GANG ACTIVITY: A DEEPER ANALYSIS INTO THE TYPES OF CRIME COMMITTED BY

GANG MEMBERS

by

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Abstract

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The aim of this study is to get a better understanding of the different types of gang-related crime. The arrests of 410 gang members in Arlington, Texas from 2010-2014 are the subjects of analysis. These records display the date of arrest, age, committed offense, and gang affiliation of each gang member arrested by the Arlington Police Department's gang unit during this time span. Characteristics of gang members, such as age and gang type, were compared to attributes of gang-related offenses. Gang members were broken down into different age groups and gang classifications, while criminal offenses were categorized as being violent, drug-related, or miscellaneous, based on their traits. Descriptive, univariate statistics are utilized to show the basic demographics of gangs and gang crime in Arlington. A bivariate analysis consisting of a chi-square and ANOVA was utilized to calculate the findings. Only one of the gang categories was found to have a connection to drug-affiliated crime. Similarly, age played a significant role in nearly all types of gang-related crime. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Arlington gangs are more likely to engage in miscellaneous and drug-related offenses than violent crime.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction to Gang Activity

Gang activity has been and continues to be a serious issue in the United States. The issue goes back to the early 1800's, during which European immigrants formed "gangs" and "banded together…to form close alliances to each other" (Leet, Rush, & Smith, 2000, p. 1). After World War II, gangs started to develop into what they are today. They became "younger," "more non-white," and became involved "in drugs and violence within a highly-structured organizational setting" (Leet et al., 2000, p. 2). This concept of placing a gang label on a select group goes back throughout history. Society often has applied the label on social groups "considered to be major problems of the time" (Jankowski, 1991, p. 1), who are characterized by "defiant individualistic character" (Jankowski, 1991, p. 23). Historically speaking, this label has shifted from Western frontier outlaws and immigrant-based organized crime groups of the past, to today's delinquent youths from lower class neighborhoods (Jankowski, 1991).

However, what has remained constant through historical context is the intimidating connotation the term "gang" has grown to possess. It still implies the existence of dangerous individuals united under "criminal conspiracies" (Sheldon, Tracy, Brown, 2001, p. 4). People are not just merely terrified of gangs committing crime. There appears to be indifference in the ways gang members carry out illegal offenses, including the violent ones. Examples of this sort of apathy are seen in common, "nonchalant" incidents of young men "shooting and being shot in public places during daylight hours" (Beare & Hogg, 2013, p. 422). Similarly, "the involvement of gangs in the drug trade for many in the general public would appear to be a given" (Kontos & Brotherton, 2008, p. xvi). Despite all this, gangs are able to justify this type of illegal behavior. While financial gain may be present with some crimes, "it's all about survival now" (Hagedorn & Macon, 1988, p. 103). For gangs, crime is more than just an activity necessary for passing the time or making money. While these can act as incentives, crime is one method utilized by gang

members to deal with society. This study will discuss gang activity in greater detail and investigate the many different crimes gangs engage in on a regular basis.

Besides the level of danger they pose to society, a critical reason as to why gangs are so embedded in the criminal justice system is the vast and varying types of crime they commit. Thrasher (1927) explains this complexity, as gang crimes can include "truancy to serious crimes, disturbances of the peace from street brawls to race riots" (p. 3). In its recent gang threat assessment, the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014) listed crimes relating to drugs, homicide, robbery, sexual assault, assault, terroristic threats, burglary, larceny, stolen vehicle, and property crime as some of the most common offenses (p. 27). Similarly, Delisi, Berg, and Hochsettler (2004) list common gang activities as crimes against a person, like homicide, robbery, assault, drive-by shootings, to other offenses, such as using and selling drugs, gun possession, shoplifting, credit card theft, forgery, buying and selling stolen property, and property crimes. By observing these listed offenses, it is evident some are basic, petty crimes, while others are much more serious, organized, and even life threatening. The degree to which gangs commit these crimes is also alarming. The National Gang Intelligence Center (2009), which gathers data from various law enforcement agencies from across the United States, goes as far as to state that gangs are "responsible for an as much as 80 percent of the crime in some locations" (p. 8). Later findings report gangs are "responsible for at least 90 percent of crime" in locations in Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, and Texas (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011, p. 15).

Part of the reason why some of these offenses differ so greatly is because the characteristics of the gang influence the types of crime they will likely to commit. Densley (2012) states a gang's activities change as the gang evolves. According to Densley (2012), a gang begins in a recreational stage and progresses through a criminal stage, enterprise stage, and may even reach a governance stage. Each of these stages have different goals in mind, therefore, the crimes used to reach these goals can vary. As a gang progresses into each of

these stages, the general goals become more organized and power-oriented, which means the measures used in order to achieve them often result in violence and even death for the opposition. Thrasher (1927) adds to this by explaining a gang starts off like a playgroup amongst poor youths that participate in mischief and delinquency simply due to sheer boredom. The goal at this stage is to satisfy a craving for excitement and thrills. Over time, gang members eventually get tired of the same activities, and these acts become more and more delinquent to fulfill "the quest for new experience" (Thrasher, 1927, p. 85). Thrasher (1927) lists acts such as "rough housing" (p. 84), games and gambling, stealing, burglary, vandalism, and the use of stimulants as means to this so-called quest. Over time, as the gang becomes a more secretive society, it becomes more involved in criminal activities (Thrasher, 1927). Gang warfare, which is a part of these criminal activities, can be both brutal and fatal, especially regarding interests such as territory and economic means (Thrasher, 1927). Jankowski (1991) describes this entire concept an "organizational phenomenon" in which gangs are the "socialization agents for the graduation of young delinquents to organized crime" (p. 3).

The primary objective of this essay is to investigate the types of crimes committed by gangs. This is done through an exploratory oriented approach, which is a broad method that involves making discoveries through inductive reasoning (Trochim, 2006). Essentially, this exploratory methodology forgoes the generic approach of testing a particular hypothesis and focuses on formulating its own theories based on observations of patterns in the data analysis. These findings are compared to those of past research in order to confirm or refute popular gang ideologies. Pre-existing data from an outside source is the focus of this essay. This data shows gang members, their ages, their gang affiliations, and the crimes they have been arrested for. These crimes are divided into three general categories, pertaining to miscellaneous crimes, drug-related offenses, and violent crimes. More specifically, a violent crime is a form of assault or homicide, a drug related offense can be either selling or using, and miscellaneous crimes involve crimes not fitting within these other categories. These different categories allow for basic

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organization and contain the types of crime gangs are typically involved in, according to the data and literary references.

Research Questions

A series of research questions will be used in order to make basic deductions regarding gangs and their connections to violent, drug-related, and miscellaneous offenses. The first question simply asks what the most and least commonly types of gang-involved crime are, in order to establish the basic characteristics of gang-related crime. The second question deals with the violent reputation often placed upon gang members, as policy makers and regular citizens often label gangs as dangerous plagues to society without truly understanding them (Jankowski, 1991, p. 311). So, are gangs highly involved in violent crime or do they mainly partake in nonviolent offenses? Next, can any motives be established based on the type of gang-related crime? For example, while the occurrence of drug sales would indicate fiscal goals, miscellaneous offenses could imply the fulfillment of recreational achievement. Lastly, does any sort of relationship exist between particular types of crimes? For instance, drugs and violence are often cited as two aspects of gang activity that coincide (Valdez, Kaplan, & Cepeda, 2006). Based on these findings, it will be possible to see what exactly the term "gang activity" entails and a more complete picture can be drawn of what gang members actually do. By the end of this study, a better understanding of the gang phenomenon will be achieved and theories about how to deal with gangs will be formulated.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Gang Research

Research regarding the activities of gangs primarily goes back to the work of Thrasher (1927). Thrasher (1927) observed over 1300 gangs in Chicago and analyzed their daily routines. Although the gang members analyzed by Thrasher (1927) differ greatly than gang members today, their general activities and driving factors behind their memberships remain the same. For example, it was Thrasher (1927) who discovered people who join gangs specifically lack crucial characteristics involving opportunity to pursue other things and the lack of skills and drive to compete for socially acceptable occupations (Jankowski, 1991, p. 3). Thrasher (1927) also added gangs "undergo a natural evolution from a loosely organized group into a mature form" (Weisel, 2002). Densley (2012) proposed a similar theory, in which gangs start off as "adolescent peer groups" and evolve into an organization focused on criminal enterprise (p. 517). Essentially, a gang member's criminal actions are based on the gang's goals. These goals, which can be financial or social, are dictated by a gang's evolutional phase.

Many factors surround the gang problem, complicating it into a multifaceted issue. For example, gangs are often seen as just a norm in poor communities. Jankowski (1991) found in 84 percent of his cases, the gang and the community had some sort of working relationship (p. 179). This is especially true for the areas where members originate from; where membership in a gang is widespread. It is not uncommon for parents, who may be members themselves, to encourage their kids to become involved with gangs (Jankowski, 1991, p. 180). Community members may also praise the gang for its "resistance component" (Jankowski, 1991, p. 181), as they are experiencing the same social issues as the gang members. Furthermore, gangs provide certain services in a community, such as protection or immediate action (Jankowski, 1991). On the other hand, the community provides a location for the gang to operate, recruitment opportunities, gathering of information, and a psychological sense of belonging (Jankowski, 1991). Outsiders

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who do not associate with the gang or are not from the area in which the gang operates only view them as dangerous. For example, in 2011, the National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC) labeled 45.3 percent of neighborhood-based gangs and 22.9 percent of street gangs as "significant threats" (Texas Department of Safety, 2014, p. 14). From citizens' perspectives, people who reside in gang-free areas are usually surprised by local residents' lack of response to gangs. However, they are also quick to sympathize with residents who combat against gangs and seek police help against gang activity (Jankowski, 1991, p. 317). When police are involved, it can be difficult for any real progress to be achieved. Police depend on the community in order to apprehend gang-based offenders. When the community wants something done against the gang, officers become aggressive and jump at the opportunity (Jankowski, 1991); however, without the community's support, officers feel frustrated and will "let the community live with them" (Jankowski, 1991, p. 256). All these implications regarding the levels of danger of a gang and the relationships it has with others only further complicate gang research.

