THE APPLICATION OF MULTIPLE MARGINALITY THEORY TO SAN ANTONIO MEXICAN-DESCENT ADULT MALE GANG MEMBERS

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Tiffany Gentry Rogers, B.A.

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THE APPLICATION OF MULTIPLE MARGINALITY THEORY TO SAN ANTONIO MEXICAN-DESCENT ADULT MALE GANG MEMBERS

Committee Members Approved:

____

Scott Bowman, Chair

____

Brian Withrow

____

Ana Juarez

Approved:

____

Andrea Golato

Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, James Diego Vigil's Multiple Marginality framework has been applied to the examination of San Antonio Mexican descent, male, street, gang members- over the age of 18. The Application of Multiple Marginality Theory to San Antonio males is important because there has been a shift in law enforcement, with an increased focus on Hispanic gangs. Understanding the motivation of gang formation is important when developing interventions. Also, knowing differences between Texas Mexican American gangs and other Texas gangs allows enforcement officials and legislative entities to develop specific interventions and consequences for gang-associated crime in this area.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) National Gang Threat Assessment (2011), the United States has approximately 1.4 million street, outlaw motorcycle, and prison gang members. These members comprise more than 33,000 identified active and organized gangs. The National Gang Center (2011), reports that in every survey year between 1996-2011, law enforcement personnel report a higher proportion of adult gang members. The 2011 survey shows three out of five street gang members are over the age of 18 (Figure 1).

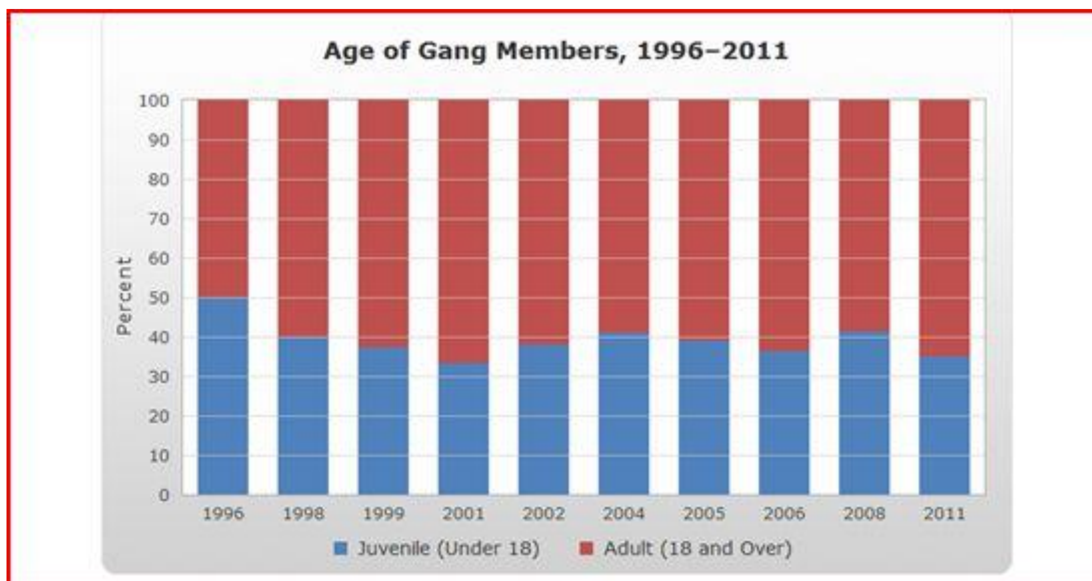

Figure 1: Age of Members by Year (National Gang Survey, 2010)

A clear definition of a street gang is difficult to ascertain. The FBI Gang Task Force (2011), Title 18 U.S.C. Section 521 states that a "group qualifies as a street gang when associations of five or more individuals have the commission of one or more criminal offenses as their primary objective." According to the Texas Gang Threat Assessment (2010), a gang is three or more members with the same qualifications as the national definition (p. 7). According to the National Gang Center (2011), criteria that qualify a group as a gang are as follows: the group has three or more members between the ages of 12 and 24, members share an identity, members view themselves as a gang and are recognized by others as a gang, the group has some permanence and a degree of organization, and the group is involved in an elevated level of criminal activity (What is a Gang section, para. 2). Ayling (2011), believed these designations to have been modifications of the Eurogang definition suggesting "a street gang is any durable, street-

oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of its group identity" (p. 2).

Street gang membership is associated with increased crime against property and persons (Akers, Fox, & Lane, 2010; Decker & Miller, 2001; FBI, 2011; Kissner & Pyrooz, 2009). The FBI (2011) indicates that gangs are responsible for approximately 48 percent of all violent crime and up to 90 percent of the violent crime in some jurisdictions. Decker and Miller (2001), note that in the Rochester Youth Development Study, gang members accounted for 1/3 of the study participants, yet committed 86 percent of all serious reported delinquent acts and 69 percent of all violent crimes.

Decker and Miller (2001) describe gang membership as a catalyst to increased frequency and severity of criminal offending. They suggest that, if/when an individual joins a gang, his/her participation in crime increases exponentially and decreases just as drastically if/when the individual leaves the gang. Akers, Fox, and Lane (2010) stated that gang members are more likely than non gang members to participate in homicides, drive by shootings, auto theft, and drug sales.

In addition, gang members are not only more likely to participate in criminal activity but are also more likely to be victims of crime themselves (Akers, Fox, & Lane, 2010; Decker & Miller, 2001). This result is largely due to the fact that the primary targets of gang violence are other gang members. Bolland, Freilich, and Spano (2008) refuted the misconception that gang members provide protection for one another. In contrast, they found that gang members experience greater violent victimization while in the gang, compared to the misconception that the gang provides additional protection from interpersonal violence. This is due to proactive or retaliatory attacks from other

gangs, as well as violent hazing or punishment from one's own gang. Additionally, victimization may occur during the commission of gang activities such as drug sale transactions.

This study surveyed Bexar County male probationers in an attempt to include San Antonio gang members in current Multiple Marginality research. Multiple Marginality Theory was originally developed and applied to Mexican descent gang members in Los Angeles, California to which San Antonio, Texas has a similar migration pattern. The brief survey administered to adult male probationers attempted to connect factors influencing gang membership and to potentially use these connections to develop and evaluate gang intervention and prevention programs specific to adult Mexican descent males.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF GANGS

According to Howell and Moore (2010), "The first active gangs in Western civilization were reported by Pike, a widely respected chronicler of British Crime" (p. 1). Though gangs may have originated in the 14th or even 12th centuries, the first documented gangs were not until the 17th century. These gangs did not resemble modern street gangs; they were instead highway robbers in England (Vigil, 2002).

Howell and Moore (2010) evaluated the history of United States' gang formation by region: the Northeast, the Midwest, the West, and the South. Within the United States, the first documented gangs were on the East coast, during the 18th century, following the end of the American Revolution. Both the Northeast and Midwest (New York and Chicago) gangs were traced to poor European immigrant groups coming to the United States to enhance their quality of life.

The White immigrant groups came in two overlapping waves. The first wave from 1820-1880 was immigrants from mostly Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia and the second wave around 1850, brought Polish, Italian, Irish, and Jewish immigrants (Howell & Moore, 2010; Vigil, 2002). The overlapping of their arrivals "overwhelmed the housing and welfare capacity of the young Northeast and Midwest cities" (Howell & Moore, 2010, p. 3). Both waves of immigrants lived in common urban communities

engulfed in slum-like conditions. A lack of marketable skills, in addition to other factors, made finding work extremely difficult and trying. Native born residents discriminated against the immigrant groups, creating conflict-ridden environments in which gangs thrived.

Northeast

Howell and Moore (2010) described gang development on the East Coast in three phases. The first gangs were those that formed from the slum-like conditions and discrimination-based conflict in the European immigrant communities. Though identified as some of the earliest, and possibly the first, gangs in the United States, most early gang like activity was simply juveniles fighting over turf. Howell and Moore (2010) note that these gangs were often multiethnic groups who formed from a specific region or neighborhood.

These early gangs were not focused on or driven by criminal acts--as many members were employed as laborers. The violence in which they engaged was not exclusive to membership in the gang; the violence was believed to be a part of the neighborhood's culture. The gangs at the time were formed in response to a need for a social group amongst the young, New York males (Howell & Moore, 2010).

By 1840, however, a more dangerous type of gang began to form. It was during this next phase that the second wave of White Europeans began their descent upon the neighborhoods occupied by the initial immigrants from the North and West in Europe. The overwhelmed housing complexes, now regarded as slums, were at their capacity. In order to accommodate the incoming populations, temporary housing units were established. These homes were subpar (some were made in stables and abandoned

stores), and there were no government organizations established to assist the poor in escaping these social and economic conditions (Howell & Moore, 2010).

In this historical period, the police had minimal power in these neighborhoods, so gangs were able to establish themselves as authority. Prior to 1840, gangs were divided by neighborhood rather than by ethnicity. As the conditions worsened, and the competition for jobs increased, gangs developed based on ethnic identity. Adamson (as cited in Howell and Moore, 2010, p. 2), stated that, “gang warfare replicated ethnic conflict.”

Simultaneously, Chinese immigrants established ethnically based business organizations (Howell & Moore, 2010). These organizations were based on criminal enterprising and took over the street gang, drug, gambling, and political markets, and did so with little to no opposition. Eventually, they found competition in the market with the Italian Mafia who limited the Chinese expansion. In 1914, the last major organized mafia gang fight of that generation occurred. From that point until the 1950s, gang members were mostly young, amateur males from the poor regions of New York (Howell & Moore, 2010).

