increase in resources and patrol units in this area would

provide the necessary increase in police presence to assist in the deterrence of gang violence. However, such a solution does not provide a prevention policy rather only a way to deal with it after the fact. To determine a manner in which to address the violence involving the Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips proactively, it would be wise to focus only on the violent activities amongst these two gang subsets, possibly discovering a correlation between the subsets and their rivals and/or victims on a greater scale than what was able to be provided in this thesis due to the overwhelming amount of data analyzed and the limited number of resources used to extract the data.

Conclusion

As mentioned several times in the Discussion Chapter of this study, the primary limitation to take into consideration is the possibility of misrepresented data in regards to the way in which gang subset names are recorded in the court cases. In an effort to provide an example, there are instances in which a certain gang subset has additional subsets and therefore the inconsistency of specifying each subset can lead to a misrepresentation of violence of one subset over others. Table 8 below illustrates a select few Crip subsets that have additional subsets beneath the main subset umbrella that, if mislabeled, can slightly construe the representation of the data. In this study, the East Coast Crips were represented as offenders in 45 links; however, in 12 links (27% of East Coast Crips activity), a neighborhood or specific set of East Coast Crips is not specified in the court cases of these particular 12 links.

Table 8. Subsets with Subsets: Leading to Misrepresentation of Data

Subset	City	Neighborhood	Number of Links
East Coast Crips	Carson	190	9
East Coast Crips	Florence	76	11
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	118	4
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	59	0
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	62	7
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	66	1
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	68	0
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	69	1
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	97	0
East Coast Crips	Pomona	200	0
East Coast Crips	Los Angeles	Unidentified	12
			Total: 45

Neighborhood Crips	Los Angeles	106	0
Neighborhood Crips	Los Angeles	11	7
Neighborhood Crips	Los Angeles	112	5
Neighborhood Crips	Los Angeles	46	0
Neighborhood Crips	Los Angeles	67	1
Neighborhood Crips	Los Angeles	Unidentified	6
			Total: 19

Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	107	2
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	112	0
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	59	1
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	74	1
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	83	9
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	92	0
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	94	4
Hoover Crips	Los Angeles	Unidentified	5
			Total: 22

In situations like this, it could be that these 12 links are representative only of the East Coast Crips main gang subset. However, it is also possible that

some, if not all of these 12 links are representative of a smaller neighborhood or specific set, therefore under-representing the violence caused by a smaller subset and over-representing the violence caused by the larger subset. The same holds true in regards to the Neighborhood Crips and the Hoover Crips, also represented in Table 8.

Despite the slight limitations that the detailing of subsets can cause, the main gang subsets that are responsible for most of the offending within this study are not the gang subsets that may be misrepresented because of the lack of detail in regards to street territory. As clearly identified, there are three major dyads that have a history of reciprocal violence dating back years prior to this study. Furthermore, also identified in this study is the omnipresent structure of local hierarchies in regards to offending among the gang subsets in Los Angeles County. The two-star formations that were uncovered in this network are representative of the notion that there appears to be a less than “sporadic” structure amongst the gang violence in Los Angeles County. It would appear that quite a bit of the violence is caused by dominant gang subsets and the victimization often falls upon individuals that are not gang-related. It is important to highlight that two gang subsets appear in both the presence of reciprocal violence as well as play an active role in offending among the local hierarchies in the area. The Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips make a strong impression in this network, an impression that should be considered in regards to policy implications. The activity of the Black P-Stone

Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips should also be scrutinized in regards to the targets of their violence. The network shows that more often than not, both of these gang subsets are victimizing individuals that are not known to be gang members. The direction of gang violence would cause for speculation as to why these subsets seek after non-gang affiliates. The victimization of community members that do not belong to a gang may be a method to instill fear, and therefore respect of the subsets. Where on the contrary, violence amongst subsets may be a fight for resources that may provide for a financial gain. The scope of this thesis does not allow for the answer to such questions, rather an idea as to what future research can expand on.