The following literature will discuss the types of crimes gangs commit. The three major categories this research focuses on are miscellaneous crimes, drug related crimes, and violent crimes. Miscellaneous crimes include offenses that do no fall into the other categories. Basically, they do not involve the purchase or selling of drugs or bringing physical harm or death to a person. The crimes in this group are much more general than the other two types. A drug related crime involves a gang member either selling drugs or purchasing and using drugs. A violent crime indicates a gang member physically hurt the victim, which may or may not have resulted in the victim's death. Physical threats of violence were also included in this category. Works by other researchers regarding these types of crimes and gangs play a heavy role in interpreting the results. Besides the relationship between the gang members and crimes they committed, the specifics of what factors possibly motivated these crimes will be demonstrated.

Miscellaneous Crime

Gangs are often associated with violent crimes and drug related offenses. However, these are not the only types of crimes gang members commit. According to Weisel (2002), while gangs engage in serious criminal activity such as violent offenses and drug dealing, other problems also include vandalism, property crime, and graffiti. The general reasons behind why gang members commit these crimes can vary. Thrasher (1927) explains, gangs in the earliest stages may turn to these more general types of crimes as ways to "break the humdrum of routine existence" (p. 82). These crimes, which are smaller and less severe in comparison to the other types, provide excitement for "young-adult gangs and even of the hardened gangster" (Thrasher, 1927, p. 83).

A study conducted by Weisel (2002) observed the criminal activity of gangs, which included violent crimes, drug crimes, as well other types offenses. Weisel (2002) used two types of approaches to measure gang criminal activity. Nationwide mail surveys, which were sent to police agencies in 1995, provided quantitative statistics, while interviews conducted with gangs in four gangs in Chicago and San Diego in 1996 and 1997 offered both quantitative and qualitative results. The police interviews questioned police departments about the frequency of crimes committed by three categories of gangs: violent gangs, drug-dealing gangs, and entrepreneurial gangs. The results were then filtered in order to focus on the instances in which the department reported the gang had committed an offense "very often or often" (Weisel, 2002, p. 36). The quantitative data offered mixed results in regards to the relationship between gang type and crime. Besides drug-dealing gangs obviously committing more drug sales than the other two, the other crimes varied. 44 percent of police reported entrepreneurial gangs commit motor vehicle theft very often or often, compared to 25 percent for both violent gangs and drug-dealing gangs. Robbery was much more even among the three types of gangs; departments reported 33 percent of violent gangs, 30 percent of drug-dealing gangs, and 36 percent of entrepreneurial gangs committed robbery very often or often (Weisel, 2002, p. 36). Burglary was also relatively equal,

with 36 percent reporting violent gangs, 25 percent reporting drug-dealing gangs, and 37 percent reporting entrepreneurial gangs. Vandalism (57 percent) and graffiti (67 percent) were more common in violent gangs than drug-dealing gangs and entrepreneurial gangs, which were not reported by more than 50 percent of departments. Regarding theft, entrepreneurial gangs registered a higher percentage (52 percent) of departments than violent gangs (49 percent) and drug-dealing gangs (37 percent). Home invasion registered relatively small results, with 27 percent of departments reporting entrepreneurial gangs, 11 percent reporting drug-dealing gangs, and 10 percent reporting violent gangs.

The other portion of the study focused on the perspective of gang members. 85 gang members from two gangs in Chicago and San Diego were the subjects of analysis. 26 Black Gangster Disciples (BGD) and 18 Latin Kings represented Chicago, while 20 Syndo Mob/Lincoln Park Piru members and 21 Calle Treinta/Red Steps came from San Diego. These members were asked about the same types of crimes in the police surveys. According to the gang members, Lincoln Park/Syndo Mob admitted to the most crimes involving the taking of somebody else's property, in comparison to the other three gangs. 48, 62, 67, and 86 percent of Lincoln Park/Syndo Mob members respectively participated in motor vehicle theft, burglary, robbery, and theft. 65 percent of Calle Treinta/Red Steps committed acts of vandalism, which was the highest compared to the BGD's (31 percent), Latin Kings (53 percent), and Lincoln Park/Syndo Mob (52 percent). Finally, graffiti was most common with Calle Treinta/Red Steps, with 60 percent, although the Latin Kings (59 percent) and Lincoln Park/Syndo Mob (52 percent) were not far behind them. Interestingly, higher percentages of the San Diego gang members recalled participating in crimes than Chicago-based members. The BGD's had the lowest participation percentages in all crimes that were not violent or drug related.

A study similar to Weisel (2002) was conducted by Webb, Ren, Zhao, He, and Marshall (2011), in which youth gangs in China were compared to gangs in the United States. Web et al. (2011) conducted surveys in schools in Hangzhou, China and five cities in the United States. The

Chinese schools had a 94% response rate resulting in 1,043 surveys, while 64% of the American schools returned 2,401 total surveys. The students were asked three questions about their group in order to determine if their group was a gang. Specifically, do they have a group of friends they spend time and hang out with? Does the group do illegal things together? Does the student consider their group a gang? The students were also asked binary yes-no questions regarding about what types of illegal activities does their gang or group partake in. of the 2,401 student sample size, 87.8 percent of U.S. students admitted to having a group they regularly spend time around. However, only 26.9 percent admitted to doing illegal things and an even smaller percentage of 6.2 considered their group to be a gang. If students answered yes to all three of these questions, they were classified as a gang member. For each county, surveys were divided up into individuals belonging to a gang and students not associated with a gang. 2,041 adequately answered the survey in the United States; out of these, 83 students were a part of a group possessing gang characteristics. The crimes these students were primarily of the nonviolent, nondrug-related type. 54 percent carried a weapon, 14 percent engaged in pickpocketing/snatching, 14 percent committed robbery/extortion, 51 percent committed vandalism, 54 percent shoplifted, 30 percent stole a bicycle or motorbike, 30 percent broke into cars, 18 percent stole a car, and 16 percent admitted to burglary. Compare this to the other three groups in which none even came close to half as high as the United States gang members. While 51 percent of gang members in the U.S. admitted to this offense, only 23.53 percent of Chinese members committed this crime. The amount of non-gang members who committed vandalism was even smaller with 3.86 percent in China and 15 percent in the U.S.

The last pieces of research were conducted by Alleyne and Wood (2010) and Bennett and Holloway (2004). Although these studies were took place in the United Kingdom, they still provide relevant data concerning crimes committed by gangs. Bennett and Holloway (2004) even argue, "in some respects, the reports of gangs in the United Kingdom sound similar to reports of gangs in the United States" (p. 305). The focus of Alleyne and Wood's (2010) research was to

explore the delinquency of non-gang youth, or youth that were not technically in the gang but still "exist along the gang's periphery" (p. 426), and gang members. The units of analysis were 798 youths from five schools in London. The sample consisted of 566 boys and 231 girls with 14.3 years as the average age. The youths were asked to complete surveys about their demographic information, delinquency, gang membership, social status, perception of threat from other groups, moral disengagement, and attitude toward authority. Of the participants, 59 were labeled by Alleyne and Wood (2010) as gang members, 75 were peripheral youth, and 664 were not in a gang. Unsurprisingly, gang members generally committed the highest amount of crimes. 59 percent had avoided paying for merchandise, 41 percent admitted to property offending, 37 percent had stolen items worth less than the equivalent of $80, 7 percent stole items worth more than the equivalent of $80, 7 percent confessed to breaking and entering in order to steal something, 2 percent stole a motor vehicle, and 12 percent had engaged in graffiti. While some of these amounts are small, gang members were consistently the most delinquent. Peripheral youths were the only other group who came close to the crime rate of gang members. This group matched gang members in regards to breaking and entering with the intent to steal (7 percent) and was not far behind in respect to the other crimes. The non-gang youth were last in all of the major crimes listed but did have the highest percentage of drug dealers.

Bennett and Holloway (2004) are similar to Alleyne and Wood (2010) by sharing the same interest in the activities of gangs in comparison to people not in gangs. Bennett and Holloway (2004) retrieved their data through surveys given to arrestees over the course of three years, 1999-2002. These surveys were given to arrestees who were deemed eligible while in 16 custody suites in England and Wales. The offenders were asked general demographic information, whether or not they were in a gang, if they had been in a gang in the past, the types of crimes they had committed over the last year, and their drug use. The types of crime they committed were separated into three types: property crime, violent crime, and drug-related crime. The property offenses and violent crimes, which are both considered miscellaneous crimes for

the purpose of this research, are theft of a motor vehicle, theft from a motor vehicle, shoplifting, burglary dwelling, burglary non-dwelling, fraud, handling of stolen goods, robbery, and theft. Of the current gang members, 21 committed theft of a motor vehicle, 12 committed theft from a motor vehicle, 24 shoplifted, 1 burglarized a dwelling, 5 burglarized a non-dwelling, 15 committed fraud, 45 handled stolen goods, 7 robbed someone, and 1 committed theft. Those who considered themselves past gang members committed more crimes than those who have not been involved with a gang. 14 committed theft of a motor vehicle, 16 stole from a motor vehicle, 35 shoplifted, 8 burglarized a dwelling, 10 burglarized a non-dwelling, 15 committed fraud, 38 handled stolen goods, 5 robbed individuals, and 4 committed theft.