The third phase of gang development in the Northeast began with a mass influx of Blacks from the South. The “Great Migration” occurred in two segments, the 1st Great Migration was from 1910-1940 and the 2nd Great Migration was from 1940-1970 (Mathieu, 2009). Escaping the repressive and limiting Jim Crow laws in the South, many Blacks migrated to the North beginning in 1910 in an attempt to secure better employment and more humane treatment; however, settling in areas near all White neighborhoods sparked interracial conflict (Howell & Moore, 2010). Employment in the

meat packing plants, the railroad, and the war industries paid more that than what was paid in the South. Competition for these jobs created conflict between the incoming Black men and the Irish men, both seeking employment in the higher paying industries (Mathieu, 2009).

Young Black men joined together in factions that morphed into protective groups. High rise public housing was created throughout the city (Howell & Moore, 2010). Intended for the low income families, these buildings were often populated by Black families. Gangs became very common in the high rise housing units, providing a natural, visible home base in which the gangs could operate. These conditions caused gangs to become rooted in the daily lives of the underclass.

Latin immigrant groups also moved into New York in the early 20th century. In 1917 the Jones-Shafroth Act gave Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship and allowed travel without a passport (Kanellos, 2013). The largest wave of Puerto Rican immigrants came to New York in the 1950s and they found housing in the South Bronx and Brooklyn which were areas mostly inhabited by European Americans. The 1960s marked a major change in the gangs; a majority (over 60%) of the gangs in New York was either Puerto Rican or black. By the 1990s, Hispanics had become the largest minority group in New York City. Overall, each of these historical factors has contributed to the growth and sustainability of gangs in the Northeast. By 2008, the New England area had 640 gangs with more than 17,250 criminally active members (Howell & Moore, 2010).

Midwest

There is evidence of gangs in the Chicago area dating as far back as the 1860s. The first street gangs were created by White immigrants divided by nationality; the Irish,

the Italians, and the Lithuanians were in independent, segregated gangs (Howell and Moore (2010). Similar to New York, the early gang members were working class men for whom fighting and criminality was entwined in the everyday life. It is suspected that these early Anglo gangs were developed from local fire departments. These gangs dissolved, and Howell and Moore (2010) attributed this dissolution to the relocation of the members. They were financially able to afford to move out of the slum like neighborhoods and into a more affluent area and the gang life did not follow.

The gang life and the gang mentality stayed in the original, poorer neighborhoods where the steady migration of incoming Mexicans and Blacks would live. The migration of the Black population occurred in both the 1910-1930 time frame and the 1940-1950 time frame (Howell & Moore, 2010). The huge influx of minority populations led to racial tensions and eventually a 1919 race riot between White gangs and Black gangs. The newly formed ethnically based Black gangs were no match for the multiple White gangs divided by nationality, which were established and well organized. Conflict continued between the races over neighborhood resources that were in short supply (Howell & Moore, 2010).

Major street gangs formed during the second migration of Black populations coming from the South. These gangs were the Devil’s Disciples, P-Stones, and Vice Lords (Howell & Moore, 2010). Two of these street gangs originally began in a reformatory school. It was also during this time frame that the Latin Kings were developed.

Mexican Gangs in Chicago. Though it is known that the Latin Kings formed between the 1940s and the 1960s, much Latin@ gang formation is not documented (Howell & Moore, 2010). Mexicans had only been a stable population in Chicago since the 1900s.

The first major Mexican migration was between 1919 and 1939. The appeal of new job opportunities in the meat packing and steel industries brought many Mexicans north to the Chicago area. Another area for employment, though involving a much smaller population, was the railroad. By the 1960s, 56,000 Mexicans had relocated to Chicago (Howell & Moore, 2010).

Mexican and Black youth lived in similar areas and were victims of the same Anglo gangs. In an attempt to align and create support structures in the 1970s, all Latin, Black, and White gangs in Chicago created two multi-ethnic alliances: "People" and "Folk". The alliance as either People or Folk was maintained through generations of gang membership. The adversarial relationship between gangs associated as People and gangs associated as Folk was fierce until recent years (Howell & Moore, 2010). Many street gangs will still claim to be People or Folk, but law enforcement personnel believe that the former strength in the separate alliances is now gone (Howell & Moore, 2010).

In reaction to racial violence, gangs such as the Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (ALKQN) emerged. Latin@ gangs became well organized and extremely violent. The Latin Disciples and the Latin Kings were two of the four largest gangs in Chicago by the 1990s. Currently, from within the prison system, the Mexican Mafia (La Eme) has established an influential presence on street gang activity (Howell & Moore, 2010; National Gang Center, 2011). Law enforcement agencies suspect that several Midwest

Latino gangs are partnered with Mexican drug trafficking organizations as well (FBI, 2011; Howell & Moore, 2010; National Gang Center, 2011).

West

In the 1920s, more than 2 million Mexican immigrants came to isolated neighborhoods in the United States in search of employment and escape from the Mexican Revolution (Howell & Moore, 2010; Vigil, 2002; Zavela, 2011). Between 1940 and 1964, an additional 4 million Mexicans immigrated to the United States with another 6-12 million immigrating in the 1970s. Most settled in the Los Angeles area. Black populations relocated from the South to Los Angeles en mass around 1920 and again around 1945 (Howell & Moore, 2010; Vigil, 2002). Similar to the Mexican immigrants, the Black population came in search of a better life including better employment opportunities.

The Zoot Suit Riots were a defining event for Latin and Black minority populations in the United States (Howell & Moore, 2010; Montejano, 1987; Sanchez, 1993). Though the origin of Zoot Suits is unknown, the suits are believed to have been influenced by the jazz culture of the 1930s. The broad brimmed hats, long jackets, and trousers became a symbol of the estranged minority youth of the times (Sanchez, 1993; Vigil, 2002). By 1943, the unsubstantiated perception of Zoot Suiters was that of a violent group of minorities that attacked white women. Tensions were especially elevated between Zoot Suiters and servicemen in California. A group of military men approached a group of Mexican women and harassed them. A group of Zoot Suiters attacked and knocked one sailor unconscious. The altercation escalated and both groups of men physically aggressed on one another. The second incident that sparked the riot was four

days after the previously described altercation. Based on a report made by sailors that they were attacked by men in Zoot Suits, off duty police officers and large groups of sailors responded to the claim. They sought out anyone in the Zoot Suits (the first victims were preteen boys), clubbed them, removed, and burned their suits. This attack sparked the national Zoot Suit riots (Vigil, 2002). The injustice and the discrimination that the riots represented fueled the formation of gangs in the urban communities.

Protection of minority people from violence coincided with the new emerging street groups (Howell & Moore, 2010; Vigil, 2002). Black Los Angeles youth formed these street groups and mobilized under a new identity. The Black gangs in Los Angeles divided into two factions, Crips and Bloods (Howell & Moore, 2010). These monikers have persisted since the early 1970s and exist even today. According to Valdez (2007), all current Pacific coast Black gang members identify as either a Crip or a Blood.

Mexican Gangs in Los Angeles. "The existence of the Mexican population in the United States dates back to the 16th century, when Spanish explorers settled what was then northern Mexico and is currently the American West" (Howell & Moore, 2010, p. 9). The first appearance of Mexican gangs is documented in the early 1890s.

In 1848, under the Treaty of Hidalgo, Mexican citizens experienced a massive disruption in their identity. The United States government acquired the Southwest United States (California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and a portion of Colorado) from the Mexican government. The Mexican citizens in these states became naturalized U.S. citizens (Howell & Moore, 2010; Montejano, 1987; Sanchez, 1993). In the United States, the citizens of Mexican descent were treated as second class citizens; held in a lower caste than Anglos and Spanish descent Mexicans (Sanchez, 1993).

Efforts by to repatriate Mexican citizens were short sighted and not supported, leaving the U.S. citizens of Mexican descent alienated in their homeland (Howell & Moore, 2010; Montejano, 1987). This alienation by the Anglo citizens forced the Mexicans to find homes literally on the edges of town, in ethnically isolated neighborhoods (Vigil, 2002).

Youth in these neighborhoods or “barrios” were isolated from the opportunity to assimilate in the Anglo culture and found identity in their Mexican and American roots. Cohesion between the youth was solidified by a feeling that the newly added states were lands that the U.S. had stolen from the Mexican people (Zavella, 2011). The gangs that were formed were labeled “boy gangs” and were modeled after the traditional Mexican “Palomilla” that migrated from Texas to Los Angeles in the early 1900s (Howell & Moore, 2010; Vigil, 2002).

The key members of the boy gangs were those that had the least connection to either ethnic group, the Anglos or the Mexicans (Vigil, 2002; Zavella, 2011). The gang provided a subculture as a means of social connection and adaptation for these unconnected youth. The “boy gangs” transitioned from a loose association to the more organized institution of a street gang (Vigil, 2002).

The immigration that occurred in the Northeast and the Midwest came in waves and ceased. Conversely, immigration from Mexico has been uninterrupted and continuous (Vigil, 2002). This history distinguishes the gang formation in the West and the South from that of the Northeast and the Midwest. Additionally, the gangs in Chicago and New York were formed in response to conflict amongst ethnic groups. Mexican gangs in the West were formed from pride and connection to their unique

biracial heritage. "Mi barrio" and "my gang" are interchangeable terms within the gang. This symbolizes that a "boy is a member of a gang, of a neighborhood, and of a barrio" (Howell & Moore, 2010, p. 10).