As opposed to simply increasing the patrol in the areas in which troublesome gangs frequent, it may behoove law enforcement agencies to proactively discontinue the feud that is going on amongst the dyads in which the Black P-Stone Bloods and the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips are involved in. Similar to the Cease Fire Agreement that was posed in 1992 between the Bloods and Crips as a whole, it may be more beneficial to focus on a smaller aspect of the gang violence amongst Bloods and Crips and branch out as time progresses and the effects of such a policy is noticed.

Lastly, while the Black P-Stone Bloods is a gang that is noted as committing acts of reciprocal violence, it would actually appear that most of the violence committed by Black P-Stone Bloods are against individuals that do not belong to a gang, which instills a greater fear in the community as it would

appear that the gang does not necessarily care whom they harm. With that realization, law enforcement agencies should put a greater focus on the areas in which the Black P-Stone Bloods represent as well as educate the community in a manner in which they are able to protect themselves and be aware of their surroundings, therefore lessening the fear and rather encouraging and increasing their ability to be more observant, which can in turn assist law enforcement.

To further expand on the value of this study, it would be wise to include other popular Los Angeles County gang subsets, such as those that may account for the other demographics in the County (Asian and Hispanic street gangs), as it has been identified that Hispanics are the majority of the gang-related victims in Long Beach and Los Angeles (Berg, 2012). There is a known lack of social efficacy between races in Los Angeles County (in regards to street gangs), which can also attribute to several incidents of gang violence between the inter-racial gang subsets in Los Angeles County. Such a feat would be difficult to endure, as the number of cases and subsets would certainly rise above 284 cases and 158 Bloods and Crips subsets that were identified in Lexis Nexis during this time period.

APPENDIX
COMPLETE DESCRIPTIVE VARIABLES

Variables	Definition and Coding
Case ID	Case ID Number assigned to data
Date	Date of Incident
Offender Gang Affiliation	Gang affiliation of defendant in case, coded as: Four-Category Variable: Blood (0), Crip (1), Non-Gang (2), or Neither (3); Multinomial Variable
Offender Gang Subset	Name of subset in which offender is a member, coded as: Multinomial Variable
Offender Gang Location	Location in which the subset of the offender claims as their territory. Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 1 Gang Affiliation	Gang affiliation of accomplice 1 in case, coded as: Four-Category Variable: Blood (0), Crip (1), Non-Gang (2), or Neither (3); Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 1 Gang Subset	Name of subset in which accomplice 1 is a member, coded as: Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 1 Gang Location	Location in which the subset of accomplice 1 claims as their territory. Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 2 Gang Affiliation	Gang affiliation of accomplice 2 in case, coded as: Four-Category Variable: Blood (0), Crip (1), Non-Gang (2), or Neither (3); Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 2 Gang Subset	Name of subset in which accomplice 2 is a member, coded as: Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 2 Gang Location	Location in which the subset of accomplice 2 claims as their territory. Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 3 Gang Affiliation	Gang affiliation of accomplice 3 in case, coded as: Four-Category Variable: Blood (0), Crip (1), Non-Gang (2), or Neither (3); Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 3 Gang Subset	Name of subset in which accomplice 3 is a member, coded as: Multinomial Variable
Accomplice 3 Gang Location	Location in which the subset of accomplice 3 claims as their territory. Multinomial Variable
Victim 1 Gang Affiliation	Gang affiliation of victim 1 in case, coded as: Four-Category Variable: Blood (0), Crip (1), Non-Gang (2), or Neither (3); Multinomial Variable
Victim 1 Gang Subset	Name of subset in which victim 1 is a member, coded as: Multinomial Variable
Victim 1 Gang Location	Location in which the subset of victim 1 claims as their territory. Multinomial Variable
Victim 2 Gang Affiliation	Gang affiliation of victim 2 in case, coded as: Four-Category Variable: Blood (0), Crip (1), Non-Gang (2), or Neither (3); Multinomial Variable
Victim 2 Gang Subset	Name of subset in which victim 2 is a member, coded as: Multinomial Variable
Victim 2 Gang Location	Location in which the subset of victim 2 claims as their territory. Multinomial Variable

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