These studies were not without their limitations. For example, Webb et al. (2011), Alleyne and Wood (2010), and Bennett and Holloway (2004) did not primarily focus on gangs in the United States. If similar studies were conducted in the United States, the results could have varied due to different social and demographic factors. For example, as Bennett and Holloway (2004) points out, the ethnic background of gangs in the United States is much different than the gangs in the United Kingdom, with more minorities existing in the U.S. Furthermore, the participants in all of the studies could have been dishonest about their answers and the police surveys could have been untruthful in order for it to appear that departments were cracking down on gang activity. Gang members may have also been dishonest about their answers out of fear they could face incriminating consequences. Last, the amount of gang members in each of the samples was fairly small, especially in the last two. If the sample sizes had increased, the results could have varied. From all of the studies, there was no evident trend in the crimes committed and the amount of offenses carried out by gang members varied. Based on these crimes, an argument can be made that most of the gangs represented in the sample are not organized and are carrying out these crimes with the hopes of extinguishing their boredom and seeking pleasure, as described by Thrasher (1927). Very few committed crimes appeared to be backed by financial goals, except for those involving robbery or burglary.

Drug Crime

The next type of crime is one that often comes to mind when general gang activity is discussed. Fagan (1990) states "drug use and drug dealing have been added to the stereotype of urban youth gang activities." Additionally, "drug use, drug sales, and violent offending are often considered the domain of gangs and their members, p. 100). In other words, the use and selling of drugs have become commonly associated with gangs and are even cited as contributing factors leading to gang violence. The reasons for these activities can vary according to the goals in mind. Similar to other drug users, gang members may use a drug simply for recreational purposes. This does not automatically indicate disorganization within a gang; drug usage by gangs is widespread in both advanced, organized groups as well as young, freshly establish gangs. According to Katz, Webb, and Decker (2005) studies have "consistently found that gang membership is related to increased drug use" (p. 59). On the other hand, drug sales is obviously much more associated with financial gains, as Moore and Hagedorn (2004) call drug dealing "the most important illicit income-generating activity of male gang members (p. 213). According to Fagan (1990), the crack cocaine epidemic in the 1980's as a major driving factor behind gang involvement and drug sales because it "created opportunities for gang and nongang youth alike to participate in drug selling and increase their incomes" (p. 49). Selling drugs as a means for financial gain is "particularly easy" for gang members because the gang "already provides established networks with proven mutual loyalty, willingness to use violence, and a degree of secrecy" (Moore & Hagedorn, 2004, p. 43). Gangs' roles in the national drug trade has been so greatly emphasized by both the media and law enforcement, gangs and drug sales have become "synonymous" (Kontos & Brotherton, 2008) and "are almost the same problem" (Klein, 1995, p. 40).

The first article concerned with gangs and their involvement with drugs is by Mackenzie et al. (2005). Unlike may other gang researchers who focus on gangs and drug sales, Mackenzie et al. (2005) concentrated on gangs and their drug use. Gangs, and the sales of drugs, are more

commonly associated with each other due to the resulting violence. In fact, "the preoccupation with gangs and drug-related violence has tended to overshadow the importance of drug use itself within gangs" (MacKenzie et al., 2005, p. 100). The drug Mackenzie et al. (2005) is primarily concerned with is marijuana, due to the fact it is "the most widely used substance in gang life" and "the most widely used illicit drug in United States" (p. 100). Marijuana use by gangs is especially popular due to the vast amount of time members spend "hanging out," which often involves the partaking of marijuana and/or alcohol (MacKenzie et al., 2005, p. 110). Members often use marijuana when they are relieving stress and partying (MacKenzie, 2005, p. 110); thus, some adults consider marijuana use a "waste of time" (Mackenzie, 2005, p. 110). However, to gang members it is essential to discussing group activities and business (MacKenzie, 2005, p. 110). The sample for MacKenzie et al.'s (2005) study is youth gang members in San Francisco between 1997 and 1999. Interviews were conducted with 383 male gang members from 92 different gangs. Ethnicity of the members was considered an important factor, as the gangs in San Francisco "are all primarily organized around common ethnic factors" (MacKenzie et al., 2005, p. 105). The gang members for the project were found through the use of a snowball method, in which members referred others who fit the standards to be interviewed. The interviews consisted of two stages: the first part consisted of quantitative questions, while the second was more in-depth. The questions asked revolved around the members' basic demographic data, background and early life, family history, gang history, work and criminal histories, alcohol and drug use, drug sales, gang activities, and violence. Of the interviewed applicants, 96 percent admitted to having tried marijuana at some point in their lives. Furthermore, 76.8 percent answered they still currently use it. In fact, 93.8 percent of Blacks, 65.8 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 59.2 percent of Latinos stated they still actively use marijuana.

The next highest used drugs were crack cocaine and powder cocaine, both of which were presently used by 3.4 percent of the applicants. Latinos registered the highest percentage of active powder cocaine use with 6.8 percent, while Asian/Pacific Islander gang members had the

highest percentage of crack cocaine users with 6.3 percent. The majority of members stated they had first smoked marijuana as a social activity with other members; only a small minority initially smoked it by themselves. What could be labeled as a shock is over one-third of the respondents first encountered drugs through their family members. This was especially true with African Americans, "with more than 45 percent citing family members who used drugs" (MacKenzie, 2005, p. 112). While this does not imply family members made them do it, just the existence of marijuana use led to members becoming "curious of what weed would do to you" (MacKenzie, 2005, p. 113). A few other gang members even admitted to using marijuana directly with family members. However, the more common route towards marijuana was through friends that may or may not have been gang members themselves. In fact, marijuana can even help members make friends within a gang by acting as a "social lubricant" (MacKenzie, 2005, p. 125). Through this bonding, gang members learn the details about the gang lifestyle and life on the street. Interestingly, one major reason marijuana use was so high was due to the existing taboo with other hard drugs. From a logical perspective, African American gang members were the least likely to use any other drug besides marijuana because they believed "the use of hard drugs could interfere with one's ability to make money" (Mackenzie, 2005, p. 121). African Americans were also less likely to use hard drugs because they witnessed the effects they had on their family. One interviewee went so far as to say, "every fiend got a family, every family got a fiend" (MacKenzie, 2005, p. 121).

The relationship between gangs and drugs goes deeper than either selling or using. In fact it is not uncommon for gangs to be involved with both types activities. A study conducted by Bjerregaard (2010) observed the causal relationships between violence and drug involvement between non-gang and gang members. Concerning drugs, Bjerregaard (2010) states some aspects are more perceivable than others. For starters, "gang members are more likely than non-gang members to use drugs" (p. 4). Also, " the consumption of alcohol is a frequent activity in the gang setting" (p. 3). However, the usage of illegal drugs is hazier because the relationship

between gang membership and alcohol "appears to vary by the type of drug" (p. 4). It is also unclear whether or not gang members are more likely to sell drugs than non-gang members (Bjerregaard, 2010). Bjerregaard (2010) was curious about these interweaving relationships between gang membership, drug use, drug sales, and violence. The three central questions to Bjerregaard's (2010) experiment were: 1. Are gang members more likely than non-gang members to be involved in using and/or selling drug? If yes, what is the temporal ordering of these relationships? 2. Does involvement in using and/or selling drugs increase one's level of violence? If yes, is the nature of and relationship between drug involvement and/or violent behaviors different for gang-involved versus non-gang-involved youth? 3. Do the relationships observed above hold when controlling for factors commonly associated with gang membership? Bjerregaard's (2010) data comes from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97), which questioned people born between the years of 1980 and 1984. The average ages of the respondents were 14, 15, and 16 years. The survey continued to question the applicants annually for the following two years. "A total of 8,984 respondents were surveyed at Time 1, 8,386 at Time 2, and 8,209 at Time 3" (Bjerregaard, 2010, p. 13). While the primary objective of the survey was to focus on longitudinal data related to the labor market, other questions were asked about the applicants' gang membership, drug use, drug sales, and delinquent activities.

Specifically, during each time they were given the survey, respondents were asked if they were currently in a gang; the number of times in the past year that they had done drugs not prescribed by a doctor to get high; the number of times they had sold illicit drugs; and, the amount of times in the past year they had assaulted someone. During the first time of questioning, only about 2.5 percent of applicants answered they were part of a gang. 5 percent stated they had sold drugs in the past year and 9 percent had used marijuana. Moving forward to time 2 and 3, Bjerragaard (2010) observed if any bivariate relationships between the variables, gang membership was weakly associated with drug use, drug sales, assaults, and gun carrying (p. 18).

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Marijuana use was linked to all of the other examined behaviors, but hard drug use was only significantly correlated with gang membership and the use and selling of drugs.