South

Before 1970, only Miami and San Antonio were identified as southern cities with a serious gang problem. By 1998, the states with the largest number of gang counties were Texas, Georgia, California, Illinois, and Florida, "with the South replacing the Northeast as the region with the most top-ranking states" (Howell & Moore, 2010, p 13). In 2010, nine of the top ten most dangerous gangs in Texas were based on a "Hispanic" identity and three of the top four most dangerous gangs in Texas (Barrio Azteca, Mexican Mafia, Texas Syndicate, and Tango Blast) are found in San Antonio (Texas Fusion Center, 2012).

Finding identity and mobility as a Mexican American in San Antonio has been a continuous struggle. Many Texas Mexicans experience the same frustrations that the first Mexican Americans did, where lack of professional job opportunities, the absence of cultural appreciation in schools, and the limited influence of the family have given gangs a ripe environment in which to form (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Montejano, 1987; Vigil, 1999, 2002, 2003).

CHAPTER III

MEXICAN HISTORY IN SAN ANTONIO

The American pioneers who first came to the Southwest had backgrounds that varied from petty speculators, outlaws, adventurers, European colonists, farmers, mechanics, and craftsmen. In the 1830s, the Southwest region was noticeably divided into a quasi-caste system with Mexicans claiming European heritage placed at the top (Hanley & Vigil, 2002; Montejano, 1987). These Mexican elite owned significant amounts of land, occupied government positions, and maintained elite status through arranged marriages. As the Anglos moved into these areas, they seized the opportunity to increase their wealth and status by intermarrying with the Euro-Mexican elites. This system continued relatively peacefully until the incorporation of Texas forced the old system to be reevaluated (Montejano, 1987).

During the years of Texas' incorporation to the United States-1836-1900-many Mexicans were driven off of their land through force or intimidation (Hanley & Vigil, 2002; Montejano, 1987). By the 1840s at least 200 Old Spanish families that had lived in San Antonio had left the city. The Anglo Americans settled to the West and South of the Austin-San Antonio road to ensure a buffer between themselves and the Indians and Mexicans (Montejano, 1987), yet the Anglo desire for separation extended beyond wanting a physical buffer between themselves and the natives. There were questions

regarding the political status of the Mexicans in the area. Mexicans were not considered equal to the Anglo Americans and many were forced out of communities.

The primary source of economic capital for the native families was land ownership, though this was taken by the immigrating Anglos. "In the six years following the Texas Revolution, from 1837 to 1842, 13 of the most prominent 'American buyers' purchased 1,368,574 acres from 358 Mexicans" (Montejano, 1987, p. 28). The demographics of Texas' first city, San Antonio, had shifted to a population of 10,500. Population estimates say that 4,000 people were Mexican, 3,000 people were German, and 3,500 people were American born. In addition, the San Antonio government was exclusively Anglo, the merchants were German, and the Mexicans became cartmen (transporting goods).

Between 1900 and 1910, the land the Anglos secured from the Mexicans was given a new purpose. Using creative advertisement, the land owners were able to sell portions of their ranch land as farm land at high prices to migrating northerners. Once arrived, the northerners recruited Mexican day laborers to manage and farm the newly purchased lands (Hanley & Vigil, 2002). A Laredo newspaper made note of the sad transition of Mexicans from ranch owners to farm day laborers. The rapid transfer of land, displacing many Mexicans, was reflected in an article that noted that many Mexicans were now working as day laborers on land that once belonged to them (Montejano, 1987).

Over time, the Mexican American reaction to being placed in a subservient, unequal position, led to insurrection. Though seen across Texas, it was most noticed in politically populated cities like San Antonio. Anglo Americans demanded government

intervention to prevent the threat of Mexican revolution. To intervene and prevent revolutionary actions, the Texas born San Antonio Mexicans became the go-between for the Mexican laborers and the Anglo American bosses (Montejano, 1987).

Common disputes between land owner and laborer involved monies owed. For example, in reviewing cases of coercion, it was noted that in San Antonio, the landowners would immobilize the cropper by keeping him in debt. There were many cases of the landowner advancing between $250 and $500 per year to the Mexican families. The landowner would then use the debt (and threats of law enforcement intervention or personal violence to collect the debt) as a mean to secure the compliance of the worker. Additionally, the workers would occasionally be fired without pay based on a fraudulent violation of the employment contract.

As quoted by Montejano (1987), one Mexican recalls his experience in 1912 with this type of manipulation.

> “In San Antonio, we were under contract to go and pick cotton in a camp in the Valley of the Rio Grande. A group of countrymen and my wife and I went to pick. When we arrived at the camp, the planter gave us an old hovel which had been used as a chicken house before, to live in, out in the open. I didn’t want to live there and told him that if he didn’t give us a little house which was a little better we would go. He told us to go, and my wife and I and my children were leaving when the sheriff fell upon us. He took me to the jail and there the planter told them that I wanted to leave without paying him for my passage. He charged me twice the cost of transportation, and though I tried first not to pay him, and then to pay him for what it cost, I couldn’t do anything. The authorities would

> only pay attention to him, and as they were in league with him they told me that if I didn't pay they would take my wife and little children to work. Then I paid him." (p. 204-205)

The industrial and urban revolutions' arrival in Texas was in the decade from 1940 to 1950. Manufacturing plants increased and the employees in these plants doubled. Nearly half a million Texans migrated to these urban centers to secure employment. Two hundred Texas counties lost population to the remaining 54 counties (Montejano, 1987). The demand placed on manufacturing centers by the war, allowed for the temporary reprieve of discrimination towards Mexicans (Hanley & Vigil, 2002).

However, in the years following the war, the urbanization expanded the discrimination. For example, as San Antonio grew, new subdivisions like Jefferson and Harlandale became nearly exclusively Anglo. To maintain the Anglo neighborhoods, these areas adopted restrictive policies that prohibited the sale or rental of housing to persons other than of the White race. This is reflective of the physical marginalization that Vigil (2002) noted happening in Los Angeles that created inferior Mexican exclusive neighborhoods.

CHAPTER IV

MULTIPLE MARGINALITY THEORY

Knowing that immigrant youth are more likely to experience family disruption, educational failure and economic hardship, Multiple Marginality Theory encompasses why individuals from these conditions are motivated to join a gang (Vigil, 1999, 2002, & 2003). Multiple Marginality Theory addresses how multiple sources of oppression such as family, educational, and financial strains create conditions under which customary social controls disappear and new, gang created social controls develop (Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, & Schmidt, 2011; Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Esbensen & Freng, 2007; Hanley & Vigil, 2002; Vigil, 1999, 2002, & 2003).

The powerlessness that develops from marginalization pressures and forces over an extended period of time is unique to the groups subjected to the conditions. Vigil (2002) criticized the perception that economic frustration is independent of family disruption and educational failure. His multiple marginality framework (figure 2) shows the "actions and reactions among various forces that generate and sustain an extremely tenuous and uneven…experience (Conchas & Vigil, 2010, p. 56)" between the dominant and minority cultures.

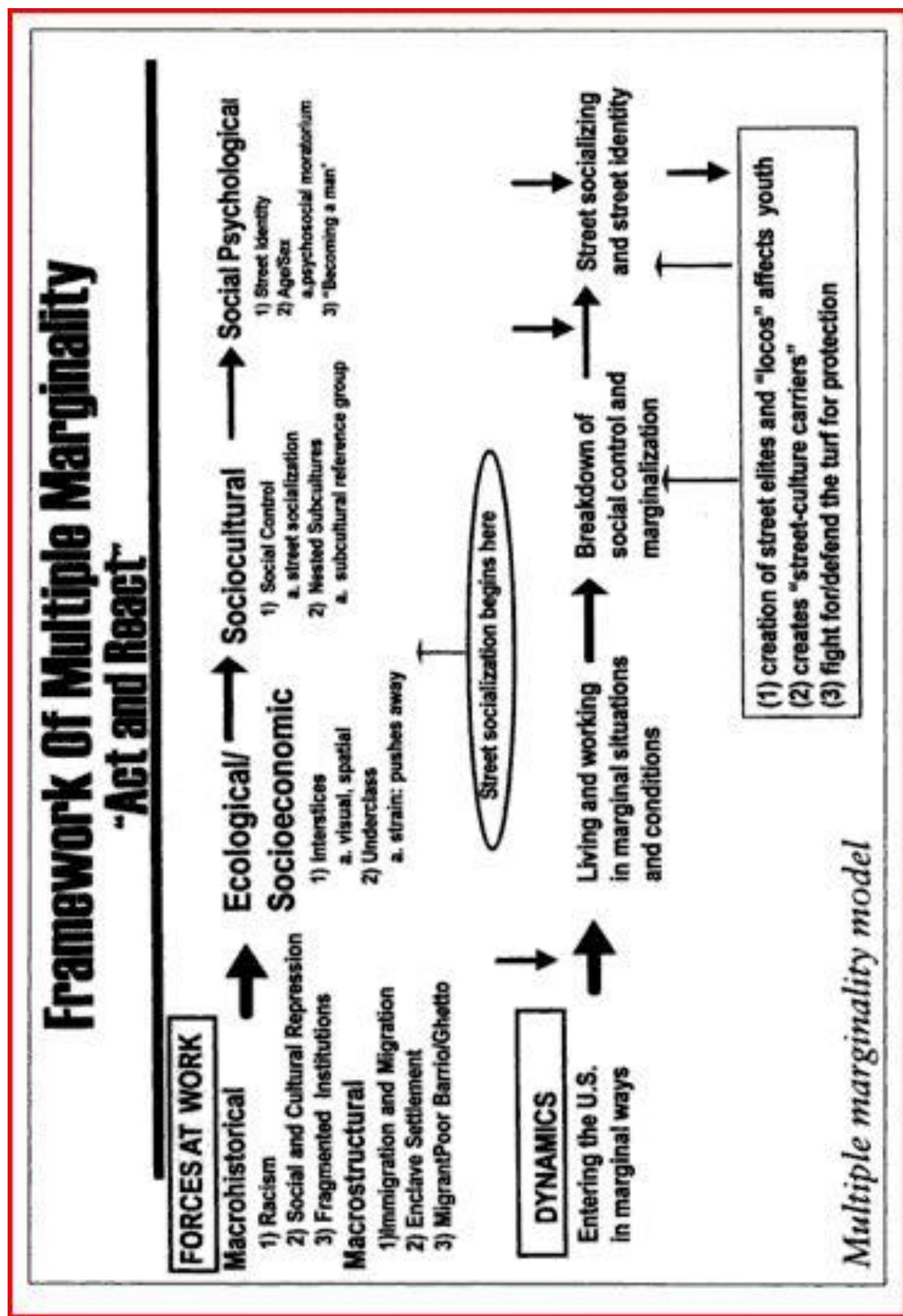

Figure 2: Interaction of Influences for Gang Involvement (Vigil, 2002)