In regard to the temporal order of the behaviors, gang membership was "found to be associated with drug use at subsequent time periods" but drug use "was not related to future gang membership" (Bjerregaard, 2010, p. 20, 21). In other words, while it was indicated that gang membership caused drug use at different times, drug use did not instigate members into joining a gang. Drug sales was more complex, as gang membership at Time 1 had not have any relation to selling drugs during Time 2, but gang membership at Time 2 was found to predict future drug sales (Bjerregaard, 2010, p. 23). Conclusively, Bjerregaard (2010) found "gang sales were not associated with future gang membership at all time periods (p. 22). When Bjerregaard compared violence and drugs, involvement and violent crime showed inconsistent results, since the connections were weak at all survey times. Neither drug sales or drug usage was related to assaults at any time during the study, while carrying a weapon showed weak, inconsistent connections to drug sales and drug use (Bjerragaard, 2010, p. 23). Bjerragaard (2010) concluded "gang membership, even at the bivariate level, to be only weakly associated with drug use, drug sales, and violent behaviors" (p. 25). Despite the popular belief that gangs and drugs go hand-in-hand, Bjerragaard (2010) found gangs "are not heavily involved in promoting either drug use or drug sales" and their involvement with drug sales "does not produce high levels of violent behavior" (p. 26). The only major conclusions made by Bjerragaard (2010) that link gangs and drugs together are "gang membership facilitates drug use" and "promotes drug sales among the 15-year-olds" (Bjerragaard, 2010, p. 25). Overall, when compared to non-gang members, the results proved gang members were more likely to be drug users but not necessarily drug dealers. The following two research articles, conducted by Bellair and McNulty (2009) and Valdez et al. (2006) focused on similar aspects as Bjerragaard (2010) concerning gangs, drugs, and violence. However, their results were much different Bjerragaard's (2010). Bellair and McNulty (2009) start off by stating the perspective Bjerragaard (2010) concluded with: "gang member involvement in

drug selling does not necessarily increase violent behavior" (p. 644), even going so far as to exclaiming it is has become "conventional wisdom" (p. 645). However, Bellair and McNulty (2009) hypothesize outside factors, like neighborhood disadvantage strengthens the relationship between gang membership and drug sales, as well as their interaction leading to violence. Some research does suggest "the neighborhood context in which gang membership and drug selling take place increases the frequency of violence" (Bellair & McNulty, 2009, p. 647). The sample in Bellair and McNulty's (2009) research comes from the first five waves of the NLSY97, like Bjerragaard (2010). The respondents were initially interviewed in 1997 and were between the ages of 12 and 16. Progressing through five years and five times later, 5,919 respondents completed interviews. Bellair and McNulty (2009) were only concerned with the questions dealing with violence, gang membership, drug selling, poverty, unemployment, and female-headed households, as well as basic demographic information.

With respect to drug sales, 17 percent of the participants sold drugs during at least one of the times they were interviewed; 6 percent even sold drugs during every interview wave. Interestingly, 62 percent of gang members answered they do not sell drugs. This matches the findings of Bjerragaard (2010), who found the majority of gang members do not sell drugs. When gang membership, drug sales, violence, and neighborhood variables were all compared, it was discovered "being a gang member who sells drugs raises the frequency of violent attacks by 2.031 relative to person-years when not in a gang and not selling drugs" (Bellair & McNulty, 2009, p. 660). "Drug-selling gang members are nearly twice as violent as non-selling gang members and non-gang drug sellers" (p. 660). Neighborhood disadvantage only further strengthened the indication that gang members who sell drugs are violent; "the figure clearly implicates the role of gang member participation in drug selling in promoting violent behavior, particularly in the more disadvantaged locales" (Bellair & McNulty, 2009, p. 660). Neighborhood disadvantage had an especially constant impact on both gang membership and drug sales, causing the chances of both to rise when it increased. The best possible explanation for this would be an increased

neighborhood disadvantage is causing youths to band together for social support and sell drugs for whatever financial gains they can achieve. The mutual relationship gangs share with poor areas, as indicated by Jankowski (1991), could also play a major role between gangs and drugs. Bellair and McNulty (2009) concluded drug selling is a major facilitator of violence and "gang members who sell drugs are by far most violent when they reside in highly disadvantaged locales" (p. 661).

Valdez et al. (2006) also examined the correlation between drugs and violence, but only among Mexican-American gang members. Valdez et al. (2006) refers to this connection between drugs and violence as the "drugs-violence nexus," a paradigm that can be applied to communities in general, not just gangs (p. 110). Three types of violence stems from drugs: violence as a result of the effects of the drug upon consumption; violence that comes from an individual using force to obtain money to support his addiction; and, violence that is associated with competition in the illegal drug market. Since gang members use and sell drugs at a higher rate, as found in the prior readings, it is reasonable to assume they are prime models for this type of violence. Mexican-American gang members were chosen as the sample by Valdez et al. (2006) based on evidence that they have "grown over the two decades and have become associated with increased episodic violence such as drive-by shootings and assaults" (p. 110-111). Mexican-American gang members also go through a "street socialization process" that legitimizes violence "as a means of resolving conflicts" (Valdez et al., 2006, p. 1111).

The sample used by Valdez et al. (2006) consisted of 160 Mexican American gang members in San Antonio, Texas. The interviewers sought after the gang members in two areas in the city known for their high levels criminal activity. The objective of the study was to "identify and distinguish the relationship between gang violence and drug use among male gangs" (Valdez et al., 2006, p. 111). After social mapping to determine where the gang members congregated and established a legitimate presence within the communities, field workers were able to interview the gangs. Gang members were asked questions about their family; relations between their

community and social institutions; gang structure; violence; drug use; illegal and violent activities; friendships; experiences with school; and, sexual behavior. In regards to drugs and violence, participants were asked the amount of days out of the last 30 they had used marijuana, cocaine, noninjecting heroin, and heroin. Members had caused an injury in a fight, attacked a family member, used a weapon to hurt someone, felt angry, and kept weapons in their home. Valdez et al. (2006) found high levels of lifetime and current use of illicit drugs by the members. Specifically, "marijuana (lifetime 98%; current 75%), cocaine (lifetime 90%; current 53%), and heroin (lifetime 57%; current 26%), as well as "prescription drugs such as Valium, Xanax, Rohyphnol, etc. (lifetime 75%; current 28%)" (p. 115). Marijuana was consumed the most, with an average of amount of 22 days involving usage out of 30. The average days for heroin and cocaine were 12.19 and 7.62 respectively. 25 percent of the members used heroin through noninjection and 3 percent reported injecting heroin. Other drugs such as amphetamine, inhalants, and crack cocaine were the three fewest drugs that members admitted to using.

Despite the widespread drug use, the hypothesis that violence behavior and the risk of violence are influenced by drug use was only partially supported by the results. Cocaine use was significantly correlated to the number of fights the member had engaged in and the violence risk the member posed to others. Marijuana was significantly related to the number of fights, but it showed no risk of violence. Heroin showed no connection to either violence risk or number of fights, but Valdez et al. (2006) attributes this to the small amount of heroin users in the sample. Based on the findings of Valdez et al. (2006), it can be stated with some confidence that the common belief in a relation surrounding gangs, drugs, and violence does show some merit. Based on the findings from other research, the claim that gangs are heavily involved in using and selling drugs is supported. Only one study, Bjerragaard (2010), found it to be inconclusive that gangs are involved in these drug-associated activities. However, Bjerragaard's (2010) findings are not without questions. For instance, Bjerragaard (2010) and Bellair and McNulty (2009) both pulled their sample from the NLSY97 surveys, but Bellair and McNulty (2009) had different

results. Bellair and McNulty (2009) discovered neighborhood disadvantage reinforces gang members' involvement with drugs by providing "few legitimate economic opportunities" (p. 662). Of course, disparity this could just be a result of Bjerragaard (2010) and Bellair and McNulty (2009) focusing on different aspects. While Bjerragaard (2010) was primarily concerned with gangs, drugs, and violence, Bellair and McNulty (2009) added neighborhood disadvantage as an additional variable. Overall, it is evident gang members are highly involved in the use of drugs, while the sales of drugs varied and was not as conclusive.

Violent Crime

A major reason for the public fear of gangs is the persistent belief that they are extremely violent. Many studies back this claim, suggesting "the level of violence associated with gangs far surpasses normal levels of such behavior" (Melde & Esbensen, 2012). The degree to which gangs are involved in violent crime can best be described as "disproportionate," with youths in gangs responsible for "roughly 70% of all self-reported violent offending in adolescent samples" (Melde & Esbensen, 2012, p. 145). Going back to the theory that gangs evolve, violent crime starts to emerge once a gang moves past its deviant, recreational stage to the criminal stage (Densley, 2012). As a gang enters this stage, they start to become "conflict groups" that require "strife and thrives on warfare" with other gangs in order to develop (Thrasher, 1927, p. 173). Through violence, gang members learn "group identity and practice" (Densley, 2012, p. 526), necessary qualities "for both the formation and continuation of the group" (Melde & Rennison, 2008, p. 235). The brutality of this world is seen in Beare and Hogg (p. 421), as a gang leader exclaims, "You just have to take set and brush those guys. You can't sit on the range and wait for those guys to brush you. You can't do that brethren" (p. 434). The exact reasons for gangs engaging in violent crime can be over a variety of things, such as territory, business endeavors, oppression, or personal conflicts with other gangs (Thrasher, 1927). Vasquez, Lickel, and Hennigan (2010) make a case for "various environmental and socio-psychological factors" (p. 132) putting stress on gangs, resulting in displaced aggression. This displaced aggression

pushes gang members towards a level of aggression. Bellair and McNulty (2009) believed this violent behavior to be a central part of selling drugs and residing in a disadvantaged neighborhood. Violence gives gang members a way to cope with a lack of legitimate financial opportunity and achieve monetary gain. Decker (1996) even argues gang members are innately violent, and "joined the gang expressly for the opportunity to engage in violence" (p. 256-7). The point is, violent crime is firmly embedded in the gang lifestyle because it allows gangs the means to achieve things that are central to their existence.

Before the most serious forms of violent crime are assessed, the belief that gang members truly are more violent than non-gang members will be examined. Melde and Rennison (2008) were interested in this issue, since "studies consistently find gang members are involved in a disproportionately high rate of violence" (p. 234). Melde and Rennison (2008) elaborate, "there is general agreement that gang members account for a disproportionate amount of all crimes, especially those of a violent nature" (p. 234). However, Melde and Rennison (2008) argue these violent crimes are often misrepresented. While violent crimes committed by gangs typically include offenses such as homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault (p. 235), "the majority of violent encounters can best be defined as 'threats' or attempted' acts" (Melde & Rennison, 2008, p. 235). For Melde and Rennison (2008), the primary concern is whether or not physical harm was brought by a gang member. The source for Melde and Rennison's (2008) data is from the 1992-2005 National Crime Victimization Survey, which interviewed people every six months over a three year period. Questions asked about basic demographic information as well as any crimes that may have been committed against the participant. If victimization was reported, further details about the incident are elaborated.

Concerning gangs, participants were asked if they knew whether or not the offender was in a gang. In response to this, victims of violent victimization identified 2,515 gang members and 18,587 non-gang members as violent perpetrators. According to the findings by Melde and Rennison (2008), "12 percent of violent victimizations were committed by a gang member" (p.

242). Weapons did not play a major role in gang committed violence, as "half of all gang violence…is committed without a weapon," compared to 76% percent of non-gang violence. "Gang members brandish a firearm in 17% of their offenses," while non-gang offenders only used a gun five percent of the time (Melde & Rennison, 2008, p. 242). Of the violent crimes committed by gangs, half of them were simple assaults, 33 percent were aggravated assaults, and 15 percent were robberies. All but aggravated assaults were more often to be committed by non-gang offenders. In conclusion, Melde and Rennison (2008) state gang violence is less likely to bring physical injury to a person (p. 245) and membership status also played no role in the seriousness of the sustained injury (p. 245). Interestingly, "gang violence is not more serious than non-gang violence" (Melde & Rennison, 2008, p. 245), in relation to the significance of the resulting injury.

While Melde and Rennison (2008) claims gang violence is not a more pressing issue than regular, non-gang violence, it should not take away from the violent nature possessed by gang members. Melde and Esbensen (2012) argue gang membership amplifies violent crime. By becoming a part of a gang, "youth are also expected to demonstrate their willingness to engage in violent behavior to gain both the requisite respect to be involved with, and as a mechanism to build a valued reputation within, the group" (Melde & Esbensen, 2012, p. 146). For a gang member, "violence is a tool for acquiring, maintaining, and enhancing one's status in the group" (Melde & Esbensen, 2012, p. 146). The preexisting, longitudinal data used by Melde and Esbensen (2012) comes from the second National Evaluation of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program. The units of analysis are 3,700 kids ages nine to 18 from 31 schools who were interviewed 5 different times. The characteristics of the youths were measured and included factors such as membership in a gang and delinquency frequency. Delinquency was calculated by having the youths report the frequency and severity of any offenses they have committed. The violent offenses included assault, assault with a weapon, robbery with a weapon,

and gang fights. These offenses were asked in a more youth-friendly manner and measured collectively, not individually.

Overall, gang members had a higher propensity for offending overall and violent offending (Melde & Esbensen, 2012, p. 159). The active gang members were found to be more violent than non-gang members. Unsurprisingly, engagement in violent crime was highly dependent on active gang membership, "as the likelihood of violence after gang involvement was statistically equal to pre-gang levels" (Melde & Esbensen, 2012, p. 159). The overall results showed gang members engage in violent crime at about the same rate as non-violent crime. Melde and Esbensen (2012) conclude by stating that while gangs are known for their violent behavior, it should not overshadow their partaking in other types of crime.

These sources were not without some evident shortcomings. For instance, while Melde and Rennison (2008) concluded gangs are no more violent than other criminals, its use of victimization surveys for data is questionable. Common problems with these surveys are participants giving misinformation either intentionally or unintentionally. If individuals are not aware that they have been a victim or just simply forgot, the results are altered. Melde and Esbensen (2012) could have improved their study by measuring the crimes individually instead of collectively. This would have allowed for representation of gang members and their links to each form of violent crime. Despite these limitations, it is apparent violent crime can take the form of many offenses. Simple assault, aggravated assault, and robbery were some gang-related violent offenses mentioned by researchers (Melde & Rennison, 2008; Melde & Esbensen, 2012).

The last violent offense that will be discussed is one not mentioned in the previous two. Gang homicide is not an uncommon occurrence, as it has "reached epidemic levels in large cities in the United States" (DeLisi, Spruill, Vaughn, and Trulson (2014). Of course, with the dangerous lifestyle gang members engage in, this should come as no surprise. A gang is constantly at war with rival gangs "to maintain its play privileges, its property rights, and the physical safety of its members," as well as "its status as a gang among gangs" (Thrasher, 1927, p. 174). While this

warfare may just simply imply fighting, it could always escalate to homicide. The last two works elaborate this issue further and discuss if gang-related homicide truly is a serious or just one that is overblown.

DeLisi et al. (2014) tackles the issue of gang homicide by posing the question of whether or not gang members commit "abnormal" forms of homicide, such as "multiple-victim homicide, sexual homicide, and abduction homicide" (p. 125). DeLisi et al. (2014) cites a gang member's "gang involvement" and "immersion in a criminal lifestyle" as key reasons for the high amounts of gang-related homicide offenders and homicide victims. It's easy to think gang homicides occur just because two gangs do not like each other. However, it is much more complex. "Most gang homicides stem from an array of situation, contextual, ecological, and individual risk factors that typify gang members and the social environment in which they live" (DeLisi, 2014, p. 126). Some interesting facts mentioned by DeLisi et al. (2014) are most homicides involve a single victim murdered as a result of a gang feud, intragang skirmish, retaliation, and "other normative forms of criminal offending" (Delisi et al., 2014, p. 126). The study used secondary data from research in 2003 that focused on 654 convicted and incarcerated homicide offenders from eight states. Gang membership was examined for each of these offenders, with only 59 of them labeled as gang members. The homicides for each offender were classified under four different categories: homicide in which there was one victim; homicide involving multiple victims; homicide occurring along with rape; and homicide that was a part of an abduction. The first type of homicide, in which there is a single victim, is classified by DeLisi et al. (2014) as a regular homicide, while the remaining three are "abnormal."

The criminal history and sociodemographics of the offenders were also made variables for the study. The homicide history of the gang offenders and non-gang offenders were compared to see if gang involvement played a role. By comparing the two groups, the results showed gang membership accounted for 10.7 percent of single victim homicides, 3.8 percent of multiple victim homicides, 2.6 percent of sexual homicides, and 3.8 percent of abduction homicides. These

percentages are small when compared to the non-gang group, but the massive size of this group plays a significant influence in these numbers. Based on a multivariate logistic regression model, "gang members were 177% more likely than non-gang members to perpetrate a single-victim murder" but were "64% less likely than non-gang members to perpetrate a multiple victim homicide" (DeLisi et al., 2014, p. 131). Gang members were also 75 percent less likely to do a sexual homicide and 56 percent less likely to engage in an abduction homicide. Gang membership was a strong indicator for normal homicide that consisted of one victim. However, it was negatively linked to the abnormal types of homicide. DeLisi et al. (2014) cites other "constructs" as "more important in explaining more extreme, abnormal homicide" (p. 134). One such example is gang deterrence efforts by communities that "target small numbers of gang members who are disproportionately responsible for gun crimes" (DeLisi et al., 2014, p. 134).

The last gang homicide study by Adams and Pizarro (2014), who assess "whether patterns of offense specialization, escalation, or de-escalation exist" (p. 237). In other words, are gang offenders who commit homicide involved with other types of crime prior to the murder? Other research suggests this is the case. Bellair and McNulty (2009) identified the sale of drugs to be a key indicator for future violence. Drugs are not the only type of offense that could come before a homicide. "Studies have recognized that most homicide offenders have a criminal history, often with prior violent offenses" (Adams and Pizarro, 2014, p. 237). Since other works, Melde and Rennison (2008) and Melde and Esbensen (2012), have already identified gang members as showing a definite capability for violent crime, it stands to reason if they pose as more ideal homicide offenders than non-gang criminals.

Adams and Pizarro's (2014) sample comes from the city of Newark, New Jersey. This city was chosen based on its high population of nonwhite citizens and its reputation as one of the most violent cities in the country. Preexisting data was used from the Greater Newark Safer Cities Initiative (GNSCI), which focused on trying to reduce violent crime in Newark through a partnership with multiple parties, ranging from researchers to law enforcement personnel. Using

this data, 59 gang homicide offenders were compared to 81 non-gang homicide offenders in order to observe the last five arrests preceding the homicide. Based on all of these observed prior offenses, about 32 percent were for a violent offense, 15 percent for a property offense, 44 percent for a drug offense, and 9 percent for a miscellaneous offense (Adams & Pizarro, 2014, p. 245). It should be noted, the majority of prior violent offenses consisted of aggravated assault (36 percent), simple assault (13 percent), and robberies (10 percent). The prior offenses of gang and non-gang members were then compared using a multinomial regression model. Some key characteristics of these offenses were found, such as a high versatility of crimes committed by gang members before a homicide. For both groups, offenses had the highest probability of occurring before a homicide, followed by violent crime, property crime, and miscellaneous crimes. This brings some support to Bjerregaard's (2010) idea that gangs are no more violent than non-gang members. Before the homicide occurred, gang members were more likely to be arrested for drug-related offenses, while non-gang individuals increased in violent offenses over time. Adams and Pizarro (2014) propose an interesting notion as to why gang members did not seem to be as violent as initially thought, stating that gangs are changing and focusing their organizations more toward drug sales. This goes against an idea proposed by Thrasher (1927) that gang members live in constant warfare, engaging in physical combat as a way to enhance their individual and group status. However, it sheds light on another possibility proposed by Thrasher (1927) and Densley (2009), that gangs can ultimately reach a certain level of organization.