Marginalization is the process by which individuals come to live in neighborhoods literally on the outside edges of the central hub within cities (Vigil, 1999, 2002, 2003). Minority immigrant groups compete with the dominant Anglo groups for "economic and social rights and resources" (Vigil, 2003, p. 19). This competition determines where immigrants will settle. Besides being affordable, familial and cultural connections attract newer immigrants to join these established neighborhoods (Haynes & Hutchison, 2008).

The physical marginalization creates an economic marginalization as well. Living in the margins force individuals to travel for employment, entertainment and education (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Vigil, 1999, 2002, 2003). Being removed from the city's central hub of economic development makes employment a frustrating challenge. Immigrants either have to travel long distances to work or have to accept highly competitive, low paying jobs that are closer to home. Near the Los Angeles barrios, for example, service occupations (with erratic schedules) dominate the job market (Vigil, 2002).

Families in the marginalized neighborhoods suffer financial strain as they often travel farther (an economic burden) for employment, and this time commitment restricts the ability to secure secondary employment. The time constraint also keeps the working members of the family away from the home for extended periods of time, decreasing parental supervision of youth at home (Esbensen & Freng, 2007).

The limited time with children and teens and their limited supervision deteriorates the first line of defense against gang membership, which is family (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Esbensen & Freng, 2007; Vigil, 1999, 2002, 2003). Universally, the

family is the first experience individuals will have with informal social control (Vigil, 2002). The family teaches what behaviors are acceptable and expectations for those that do not conform. For marginalized families, the weakened attachments within the family lead to a less potent, informal, social control institution.

Beyond the family unit, many children acquire skills for negotiating society within the school system. The public school system is not equipped to compensate for the lack of parental direction provided at home. Educational institutions are another major venue in which individuals are taught to be citizens and contributing members of a workforce. Schools create an environment where students can translate dreams and aspirations into conventional, constructive goals. Many marginalized individuals will recognize early in the schooling process that there is a gap between what goals they would like to achieve and what goals are realistic for them to achieve.

A group of youth with limited coping skills and similar stressors may join together and collectively engage in delinquent behavior (May & Vowell, 2000). If this group identifies as a gang and the formation of the gang is a "collective response to feelings of injustice, then…perceived blocked opportunity leads…to crime and delinquency, as strain theory would suggest" (May & Vowell, 2000, p. 46). However, there are inconsistencies within gang research to exclusively support strain theory as a motivator for gang involvement (Hoffmann, 2010; May & Vowell, 2000). General Strain Theory calls for an additional component with which delinquency can be assessed. A more effective approach is the integration of complementary theories as is done with Multiple Marginality Theory.

Additionally, within educational institutions, language and cultural barriers isolate immigrant youth in the U.S. public school system (Esbensen & Freng, 2007; Valenzula, 1999; Vigil, 2002). With focus on acculturation, the schools are a powerful influence on a marginalized youth's propensity towards joining a gang. Less acculturated individuals are more likely to join a gang than their more acculturated peers (Kissner & Pyrooz, 2009).

Esbensen & Freng (2007) stated that:

> The deterioration of social control institutions like the family and the school lead the most marginalized youth to seek camaraderie in the streets with many finding connections with other youth from similar backgrounds. The camaraderie of the juveniles create a street subculture that 'fills the void' left by eroded institutions. (p. 606)

Learning morals and social expectations from other marginalized youth is "street socialization" and is one of the first steps into gang involvement (Vigil, 2002). Vigil (2002, 2003) stated that the social control institutions responsible for individuals' reliance on street socialization are the family, the school, and the law enforcement. Street socialization fills the voids left by inadequate parenting and schooling. The street group, or gang, becomes a subsociety with regulations and expectations for its members. In turn, it offers members, nurturing, "protection, friendship, emotional support, and other ministrations for unattended, unchaperoned resident youth" (Vigil, 2002, p 10). If the subsociety succeeds in meeting the needs of the youth and is able to maintain its presence, it will become an institution that will compel future generations to join or to tolerate and accept its presence.

San Antonio

In Texas, in 2010, of the over 25 million residents, more than 4 million were foreign born, nearly doubling since 2000 (Homeland Security, 2008). Based on current migration rates, the United States Census Bureau (2010) projects the Hispanic population in Bexar County will double by 2050. Currently, 63.2 percent of San Antonio's population identifies as Hispanic.

Family. San Antonio families show family disruption at a higher than national average. According to the data center at Kidscount.org (2010) the average percentage of single parent homes from 2006-2010 in the state of Texas was 29.6 percent. Bexar County's average was 33.5 percent. The national average of children in poverty (in the calendar year 2011, a family of two adults and two children fell in the "poverty" category if their annual income was below $22,811) was 23 percent, Texas was 27 percent, and San Antonio was 29 percent. Twenty-three percent of Hispanic children in the United States have had Child Protective Services (CPS) confirmed cases that include maltreatment. In Texas, 47% of Hispanic children have had the same confirmation. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011) reported Bexar County as having the highest rate of confirmed child abuse cases in Texas.

School. School as an institution reflects the marginalization pressures felt by minority youth. Reacting to alienation, students will behaviorally act out by disrupting classrooms or refusing to participate (Vigil, 2002) while the ultimate refusal is dropping out of school. In Texas, Black and Hispanic students are twice as likely to leave school without acquiring a diploma and, students from ethnic minorities account for 72.2 percent of the students lost from public high school enrollment (Intercultural Development Research

Association, 2012). In Bexar County, of the nearly 8500 students lost to attrition, approximately 7000 of those students were "Hispanic" (figure 3).

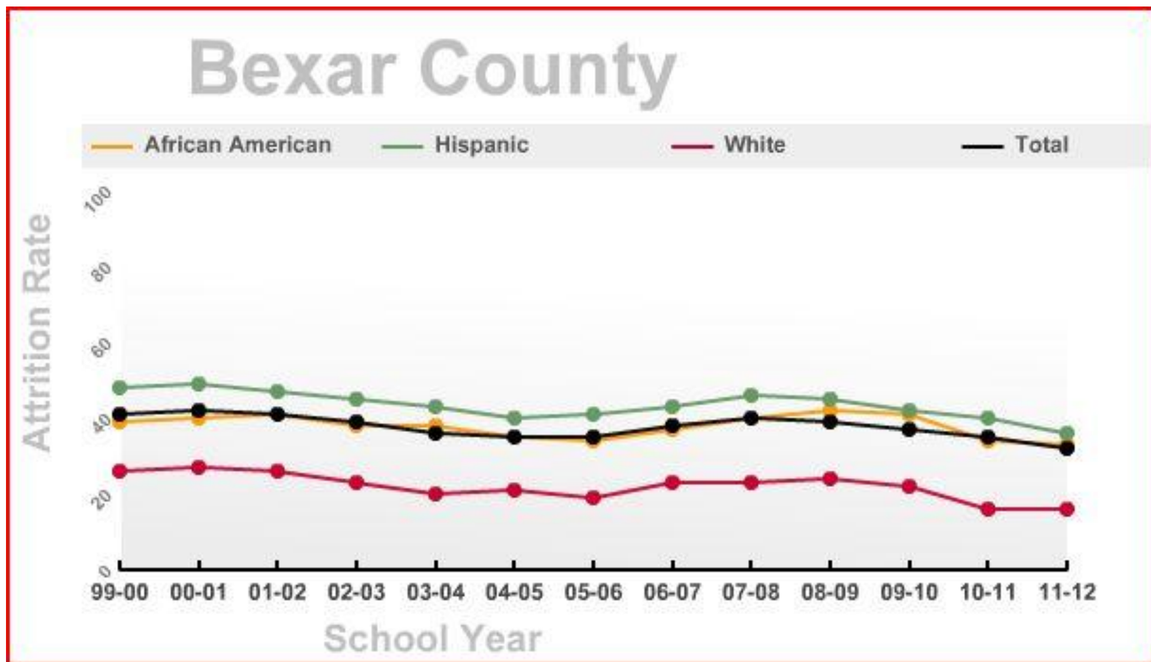

Figure 3: Public School Attrition Rates by Year and Race (Intercultural Development Research Association, 2012)

Law Enforcement. Law enforcement and the criminal justice system are the tools by which individuals who consistently fail to conform are sanctioned. Once these sanctions have a presence in an individual's life, it is highly predictable that the family and the schools have failed to properly integrate its marginalized members. A person that has encountered sanctions from law enforcement is more subject to becoming street socialized (Esbensen & Freng, 2007; Vigil, 2002).