Prior research makes clear some aspects of gangs and crime while others still require additional study. It is evident gangs are involved in miscellaneous, drug-related, and violent crime to some degree. However, there is a lack of consensus as to how active gangs are in carrying out these crimes. This is especially evident with violent crime. While Melde and Rennison (2008) contend gang members are not more likely to injure somebody than people not in a gang, Melde and Esbensen (2012) found gang membership plays a significant role in an increased amount of violent and nonviolent crime. In regards to miscellaneous crimes, the research supports the

notion of gangs actively taking part in these types of crimes. Research surrounding miscellaneous crimes was consistent in showing "gang members are typically involved in a wide range of criminal behavior" (Bennett & Holloway, 2004). Because many different types of offenses fall under this category and multiple forms are mentioned in research, there is no apparent trend for each of these; but what is clear is that gangs are very active in this category.

Interestingly, the literature indicates widespread support for the connection between gangs and drug related crimes. Gang members are highly active in the usage and sales of drugs (Bellair & McNulty, 2009); (MacKenzie et al., 2005); (Valdez et al., 2006). Drugs and gang membership were even linked to additional types of crime, such as violent crime (Bellair & McNulty, 2009). In conclusion, the results from these studies varied. However, this should not take away from their findings, but instead offer different perspectives about gangs and the crimes they commit. The findings from these sources will be considered and compared to the current study.

Chapter 3

Methods

The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of crimes committed by gangs. Based on the findings by others, it is evident there is an abundance of different gang-related crimes which include violent offenses, drug infractions, or more general criminal activities. This study focused on crimes similar to the offenses highlighted in the Texas Department of Public Safety's Gang Threat Assessment (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014). The Texas Department of Public Safety (2014) focuses on miscellaneous crimes such as burglary, larceny, stolen vehicle, property crime, weapons offenses, and kidnapping. Violent crime consisted of assault, terroristic threats, robbery, sexual offenses, and homicide. Drug-related offenses involves crimes related to drugs only. Another group, titled "other" was also included by the Texas Department of Public Safety; however, this was considered an unknown since the offenses it entails are not specified. These crimes were organized within these three groups based on the following: drug-related crimes involved the presence of drugs, violent crimes involved violence or the threat of violence towards the victim, and miscellaneous crimes consisted of offenses that do not fit inside the other two groups.

The data for the project was collected from the Arlington Police Department in Arlington, Tx, which keeps data on arrested gang members. Arlington, Texas was chosen as the location for this study for two reasons, both of which revolve around its geographical location. The first is Arlington is the closest site for this research. This obviously allows for convenient access to data. Additionally, the Arlington Police Department (APD) is very proactive in working against gangs by educating the community and labeling gang members to "reduce the incidence of gang criminal activity" (Arlington Police Department, 2013, p. 20).

Finally, Arlington is a centrally located suburb within the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, which, according to the United States Census Bureau, is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the United States. This is important, since "the greatest concentrations of gang activity tend to be

in larger metropolitan areas" (Texas Department of Public safety, 2014, p. 17). According to Egley and Howell (2013), "gang activity is concentrated primarily in urban areas, especially larger cities" (p. 2). Egley and Howell (2013) found "56 percent of gangs and 75 percent of gang members were located in metropolitan areas," based on the 2011 National Youth Gang Survey. Based on 2014 data by the US Census Bureau, which lists the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex as the fourth largest metropolitan area in the United States, Arlington is no exception. In fact, the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014) identified Tarrant County, where Arlington resides, as having a "higher" concentration of gang activity. The same can be said for the counties surrounding Tarrant County. Dallas, Ellis, and Denton all possessed the "higher" levels of gang activity, while Johnson, Parker and Wise showed smaller, but still substantial amounts. Major gangs that exist within this area are Tango Blast, the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, and the Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014).

The Arlington Police Department provided field arrest records for gang members from 2010-2014. Each member's identity remained anonymous, but the individual's age, charged offense(s) and gang affiliation(s) was known. In all, there are 413 records of arrested gang members during this four year period. The firsts variables include the age of the individual at the time of his or her arrest. Based on his or her age, members are then categorized into two different classes: "youth" was given to members who were 17 or younger and "adult" for those who were 18 or older. This is based on Texas law that states 18 is the age of majority, or the age in which a minor is officially considered an adult. This breakdown of age was done in order to see if age plays a role in the type of crime committed, as suggested by Thrasher (1927).

The offenses were organized as violent, drug-related, or miscellaneous. Violent crimes include aggravated assault, robbery, and aggravated robbery. Drug offenses include possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a controlled substance, delivery of a controlled substance, intent to distribute a controlled substance, and possession of marijuana. Miscellaneous offenses include crimes not covered by the other categories; examples include burglary, weapon

possession, failure to ID, evading arrest, and graffiti. Warrants are also included in the group of offenses, labeled as a "misdemeanor" or "felony." Many of the crimes for which the members received these warrants are unknown. However, if the exact offense for the warrant is listed, it is labeled as said offense instead of a generic warrant.

Many identified gang members were arrested for more than one offense. Therefore, crime variables were organized using two different methods. The first method involved observing each member's arrest report and marking each kind of offense. The answers, "yes" or "no", were given for each type of crime if he or she had or had not been arrested for a violent, drug, miscellaneous, or warrant-associated crime. In order to achieve a more organized approach, the second method focuses only on the most severe offense committed by the gang member. The order by which these are ranked are: violent, drug, miscellaneous, and warrant. This arrangement is based on the theory gang members are considered to be heavily involved in violent and drug-related crimes (Bellair & McNulty, 2009) While this does not take away from miscellaneous offenses and warrants, miscellaneous crimes cover a broad range of illegal activity that may or may not be labeled "serious" and warrants do not always pinpoint their origin.

The last variable, gang membership, is broken down into three different subgroups: the type of membership, the threat level tier of the gang, and whether or not the gang is considered a smaller clique under a larger gang network. The first is based on the type of membership the individual possesses with his or her gang. As seen in Appendix D, APD uses a Gang Identification Card to classify an individual as a gang member (S. Martin, personal communication, December 17, 2014). These cards are subjective and completed by members of the gang unit. These cards are completed whenever an individual who is arrested is suspected of belonging to a gang or just through an encounter with a supposed member. The cards contain basic information such as the person's name, the gang with which he is affiliated, demographic information, address, the nature of the contact the person had with an officer, vehicle information, and any details on the individual's clothing or tattoos. The most critical component of the

identification card is the set of items used to designate the suspect as a gang member. Two of

eight of these different descriptive entries must be confirmed in order for a person to be labeled a

gang member. These eight points are: self admission of belonging to street gang, identification as

a gang member "by a reliable informant or other individual," corroborated identification of the

individual as a gang member by an informant or individual of unknown reliability, evidence that

the individual frequents an area of a criminal street gang or associated with known members,

evidence that the person engages in street gang norms (dress, tattoos, hand signals, symbols)

and/or evidence that the individual was arrested or taken into custody with other confirmed

members for an offense consistent with gang activity, evidence that the individual visited another

nonfamily gang member while he was in a penal institution, and evidence that the person

attempted to recruit new members into a gang (S. Martin, personal communication, December

17, 2014). If a person meets at least two of these, he is considered a gang member. However,

not meeting some of the qualifications can still achieve the label of an "associate" within a gang.

Based on these membership requirements, the individuals were labeled as members, associates,

or possessing multiple memberships if they identified themselves with more than one gang.

The threat level of a gang is based on the three tiers mentioned by the Texas Department of

Public Safety (2014) in its 2014 Texas Gang Threat Assessment. These tiers are based on the

threat each gang "poses to the state as a whole" (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014, p. 9).

This overall threat to the state is based on a gang's "relationship with cartels," "transnational

criminal activity," "level of criminal activity," "level of violence," "prevalence throughout Texas,"

"total strength," "statewide organizational effectiveness," "juvenile membership," threat to law

enforcement," and "involvement in human smuggling and trafficking" (Texas Department of Public

Safety, 2014, p. 9-10). As outlined in Appendix C, the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014)

lists Tango Blast and the Texas Syndicate, two gangs in the sample, as "Tier 1" gangs (p. 11).

Therefore, the gang members associated with these two gangs pose the biggest threat to the

state and fall under this category. Tier 2 gangs from the APD data are the Latin Kings, Crips,

Bloods, Sureños (or Sur-13), and Aryan Brotherhood (Aryan). Tier 3 consists of the Aryan Circle, Gangster Disciples and the 18th Street Gang (18th St).

Some subjectivity was used in classifying some of the types gangs. For instance, gangs who used the terms "Blood" or "Crip" in their names were considered to be Blood or Crip gangs; therefore, they were considered Tier 2. The same can be said for gangs labeled as "Aryan" by APD. These gangs were assumed to belong to the Aryan Brotherhood, due to its heavy presence in the Dallas-Fort Worth area (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014, p. 18). The last two groups are made up of gangs not listed under these tiers. This is not to say these gangs do not pose a threat on the community level. The state ranked tiers exclude the threat gangs may impose on individual communities. These gangs could very well be considered local menaces and carry more influence on the local level than the higher ranked groups. The gangs fitting within these groups were given the labels "local" and "national." A local gang is a gang not recognized on the state level, but is still involved in local criminal endeavors in Arlington. Some of the most active local gangs in Arlington are Trill Fam, Mexican Klan Locos, Lynch Mobb, Certified Sliders Bitch, Certified Gorilla Clique, North Side Gangsters, and Untamed Gorillas. A national gang is one that has obtained national notoriety but is not recognized as a threat by the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014). This indicates the gang does not have a major impact in the state of Texas, but is still considered a major gang elsewhere. The only example of this in the sample is the Vice Lords; the Vice Lords are a street gang originating from Chicago that have "grown but also disbanded into different factions" (Kontos & Brotherton, 2008, p. 268).

It is important to mention that these tier rankings change annually; a Tier 1 gang in 2014 may have been a Tier 2 gang in 2013. While this study covers a span of five years, the 2014 threat levels were used because they are the most recent. Lastly, a third classification was made for gangs that belong to a larger, more general unit. Examples of these are Tango Blast, Bloods, Crips, Aryan gangs, and Sureños. These are some of the more popular gangs and many smaller cliques pledge allegiance to them. For example, as stated by Texas Department of Public Safety

(2014), many different cliques belong to Tango Blast, which include Puro Tango Blast and the Vallucos. Sur 13 and Sureños Por Vida belong to the Sureños Gang. The Aryan Brotherhood, Aryan Circle, and Aryan gangs are all Aryan, White Supremacist gangs which share the same beliefs. Two of the more nationally popular gangs, the Bloods and Crips, have branched out to great measures and "are a loose network of small gangs structured as a federation or independent gangs " (Kontos & Brotheron, 2008, p. 13). If a gang fits into one of these popular factions, it is labeled as such. However, although these smaller groups may share similar affiliations, this does not indicate they are allies. For instance, while Blood-affiliated gangs may share the title "Blood" in their title, they can still be enemies or rivals of each other (Kontos & Brotherton, 2008, p. 13).

Arrest records of gang members are the units of analysis for the study; these are considered social artifacts, as they are "the products of social beings and their behavior" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2011, p. 455). These data are preexisting data, meaning they did not come from a previous study, but still hold a purpose for the source where they originate. The data contain two categorical variables, the dependent variables and the independent variable. Gang members were independent variables and the crimes they committed were dependent variables. The data for these variables is primarily quantitative, as it is deals with numerical amounts. Also, the variables were measured on a nominal level, since they contain characteristics exhibiting "exhaustiveness and mutual exclusiveness" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2008, p. 127). For example, the gang affiliation and crimes committed by each offender in the sample are merely labels that identify traits of the offender.

Univariate analyses were conducted, including frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and standard deviation. Frequency distributions offer basic percentages pertaining to a member's gang association and committed offenses. Measures of central tendency shows the average amount of times a certain offense was committed and the most

frequently committed offense. Standard deviation was also used for the crime variable in order to show the variations between the offenses' averages.

A bivariate analysis consisting of both a chi-square and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to compare gang membership and committed crimes. Both of these bivariate measurements were presented using a contingency table, which illustrates the corresponding frequencies between each of the gang and offense variables. The chi-square was necessary in order to test significance of the relationships between each gang member characteristic and gang-related offense. In other words, the chi-square states whether the connection for each of the independent and dependent variables is meaningful or insignificant. The (ANOVA) was implemented to help reinforce the chi-square by testing the differences of means between the gangs and the types of crime. This allowed for a better look into the connections between the individuals' gang affiliations, ages, and committed offense to see if any key factors stand out in terms of differing from other groups.

Chapter 4

Results & Findings

The sample initially consisted of 1,036 cases of arrests conducted by the Arlington Police Department. These arrests occurred over the course of five years, from January 2010 to December 2014. Two types of individuals were in the original dataset: (1) those labeled as gang members by APD using a gang identification card and (2) offenders who did not belong to a gang, but were arrested by the gang unit. Because the scope of this study only focuses on gang-affiliated individuals, regular offenders were filtered out of the sample, leaving a total of 413 gang members included in the study. Out of this smaller sample, cases containing incomplete crime information were eliminated, leaving 410 (N = 410) as the final sample size.

Sample Characteristics

According to the yearly results, there were 92 gang-related arrests in 2010, 100 in 2011, 63 in 2012, 77 in 2013, and 78 in 2014. In terms of age, Table 1.1 illustrates adults dominated the sample every year with 71 arrests in 2010, 81 arrests in 2011, 41 arrests in 2012, 57 arrests in 2013, and 66 arrests in 2014. The lowest recorded average age at the time of arrest was 20.6 in 2010, while the highest average age at the time of arrest was 22.3 in 2011. Although the overall arrest age considered the perpetrators adults, the most recurrent age at the time of arrest fell to adolescent ranks in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The mode of the ages for these years was 17, 15, and 17, respectively. The descriptive data illustrated an age demographic inside the sample consisting of primarily adolescents and young adults. In fact, 77.1 percent of the members were considered adults when they were arrested. The average age was 21.5 years, while the standard deviation was 6.1 years. The most frequent age at the time of arrest was 17, with 13.7 percent of the sample. This age demographic is similar to that found in other studies. National Youth Gang Center (2012) found most gang members were older than the age of 18 and Valdez et al. (2006) discovered an average age of 18.5 years among male, Hispanic gang members. In this study, a large range was seen between the youngest to oldest members; the youngest offender was 14

while the oldest was 65. This range can be attributed to a small number of older outliers existing within the age demographic.

Table 4-1 Arlington Arrests by Age 2010-2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Mean Age	20.6	22.3	21.6	21.2	21.9	21.5
Mode Age	20	17	15	17	20	17
Standard Deviation	4.5	6.6	8.8	4.5	5.8	6.1
Adults	71	81	41	57	66	316
Youths	20	19	21	18	10	88

†Age was not listed in 6 arrests

There were 368 cases in which the offender fit APD's Gang Identification Card criteria to be labeled as members of a single gang, while in 15 instances, the arrestee held memberships with more than one gang. In 27 incidents, offenders did not meet the complete standards of fitting at least two descriptive gang elements on the gang identification card and fit the qualifications of only gang associates. For the purpose of this study, any individual with ties to a gang was treated as a gang member.

A total of 62 different gangs were discovered in this sample (see Appendix A). As previously stated, gangs were sorted according to the Texas Department of Public Safety's (2014) tier classification system, which analyzes the threat level a gang poses to the state. Tier 1 gangs were considered the most serious by the Texas Department of Public Safety. Tier 1 gangs in the sample included Puro Tango Blast, Tango Blast, Texas Syndicate, and the Vallucos. Tier 2 gangs consisted of primarily Blood, Crip, Aryan, and Sureño gangs; more specifically, they included the 5 9 Bloods, 5x2 Hoover Crips, Aryan, Aryan Brotherhood, Bloods, Crips, Eastwood Bloods, Latin Kings, NABA Crips, Neighborhood Crips, Piru Bloods, Rolling 20 Bloods, Rolling 60 Crips, South Side Bloods, South Side Crips, Sur 13, Sureños Por Vida, Trey 57 Crips, Truman St Bloods, and the United Blood Nation. There were only three Tier 3 gangs, but they were arrested frequently; these gangs were 18th St, Aryan Circle, and Gangster Disciples.

The last two categories consisted of local and national gangs, gangs that were not listed by the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014) because they were not considered specific threats to the state of Texas. It should be noted that although these gangs do not fit within the state's parameters, it does not mean they are not dangerous in local Texas communities or even other states. The largest group, local gangs, was comprised of 7-Tre, A Dub G, Agg Town Locos, Brown Pride, Bustin Heads Daily, Certified Gorilla Clique, Certified Sliders Bitch (CSB), Crucial, Dalworth, Down For Whatever, East Side, Fuck Your Clique (FYC), Krazy Latin Boys, Little Young Thugs, Lynch Mobb, Maniac Latin Disciples, MOB, MS-18, NA, North Side Gangsters, Original Boys, Peckerwoods, Puro Little Mafia, South Side Locos, Tew Throwed Gang, Texas Mafia, Trill Fam, TYG, Unk, Untamed Gorillas, Vagos 18, West Side 12, Wolf Pack, and YHG. Only one national gang existed in the sample, the Vice Lords. Some of the most infamous gangs in the arrest records are the 18th Street Gang (18th St) with 39 arrests, the South Side Crips with 38 arrests, CSB with 34 arrests, Trill Fam with 29 arrests, and Sur 13 with 28 arrests. Some yearly trends were seen in the individual gang arrests, as some gangs were initially very active in earlier years but became more dormant over time. Two examples of this were 18th St and Lynch Mobb. Both of these gangs recorded the highest number of arrests in 2010; however, 18th St arrests declined every year after 2010 and Lynch Mobb recorded no arrests past 2011. The opposite also occurred, in which some gangs started off as insignificant groups but eventually grew. This was seen with Trill Fam and Sur 13, whose arrest rates increased almost every year. Overall, the amount of arrests for each gang were typically very sporadic from year to year. The inconsistency in arrests can be attributed to two causes: (1) some gangs were simply arrested more than others and not necessarily more or less involved in criminal activity, and (2) the representation of some gangs decreased or increased as a result of current members leaving or new prospects joining. A more extreme explanation would be that the amount of members in certain gangs were increasing or decreasing as a result of the gangs' constant "struggle for existence" (Thrasher, 1927, p. 174) with other gangs. A gang often has to compete with rival

gangs for "its property rights and the physical safety of its members," as well as "its status as a gang among gangs" (Thrasher, 1927, p. 174). In other words, the gangs' populations are affected by rival gangs attacking and even eliminating their members. A more accurate way to measure this would be to focus on both the victims and perpetrators of gang-related crime to see how individual gangs clash with each other. This type of data is not available in the sample, so intergang conflict theory can only be speculated.