Family, schools, and law enforcement "merit special scrutiny" because they are the "primary agents of social control in society" and because they are "uniquely adaptive and responsive to the concerns of society" (Vigil, 2002, pp. 7-8). When these three

institutions collectively fail, street socialization is often given the power to succeed, thereby giving gangs a semi-permanent place in physically and economically marginalized neighborhoods.

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY

Application

Multiple Marginality Theory was originally developed in response to an increase in Los Angeles Hispanic gang formation (Vigil, 1999). The theory was then extended to include Black, White, Central American, and Vietnamese youth gang members (Vigil, 2002). Researchers have applied Multiple Marginality Theory to gangs of varied cultural heritage in a variety of urban communities (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Esbensen & Freng, 2007). The primary hypothesis in this paper is that Multiple Marginality Theory will account for San Antonio Mexican adult male gang membership through a statistically significant relationship between gang membership and five distinct marginality measures.

Data Collection

Measure. Survey research was utilized to test the hypothesis that Multiple Marginality measures will account for Mexican gang membership. The survey is based on Esbensen and Freng's (2007) Multiple Marginality survey. The respondents were asked to rate 20 statements on a 1 to 5 Likert Scale. In addition to the statements, respondents are asked to report their age, race, country of origin, and sex. They were also asked if they are in a gang and if so, at what age did they join the gang.

From the 20 close-ended questions, five marginality scales were developed. Each scale has 16 possible total points where the higher the score, the more marginalized the individual. Answers of neutral/doesn't apply were given a score of zero. As the answer reflected increased marginalization in the measured category, the answer was given a higher score with the highest possible score per statement of four. The statements below with an asterisk are reverse coded for analysis. The five multiple marginality measures that were measured in this study are: ethnic identity, educational success, parental supervision/connection, economic independence, and perceptions of law enforcement.

Marginality Measures

Ethnic Identity.

*1. I feel like I belong to my ethnic group/nationality.

2. If I were to be born all over again, I would want to be born a different ethnic group/nationality.

3. I often feel that I don't belong with any ethnic group/nationality.

4. I prefer my friends to be of the same ethnic group/nationality as me.

Hispanic (specifically Mexican) gang members report being less acculturated than non-gang members (Esbensen & Freng, 2002; Kissner & Pyrooz, 2009). When migrant workers became a leading work force in the United States, Mexican culture was viewed as a threat to the American way of life. Though educational institutions were created for the children of migrant workers, the curriculum focused on Americanization. When Mexican students were mainstreamed into American public schools, IQ testing and ability tracking testing were done in English. Many Texas Mexican students with a Spanish speaking background failed and were labeled as mentally retarded (Sanchez,

1993; Tapia, 2009; Vigil, 2002). They were then placed into remedial programs designed for impaired learning.

Students identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) by the school officials are placed in segregated classrooms or segregated portions of a classroom (Valenzuela, 1999). They are again being physically placed on the margins of the social groups. An inability to effectively navigate the politics of school from a marginalized perspective creates a consequence that Valenzuela (1999) describes as "Mexican youth [learning] perhaps no stronger lesson in school than to devalue the Spanish language, Mexico, Mexican culture, and things Mexican" (p. 19).

Students reject the acculturation process that schools provide; they cling instead to their unique Mexican American identity. For the Mexican descent youth that are at highest risk for gang membership (3rd generation), they create their own identity that shuns the exclusivity of Mexican values promoted by their parents and of the American values promoted in the schools (Valenzuela, 1999). The new identity embraced is that of a "cholo" (Valenzuela, 1999; Vigil, 2002; Zavella, 2011).

The word "cholo" has been linked to both, a caste system where it meant "mestizo" (Vigil, 2002) and to the Spanish word "solo" which means "alone" (Hanley & Vigil, 2002). Modern day gang members claiming the cholo identity use it to express an identity that is between cultures (Vigil, 2002). The typical cholo look is a male with a short hairstyle, stoic look and trimmed moustache. Cholos often wear baggy shirts and khakis or jeans (Vigil, 2002). Contrary to the socialization expected in schools, cholos often speak a mix of Spanish and English (Vigil, 2002).

Educational Success.

*5. Diversity was valued at my last school.

6. I'll never be able to afford to go to college.

7. I don't do the kind of work that I want to do because I don't have enough education.

*8. I liked school.

Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, and Schmidt (2011), and Valenzuela (1999) referenced the generational differences between Mexican Americans and the value they place on education. Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, and Schmidt (2011) noted that first generation. Mexican Americans, felt that education was an important step in achieving a successful future. This group values education and is relatively successful in school (Valenzuela, 1999).

It is not until the second generation of Mexican Americans that the disillusionment and devaluing of education becomes apparent. "(S)econd-generation Mexican Americans experienced…a lowering of expectations for what education could help them achieve" (Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, & Schmidt, 2011, p. 20).

Valenzuela (1999) attributed this change to frustrations with a school system that has a focus on acculturation. When the Mexican heritage (language and dress specifically) is treated as an indicator of being uneducated, Mexican Americans become frustrated with the schooling process. This is particularly true if Spanish is the primary language spoken in the home (Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, & Schmidt, 2011). Despite a perception by both teachers and students that the other does not care, it is noted that

youth of Mexican descent do not object to education; they object to the process of schooling (Valenzuela, 1999).

Parental Supervision/Connection.

*9. It is important for parents to know the friends of their children.

*10. As a teen, when I would go somewhere, I left a note for my parents or called them to tell them where I was

*11. I have frequent contact with both of my parents.

12. Growing up, I was often unsupervised.

Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, & Schmidt (2011) explained that Hispanic's (not exclusively Mexican's) families have a more significant impact on pro-social and antisocial behavior than in other races. The bulk of the studies comparing Hispanic with non-Hispanic youth have found that family factors are more important in predicting delinquency (either directly or indirectly) for Hispanics than for other youth. "Some variation exists in which family factors are significant predictors, but family involvement has been the most consistent" (Baldwin, Krohn, Lizotte, & Schmidt, 2011, p. 23).

Economic Independence.

*13. It's easy to get a good job in my neighborhood.

14. Life is easier for people who have more money.

*15. I can provide for my family with my current job.

*16. At my job, it helps to speak more than one language.

The concept of street socialization that Vigil (1999, 2002, 2003, 2010) presented with Multiple Marginality Theory addresses the emotional needs that are met when one joins a gang. However, Mao, Pih, Rosa, and Rugh (2008) stated that in the last twenty

years, gangs have shifted from being a family like structure to a "vehicle of individual economic gain" (p.474). Traditionally, gang membership has been classified and studied from the perspective of delinquent acts. Though Mao, Pih, Rosa, and Rugh (2008) agreed that the monetary gain occurring in the illegitimate economy justified the delinquency framework, they stated that "gang participation should be considered a form of economic action" (p. 474). This consideration should be applied to both the descriptive and academic evaluations of gang membership.

Vigil (2002) related a Vietnamese gang member's tale that with car theft, he could make $10,000 in one day. The gang member had gotten a job as a hotel bellboy, but the money was too slow. Not wanting to borrow from his parents, he utilized his gang membership to increase his financial independence. Within the framework of Multiple Marginality, gang members participate in illegitimate activities to make money because legitimate means are blocked or are perceived as blocked. Because choices to participate in the pro-social economy are limited, marginalized gang members are more likely to rob, burgle, and carjack (Akers, Fox, & Lane, 2010; Mao, Pih, Rosa, & Rugh, 2008).

The FBI (2009, 2011) and the Texas Fusion Center Intelligence and Counterterrorism Division (2010) described an increased partnership between street gangs and drug trafficking organizations (DTOs). Though there is increased participation with most nationally based gangs, Mexican gangs have secured the most associations with criminal organizations (figure 4). These partnerships have allowed gang members to increase income opportunities by increasing drug sales.

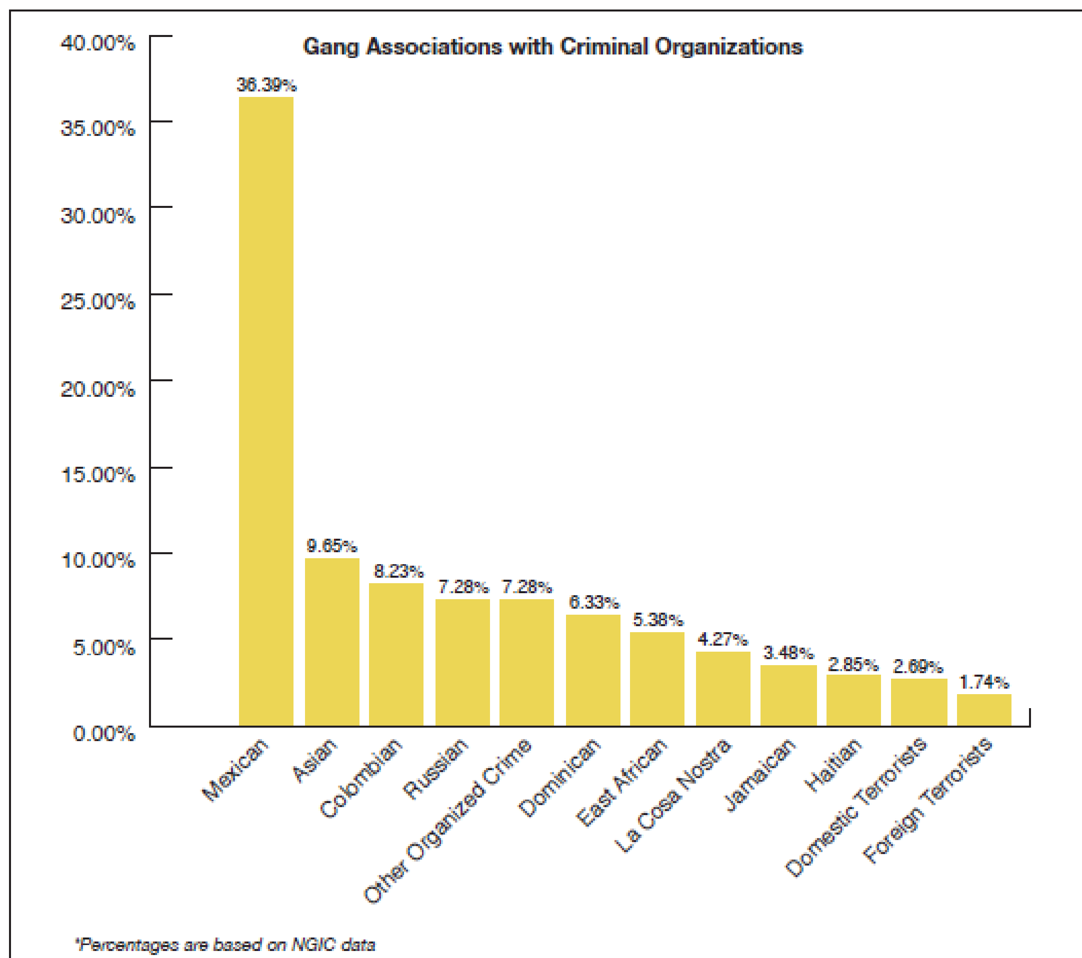

Figure 4: Gang Association with Criminal Organizations by Nationality (FBI, 2011)

Older gang members realize that with continued poverty and limited legitimate opportunity for money, that the gang may be the best opportunity for their economic future (Ayling, 2011). Instead of "maturing out" of the gang (fading away from the gang life and connections due to increased age), older members seek "a reorientation of gang priorities and activities to ensure that the gang can provided long-term economic sustenance" (Ayling, 2011, p. 12). This restructuring and evolution of the gang gives opportunity for the young street gang to become a serious criminal enterprise.

Perception of Law Enforcement.

*17. Police officers are honest.

*18. Police officers are hardworking.

*19. Police officers are respectful toward people like me.

20. Police officers act unfairly against minorities.

Gang suppression has been the main strategy utilized by government forces to combat gang influence. Suppression strategies can create an environment where a "Survival of the Fittest" practice takes root. Ayling (2011) described gang formation using an evolutionary perspective typically utilized in the biological sciences. Gangs, gang members, or gang activities that are controlled through law enforcement strategies like suppression, may be those that exhibit vulnerable or weak characteristics (Tapia, 2010). For example, policies that target illegal drug sales and use, are effective against the "smallest, least corrupt, and least ruthless of the small businesses" (Ayling, 2011, p. 16).

When these weaker gangs, members, or activities are alleviated, the more sophisticated and better organized gangs dominate that niche (Ayling, 2011; Tapia, 2010). Evading control by law enforcement reinforces resilient characteristics, an unintended consequence of suppression. The dominant gangs remaining after the natural selection process learn to adapt and to evolve in order to avoid future government intervention and prevention strategies. Ayling (2011) noted that the Salvadorian government's heavy handed approach led gangs to alter their standard operations, and to adapt to become less visible thereby evading sanctions.

When the government and law enforcement personnel lose power in an area where relations are already tumultuous, gangs are able to "fill the power vacuum left by the state" (Ayling, 2011, p. 16). The gangs take on the role of public authoritarian and continue to amass power through continuous adaptation. An individual's positive perceptions of law enforcement may be impacted in an area where a police force has minimal control and influence.

Esbensen and Freng (2007) found that with Hispanics' (nationality was not noted) attitude toward police was one of only two multiple marginality factors that significantly correlated with gang membership. Historically, Texas law enforcement has not acted favorably to Mexican descent individuals (Montejano, 1987). Vigil (2002) stated that a person is more likely to commit crime if they do not agree with the laws. Measuring the relationship with law enforcement--specifically honesty, work ethic, and respectful, non-prejudiced behaviors--allowed the evaluation of connections between police and San Antonio gang members and agreement with the equality of the laws.

Demographic

Surveys were offered to individuals being processed through the Bexar County Probation department over a two week period. The two groups that were surveyed were those assigned standard probation through Bexar County Corrections and those assigned to probation with the Gang Intake Unit. According to Gang Unit Supervisor Michael Cepada (personal communication, June 26, 2013), probationers are assigned to the Gang Unit through a specific process.

On the street, if an officer identifies an individual as a gang member using multiple indicators, the officer will enter the person into the gang member database. If convicted of a crime and assigned to the probation department, the individual's name will

be run through the gang member database. If they are identified as active with a gang in the past five years, they are then assigned to the Gang Intake Unit. The gang member status is therefore officer-assigned and not necessarily self-identified. An individual previously entered into the database but not identified as active in the past five years will be assigned to the standard probation unit.

The survey was administered to those on probation because of the increased propensity for gang members to participate in illegal activities when compared to non-gang members (Akers, Fox, & Lane, 2010; Decker & Miller, 2001; FBI, 2011; Kissner & Pyrooz, 2009). The increased likelihood of criminal activity also increased the likelihood of being caught and sanctioned for those acts. An administration of the survey to jail or prison inmates, or individuals on parole would possibly skew the measurement. Since this research is intended to only apply Multiple Marginality Theory to street gang involvement, an individual with an incarceration history may honestly respond that "yes" they have been in a gang, but in reference to a prison gang not a street gang.

While waiting to either complete the intake process or to meet with their probation officer, individual males were asked to participate in a survey. Each individual was given a brief explanation of the purpose of the survey which was elaborated on in the consent form. Surveys were administered to each male volunteer over the age of 18 and upon completion, sorted by respondent's age and nationality. In addition, the respondents must also self identify as Mexican or Hispanic. The control group includes males of the same age group and same nationality but not claiming gang membership.

A definition of gang membership or of a gang was not provided for the respondents. Camaraderie established though street socialization and personal

connection to a gang does not always result in an individual who is recognized by all gang members as "one of them". A young male's perception as a gang member can be as impactful as the same male's actual membership. This study addresses only one's self-report of gang membership.

Participation. Of the 65 intake probationers asked to participate, 39 chose to participate in the research. Twenty of the Gang Unit probationers selected agreed to participate. The total percentage of participation was 69.41 percent. Due to the high population of Spanish speaking individuals in Bexar County, the survey and the consent form were translated to Spanish and checked for accuracy by being translated back to English. This task was performed by native Spanish speakers and Del Valle Independent School District translators, Marisol Rocha and Raylynn DeLeon.

Though all probationers received a consent form with both English and Spanish translations printed, voluntary participation was still reiterated orally and no one requested or used a Spanish survey. Each participant was offered a survey in English or Spanish and was encouraged to ask for assistance pronouncing and defining any unknown words. When explaining the purpose of the project, the potential respondents were told that the research was comparing male gang and non gang members in San Antonio. Explaining that both non gang and gang members were needed in the research eliminated potential perceived stigma of being surveyed as a gang member. The elaboration of the project, including the theory, was included in the consent form.

Signed consent forms were collected prior to the survey administration so that there was no opportunity for the consent form to physically be connected to the anonymous survey. Participation was voluntary and there was neither a reward for

participation nor a punishment for non-participation. The fact that the law enforcement personnel would not know who chose to participate or what was written on each form was explained in detail. To further encourage the comfort of the respondents and to decrease the possibility of perceived intimidation, no law enforcement personnel were present during the administration of the survey.

Sample. Overall, 59 surveys were collected with a refusal rate of 30.59 percent. Thirty surveys were removed from the sample because the individuals did not identify as exclusively Hispanic or as Mexican. Of the total subjects, 10.59 percent self identified as gang members. This is somewhat higher than the overall gang member population in Bexar County Probation where of the 32,806 active cases in July 2013, 350 cases are identified gang cases for a gang case total of 1.07% (Portugal, M, personal email, July, 8, 2013). Bexar County Community Corrections measures caseload counts and not individual counts. One individual may have multiple cases which makes gauging an exact individual percentage difficult.

Demographically, the respondents were 20.34 percent (N=12) White, 8.47 percent (N=5) Black, 57.63 percent (N=34) Hispanic, and 11.86 percent (N=7) Pacific Islander, Native American, Indian, or multiracial. One person chose to not identify race or nationality. When only separating the gang members, 10 percent (N=1) were Black, and 90 percent (N=9) were Hispanic.

The respondents were asked to provide their age in whole numerals. This survey was taken by individuals that ranged from 17 years old to 51years old (table 1). Only those identifying as Mexican or only Hispanic, over the age of 18 were utilized in the analysis.

Table 1: Age of Mexican Respondents by Gang and Non-Gang Membership

AGE in gang	N	%		AGE not in gang	N	%
18-21	3	33.33		18-21	8	40.00
22-25	2	22.22		22-25	4	20.00
26-29	2	22.22		26-29	5	25.00
30+	2	22.22		30+	3	15.00

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS

Inspection of Marginality Measures revealed that ethnic identity, educational success, parental connection, economic independence, and perception of law enforcement were normally distributed for both gang and non gang groups and that there was homogeneity of variance as assessed by Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. Therefore, independent t-tests were run on each measurement of marginality.

The independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare increased (one tailed) marginality in gang versus non gang samples. With a critical value of 2.052, there was not a significant difference in the scores for ethnic identity gang (M=5.33, SD=2.18) and non gang (M=4.6, SD=2.83) samples; t (27) =.691, p=.025. This is also true for parental connection gang (M=6.89, SD=3.63) and non gang (M=6.45, SD=2.59) samples; t (27) =.373, p=.025; economic independence gang (M=7, SD=3.50) and non gang (M=7.55, SD=3.38) samples; t(27)= -.401, p=.025; and for educational success between gang (M=8, SD=3.41) and non gang (M=5.9, SD=2.79) samples; t(27)= 1.842, p=.025. These results suggest that for these adult San Antonio Mexican men on probation, gang members do not have increased marginalization when compared to non gang members with similar demographic details (table 2).

Table 2: Descriptors by Gang and Non-Gang Membership with a Critical Value of 2.052

One Tailed t Test p=.025

Member	N	Mean	Stan. Dev	SE mean	df(27) t	Significant?
Gang	9	5.33	2.18	0.73		
Non	20	4.6	2.83	0.63		
Ethnic Total	29	4.97	2.62		0.691	**no**
Gang	9	8	3.41	1.02		
Non	20	5.9	2.79	0.62		
Educ Total	29	6.95	2.93		1.842	**no**
Gang	9	6.89	3.63	1.21		
Non	20	6.45	2.59	0.58		
Par Total	29	6.67	2.88		0.373	**no**
Gang	9	7	3.5	1.17		
Non	20	7.55	3.38	0.76		
Eco Total	29	7.28	3.36		-0.401	**no**
Gang	9	7.44	3.57	1.19		
Non	20	8.25	4.49	1		
Law Total	29	7.85			-0.473	**no**

This is also reflected in no statistically significant difference in the scores for perceptions of law enforcement gang ($M=7.44$, $SD=3.57$) and non gang ($M=8.25$, $SD=4.49$) samples; $t(27)= -.473$, $p=.025$. Vigil's original work was based on experience and case studies. Esbensen and Freng (2007) applied statistical analysis between these measures and gang membership (current or past) to youth in schools. The results from this study are inconsistent with Esbensen's and Freng's (2007) results. They found statistically significant score differences on the measure of law enforcement perception. One possible reason for the difference in law enforcement perceptions is that this survey was given to men already convicted of a crime. Esbensen and Freng's (2007) sample, some respondents may not have had disciplinary encounters with law enforcement agents; in this study of probationers, all respondents have been arrested and convicted within the criminal justice system. In general, this discrepancy could come from the sample that was surveyed and not from a true lack of significance. Other limitations are discussed in the following section.

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION

Vigil's development of Multiple Marginality Theory was based on ethnographic research focused on youth gang members. Esbensen and Freng (2007) attempted to apply a quantitative measure to the previously qualitative research with juvenile populations. This current study revealed no statistical significance between the marginality measures and the adult gang membership of those surveyed in San Antonio. Though the survey instrument utilized vague statements for which respondents were to agree or disagree, the age of the respondents may have had a significant effect on the results.

Multiple Marginality Theory considers the interactions between social forces and youth in oppressive environments. Though the oppressiveness may occur throughout the life of the individual, the impact of street socialization becomes solidified during the preteen and teen years--developmentally significant times in an individual's life. This study examined the impact of marginality beyond those significant years. The lack of statistically significant results may be related to the developmental maturity of the respondents. Application of Multiple Marginality Theory to San Antonio youth first would allow one to establish geographic-based statistical significance. If the theory predicts and explains gang membership for San Antonio youth, research of adult gang

members would then demonstrate multiple marginality impact on gang membership into adulthood.

When asking individuals to participate in the survey, there is suspected significance when considering those that refused. The only exclusively Spanish speaker refused, as did each of a group of five young men waiting together. Within the group of five, the tattoos that they had in common were tattoos that indicated possible affiliation with a gang. Two respondents asked that the survey be read to them while they completed the Likert Scale, and 17 respondents asked the meaning of the word "diversity" on statement number five.

These requests indicate that some possible respondents may have refused due to a lack of comfort with the administration method. The most marginalized members of society are those that often were unsuccessful in school and perform below average on state standardized testing. An alternative would have been to have a corresponding audio read-along version of the survey available on a tablet or to have oral administration of the survey to a group. Qualitative interview portions could be beneficial when researching the supposed most marginalized populations like gang members.

Linguistically, there can be conflict with the operationalization of the terms "Hispanic" and "gang". Hispanic is a government created race reference that generally includes any individual that does not identify as Black, White, Asian, Pacific Islander or Native American. Because of its government origins and its generalization of nationalities, many "Hispanics" will not identify by that term (Anzaldua, 1987). Additionally, those that have Spanish origins have a reminiscent tendency to feel that identifying as Hispanic dilutes their status and opportunities within the United States

(Hanley & Vigil, 2002; Montejano, 1987). For those individuals, when asked to identify by race, they may choose “White” because of the privileges that accompany that identifier (Anzaldua, 1987). Consistent with this concern, one respondent identified his race as White and his nationality as Mexican. To overcome this limitation, the survey did include race as a demographic identifier, but it also included Hispanic nationalities. An individual could choose to not answer race, but instead (or in addition) answer nationality.

Within this paper, the term Hispanic was only used when citing previous research that did not delineate further. If referencing groups that would be considered Hispanic under the government, they were referred to as Latin@ or Latin. These designations do not place Latinos (males) or Latinas (females) in a favored position. This research only considers the impact of Multiple Marginality Theory on Mexican descent males in San Antonio, so whenever appropriate, the nation of origin was used to describe the individuals.

Additionally, consistent operationalization of the term “gang” is occasionally absent in research. The commonality in definitions of gang includes commission of crime. When gang members are identified as such, individuals are then automatically labeled as delinquent. It is then unfavorable for an individual to self identify as a gang member because it automatically implies involvement in crime (Tapia, 2010).

Proponents of Labeling Theory or its ideas state concerns that including crime in the definition of a gang member may create a “damned if you do, damned if you don’t” situation where an individual commits crimes simply because that is what is expected (Tapia, 2010). Probationers may have “gang association” or “gang actions” listed as a

behavior that constitutes a violation of their probation. To ask probationers to identify as a gang member when that identity includes criminal activity may have been perceived as too risky of a question to answer.

There is a discrepancy between members of the group Orejon (a Tango Blast faction in San Antonio) and law enforcement. According to one Gang Unit probation officer (personal communication, July 2, 2013), San Antonio Orejon members perceive themselves as members of an unstructured group that only protects against Mexican Mafia members and potential violence from them. Law enforcement, however, has identified this group as a gang based on actions, criminal and otherwise. Because the survey did not include a definition of a gang, many active members of the Orejon may have been assigned to the Gang Unit for probation, but do not self identify as a gang member. This would result in a disproportionate number of respondents who are marginalized and rely on a gang like group but are noted as non-gang members. It is worth noting that Tango Blast, with whom Orejon associates, have surpassed the Mexican Mafia as the most dangerous gang in Texas (Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division, 2012).

Limitations

Several limitations are present in this study. Within the survey statements and questions, one limitation was quickly identified. In casual conversation after the administration of the survey, six respondents mentioned that they indicated “no” to current gang membership though they were in a gang in the past. Four respondents answered “no” to current gang membership but did give an age at which they joined a gang. A more inclusive question that may have been a better indicator for this research

would have been: "Have you ever been, or are you now, in a gang?" Modifying the survey to include an interview portion for elaboration or explanation could have allowed this information to be included in the official data.

Multiple Marginality Theory is applied to communities and neighborhoods where marginalization is known to occur—namely regionally and financially marginalized areas. The survey utilized in this research did not disaggregate data based on class differences. Incorporating a component into the survey to establish class and geographic data could alleviate possible spurious variables allowing race and nationality to be directly attributed to marginality measures as the hypothesis suggested. Asking respondents to identify the zip code of their high school would provide another variable by which to compare marginality measures.

A national probability sample was not used so these findings are only applicable to the population that was surveyed. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to Mexican descent gang members on a larger scale. The results are applicable to the small sample of San Antonio adult males on probation during June and July of 2013. Administering the survey during a two week period that included the end of one month and the beginning of another allowed the research to include those probationers who wait or possibly procrastinate meeting with their probation officer until the end of the month (most are required to meet once a month) and those who schedule and attend meetings with their probation officer for the first of the month.

Finally, the data examined from this research can only be described and discussed in terms of relationships, and not causes and effects. Additionally, the relationships are either statistically significant or not. There is not a measurement provided to qualify how

far or how close one relationship is to the point of significance. Despite these limitations, this research coupled with the known history of Mexican descent males in Texas and more specifically, in San Antonio, can be used when evaluating current and proposed policies.

Policy implications

Prevention. San Antonio and Bexar County have implemented gang prevention programs in both the formal and informal sectors of the community. The San Antonio Police Department Youth Crime Division (n.d.) offers parents, teachers, and other adults a handbook that has basic gang information. The handbook is available online and also includes lists of gang suspicious activities in teens and prevention strategies for parents. Though vague, the suggestions offered to adults correspond to an attempt to minimize marginalization in youth. For example, a few noted suggestions are to know your child's friends' real names, spend quality time with your children, put a high value on education, and set a good example.

Home based private prevention strategies may be effective at the individual level. However, integrating community based programs with home prevention strategies may yield more effective results for gang prevention. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) researches and supports gang prevention programs (Institute for Intergovernmental Research, 2013; Sosa, Spergel, & Wa, 2004). Examples of these programs are the Gang Rehabilitation, Assessment, and Service Program (GRAASP) and the Gang Resistance and Education Training (G.R.E.A.T.).

GRAASP was instituted and initiated through federal government requirements and funded through federal government grants. San Antonio was approved for the grant in an attempt to combat increasing gang activity on the South side (Sosa, Spergel, & Wa,

2004). GRAASP facilitated communication between faith based organizations, law enforcement agencies, schools, job training programs, social workers, and youth outreach workers (occasionally former gang members).

Community prevention programs that target youth who are at a higher risk than the general population to join a gang have inherent challenges. A review of the San Antonio GRAASP program highlighted these concerns. When community organizations collaborate in the context of one large organization, it can be difficult to ensure that the results within the agency boundaries generalize to the youths' life outside of the prevention strategy context. The GRAASP program attempted to combat this issue by placing the staff on varied shifts in which to interact with the youth (Sosa, Spergel, & Wa, 2004). Additionally, the youth outreach workers are from the same communities as the targeted youth, enhancing credibility.

The youth targeted for intervention are at a heightened risk of police attention. The GRAASP model attempted to circumvent this risk to the youth by outlining guidelines for the law enforcement personnel to follow. These guidelines caused a conflict for the officers whose duty it was to respond to and prevent crimes. The targeted youth may provide information that in another situation would be used to initiate police intervention; however, within the confines of the program, it may have been a violation of the guidelines to act on the information (Sosa, Spergel, & Wa, 2004). Unfortunately, because of these issues and an inability to compare pre and post intervention targeted variables (operationalization was inconsistent), the GRAASP model did not meet the predicted expectations (Sosa, Spergel, & Wa, 2004).

In 2008, San Antonio hosted the National Training Conference for the G.R.E.A.T. program. In contrast to the GRAASP model, the G.R.E.A.T. model is utilized within the school systems. Recognizing that the school is often the strongest form of informal social control in a marginalized youth's life, the G.R.E.A.T. model used school programs to teach basic coping skills. Goals of the G.R.E.A.T. program included stress management, conflict resolution, gang education, and realistic goal setting (Institute for Intergovernmental Research, 2013).

The G.R.E.A.T. program utilized approved and trained officers to implement the program in the school system. This model helped to neutralize the negative perception held by and the negative encounters experienced by marginalized youth. Officers were able to build positive relationships with students outside of enforcing the law (Institute for Intergovernmental Research, 2013). Successful participation in the program reinforces a positive perception of the school environment. Traditionally, marginalized youth would be grouped together because of poor academic performance or non compliant behavior choices. With school based prevention programs like G.R.E.A.T., marginalized youth are placed into groups with a positive purpose.

Intervention. Despite an active approach to prevention, San Antonio gangs still thrive. Once identified as a gang member and convicted of a crime, Bexar County provides services to assist individuals leaving a gang. Many non-government organizations provide assistance to convicted gang members. Faith based organizations provide clothing, food, and community service opportunities to gang members and other offenders. Substance abuse programs, GED courses, cognitive behavior training, and job training programs are available to offenders who choose to participate. In some cases,

the court may mandate participation in certain programs (Probation officers, personal communication, July1-2, 2013).

Each of these opportunities attempts to overcome deficiencies from a marginalized background. Service programs allow for the offenders to benefit from education, employment options, and cognition modifications. These services also assist in helping the individual provide for their families. If able to participate more actively and appropriately in their child's life, then the children are less likely to suffer the same family marginalization as the offenders.

Beyond individual services that are offered through the criminal justice system, gang members that are convicted of a crime may be managed through Gang Offender Tough Justice Action (GOTJA). In an attempt to decrease and discourage gang crime, San Antonio implemented the GOTJA program to identify and track gang members (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.). An individual's file is tracked to ensure that if convicted, the gang member is punished by applying every possible law violation to the crime. The courts will also attempt to apply an Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity violation if appropriate (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.).

Tracking an individual gang member and actively pursuing rigid sanctions for that individual, will likely lead the individual to feel more marginalized. In San Antonio, if gang members are targeted for increased penalties, the perception of discrimination may increase the marginalization of the offender. Because San Antonio gangs are made up primarily of minority populations, targeting gang members appears as if it is the minorities that are targeted. A decreased trust in law enforcement is an increased marginalization.

Theoretically, an individual that spends more time in the criminal justice system has more opportunity to participate in the services offered. However, if the individual chooses to not participate in marginalization reducing services, he is instead participating in an adult form of street socialization. Within correction facilities, gang members form new associations. A gang member that is not increasing his educational achievement, financial attainment, and his familial bonds, is not likely to decrease his marginalized status. If he continues to socialize with like minded marginalized individuals, then the values that are reinforced will be those that reflect a marginalized mindset.

At the street level, San Antonio utilizes injunctions to minimize gang socialization in public locations (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.). Forbidding gang members to congregate in a specific area will force them to find a new, possibly less visible area to hang out. Preventing congregation in a certain area may disrupt drug sales in that area and may decrease territorial violence (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.). Forcing marginalized individuals to leave an area primarily occupied by a gang may decrease the effects of street socialization on that individual. By mandating the group to change locations, non gang members' access to the gang may be decreased, limiting the likelihood of them joining a gang.

Disruption. Gang behavior is dynamic and alliances are not long term relationships. One strategy the government uses to disrupt gang activity is to align the different agencies and partnerships within the government. Bexar County has assigned a gang liaison to facilitate the partnerships (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.). An ADA acts as a go between for the gang units of various enforcement agencies. The goal is to

enhance communication between the units and to ensure that information is shared across agencies.

These agencies work together to pursue gang affiliated criminal activity. The activity can include a variety of offenses and is not limited to only violent or property crimes. San Antonio gangs have increased their cooperation with known drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) and though these are not long term partnerships, the criminal activity during the alliance is targeted by the conjoined agencies (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.).

One specific method used to disrupt the gang coalitions is law enforcement of financial transactions. Tracing financial transactions can direct law enforcement to the upper-level participants in transnational gang alliances (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.). Upper-level leaders in these alliances keep themselves distanced from the criminal acts committed at their command. If connected to criminal activity, financial or otherwise, the leaders can be convicted of that crime in addition to being held responsible for violating the Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity prohibition (Bexar County Criminal District Attorney, n.d.).

Though not a conclusive list of the programs and policies utilized in San Antonio, these programs are representative of San Antonio's and Bexar County's general method of gang intervention. Many other organizations focus on eliminating gangs by decreasing marginalization as well. These include but are not limited to, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club of America, Gang Alternatives Program (GAP), Gang Prevention in San Antonio, Girl Scouts, Job Corps, Community Oriented Policing Services, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that the sample of San Antonio adult Mexican descent male gang members surveyed are not more marginalized than other individuals. If marginalization is present in childhood, this marginalization may not have a lasting impact on these men and their inclusion in a street gang. Though the survey had many limitations that would be corrected if administered in the future, the underlying notion that all groups of individuals' criminality could be impacted by a specific, ongoing experience should be influential in our research to enhance gang prevention programs.

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APPENDIX A

Multiple Marginality Measures

Age:_______ Sex: Male / Female

Race: White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian/Indian subcontinent,

Pacific Islander, or two or more races

Is your origin (circle **all** that apply please):

Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central American, South American,

other Spanish, or none of these

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Are you a member of a gang? _________ How old were you when you joined the gang?________

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements (circle the appropriate number).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/Doesn't Apply	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

1. I feel like I belong to my ethnic group/nationality.	1	2	3	4	5
2. If I were to be born all over again, I would want to be born a different ethnic group/nationality.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I often feel that I don't belong with any ethnic group/nationality.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I prefer my friends to be of the same ethnic group/nationality as me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Diversity was valued at my last school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I'll never be able to afford to go to college.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I don't do the kind of work that I want to do because I don't have enough education.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I liked school.	1	2	3	4	5
9. It is important for parents to know the friends of their children.	1	2	3	4	5
10. As a teen, when I would go somewhere, I left a note for my parents or called them to tell them where I was.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I have frequent contact with both of my parents.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Growing up, I was often unsupervised.	1	2	3	4	5
13. It's easy to get a good job in my neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Life is easier for people who have more money.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I can provide for my family with my current job.	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5
16. At my job, it helps to speak more than one language.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Police officers are honest.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Police officers are hardworking.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Police officers are respectful toward people like me.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Police officers act unfairly against minorities.	1	2	3	4	5

This survey is adapted from Esbensen & Freng's Multiple Marginality survey (2007)

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VITA

Tiffany Gentry Rogers was born in Southwest Kansas, the daughter of Ted and Suzan Gentry. After completing her undergraduate work at Washburn University, she spent ten years fulfilling her lifelong dream of working as a whale and dolphin trainer for SeaWorld. In August 2011, she entered the Criminal Justice graduate program at Texas State University-San Marcos. She anticipates applying for the Texas State Ph.D. program to be completed while she continues her work with at risk youth as a school teacher.

Tiff_gentry@yahoo.com

This thesis was typed by Tiffany Gentry Rogers.