In terms of state-level severity outlined by the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014), Tier 1 Gang membership was present in 4.1 percent of the cases, Tier 2 Gang membership existed in 36.6 percent, and Tier 3 Gang membership was seen in 15.1 percent. Local gangs had the highest involvement in arrests with 185 incidents or 45.3 percent while national gangs held the lowest percentage of arrests with only 2 arrest incidents (0.5%). Longitudinal arrest records for each gang tier are illustrated in Table 1.2.

Table 4-2 Gang Arrests by Tier 2010-2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	Percentage of Sample
Tier 1	4	4	3	4	2	17	4.1
Tier 2	26	41	23	26	34	150	36.6
Tier 3	17	11	10	14	10	62	15.1
Local	47	43	28	34	33	185	45.1
National	0	1	0	1	0	2	0.5

†More than one type of gang membership could be claimed at time of arrest

Lastly, the majority of recorded gangs (254 or 62.0%) did not share affiliations with larger groups or entities, as shown in Table 1.3. In other words, most of the gangs in the sample represented their own individual groups. There were 24 cases in which Aryan gang membership appeared evident, 30 involving Blood gangs, 55 citing ties to Crips, 32 Sureño gang arrests, and 14 arrests involving Tango Blast. In one unique case, an individual claimed membership to both the Crips and Tango Blast. These findings match some of the results of Texas Department of Public Safety (2014), which points to Tango Blast, a Tier 1 gang, and the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, a Tier 2 gang, as two of the most significant gangs in the Dallas-Fort Worth area (p. 18).

While these two groups did have a presence in Arlington, other Tier 2 and Tier 3 gangs, such as the Crips, Bloods, and Sureños, had larger representations in the sample.

Table 4-3 Gang Affiliations 2010-2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	Percentage of Sample
Aryan	1	16	3	0	4	24	5.9
Blood	3	9	3	10	5	30	7.3
Crip	13	11	8	6	17	55	13.4
Crip, Tango Blast*	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.2
Sureño	6	5	6	6	9	32	7.8
Tango Blast	3	3	3	3	2	14	3.4
None	66	56	40	51	41	254	62.0

*Membership was claimed to both gang affiliations

Warrants

The gang members in the sample were arrested for 63 different incidents that varied from a single offense to combinations of two or more crimes. In total, there were 36 different offenses found in the data (see Appendix B). The descriptive data indicates Arlington gangs commit a wide range of different types of crimes similar to the gangs in previous studies (Bennett and Holloway, 2004; Thrasher, 1927; Webb et al., 2011; Weisel, 2002).

Although warrants were not initially considered as an offense type for this study, they were the most represented offense in the sample. A warrant was involved in an arrest 56.3 percent of the time and was the most serious offense in 51.9 percent of arrests. Specifically, a felony warrant was involved in 37.3 percent of arrests, while a felony warrant was present in 19 percent of arrests. As seen in Table 2.1, misdemeanor warrants were more common than felony warrants every year except 2012 in which 17 arrests involved felonies, compared to 15 that involved misdemeanors.

According to the bivariate analysis in Table 2.2, warrant-related arrests indicate a significant relationship to age groups (p value < .05). Table 2.2, which compared the averages of the age groups and warrant arrests, also found significant differences in warrant arrests across the two age groups (sig < .05). Out of the adult cases, 41.5 involved a misdemeanor warrant and

19.6 percent contained a felony warrant. Both of these percentages were higher than the youth arrests containing warrants; felony warrants were possessed by 18.2 percent of the youths and 23.9 percent possessed misdemeanor warrants. In 55.7 percent of adult arrests and 39.8 percent of youth arrests, a warrant was the most serious offense at the time of arrest. Based on these descriptive results, it can be hypothesized that adults commit more serious types of offenses.

As indicated in Table 2.2, no significant relationships or differences in means were found between warrant arrests and gang tiers or larger gang affiliations. Because the exact offenses associated with these warrants are unknown, a connection can only be drawn between the legal severity of an offense for which a warrant was issued and the age of the gang member.

Table 4-4 Warrants 2010-2014

Yearly Frequencies	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	Percentage of Sample
Misdemeanor	39	39	15	31	29	152	37.3
Felony	11	18	17	13	19	78	19.0
Most serious offense at time of arrest	45	49	28	43	47	212	51.7

Table 4-5 Chi-Square & ANOVA: Gang Characteristics & Warrants

		Chi-Square						ANOVA	
		Felony		Misdemeanor		Warrants			
	Group	Frequency		Frequency		Chi-Square Value	p-value	F-value	Significance
		Total (Yes)	% of Group /Gang	Total (Yes)	% of Group /Gang				
Age Groups	Youth	16	18.2	21	23.9	11.524	.003	5.123	.024
	Adult	62	19.6	131	41.5				
Gang Threat Levels	Tier 1	5	29.4	8	47.1	3.103	.212	2.924	.088
	Tier 2	26	17.3	55	36.7	.679	.712	.677	.411
	Tier 3	9	14.5	22	35.5	1.519	.468	1.517	.219
	Local	40	21.6	69	37.3	1.708	.426	1.593	.208
	National	0	0	1	50.0	.487	.784	.227	.634
Larger Gang Affiliation	Aryan	8	33.3	7	29.2	16.690	.162	1.395	.215
	Blood	4	13.3	12	40.0				
	Crip	5	9.1	25	45.5				
	Crip, Tango Blast*	1	100	0	0				
	Sureño	6	18.8	9	28.1				
	Tango Blast	3	21.4	8	57.1				

*Claimed affiliation to Tango Blast and Crip gangs

Miscellaneous Crime

In regards to the three types of offenses primarily focused on in this study, the data reveals that Arlington gangs predominantly engage in miscellaneous crimes. as shown in Table 3.1, miscellaneous offenses existed in 23.9 percent of arrests and boasted the highest overall arrest frequency, other than warrant arrests, of the three types every year except 2014. In terms of the most serious crime at the time of arrest, miscellaneous offenses featured the highest amount in the years 2010, 2012, and 2013. Twenty-nine different crimes fit the description of miscellaneous offenses; these individual crimes were registered in the APD data as miscellaneous offense, burglary, criminal mischief, criminal trespass, disorderly conduct, driving while intoxicated, driving with a suspended license, engaging in organized criminal activity, evading arrest, failure to attend, failure to ID, graffiti, interference, motor vehicle theft, no drivers

license, parole violation, probation violation, public intoxication, possession of a firearm, probation violation, resisting arrest, tampering with evidence, theft, traffic violation, unlawfully carrying a weapon, and unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. Two offenses relating to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement were also listed as miscellaneous crimes. Of these offenses, the most popular were unlawfully carrying weapon(s) with 15 counts, burglary with seven counts, evading arrest with five counts, and failure to ID with five counts.

The variation in miscellaneous crime supports the research by Weisel (2002), Webb et al. (2011), Alleyne and Wood (2010), and Bennett and Holloway, all of whom found gang involvement to largely entail the commitment of crimes not containing drugs or violence. The bivariate analysis in Table 3.2 revealed a significant relationship between the age groupings and miscellaneous crime. In comparison to adult gang members, a higher percentage of youth gang members (36.4 percent) committed miscellaneous offenses. Miscellaneous offense arrests made up the second highest percentage of youth arrests. These findings, along with significant difference in the means of arrests involving a miscellaneous offense between the two age groups (Table 3.2), support the gang evolution theory by Thrasher (1927) and Densley (2012). According to the gang evolution theory, younger gang members start off by engaging in less serious offenses than older members; as they progress, members resort to more severe types of crime in order to assert dominance over an area or to further their criminal enterprises (Densley, 2012). Although age groups were significantly connected to miscellaneous crime, none of the gang tiers possessed any significant relationship. This indicates that age was the only significant characteristic connected to miscellaneous crime, while the gang typologies contained no role. About one quarter of Tier 1, Tier 2, and local gang members all committed a miscellaneous offense. The most active gangs, in terms of miscellaneous crime, were Sur 13 with 11 arrests, CSB with nine arrests, and Certified Gorilla Clique with eight arrests. Larger gang affiliation had no significant relationship with miscellaneous crime. Not all of the miscellaneous crime results supported the findings from prior research. For instance, graffiti, which is described by Weisel

(2002) and Leet, Rush, and Smith (2000) as a common gang practice, did not appear widespread in the findings. In fact, only three total arrests (0.7 percent) pertained to graffiti. Of course, this does not deem graffiti as a rare crime within the city of Arlington from 2010-2014. It was simply uncommon for the offense to result in an arrest.

Table 4-6 Miscellaneous Crime Arrests 2010-2014

Yearly Frequencies	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	Percentage of Sample
Arrests involving offense	23	24	24	15	12	98	23.9
Most serious offense at time of arrest	23	21	24	15	10	94	22.9

Table 4-7 Chi-Square & ANOVA: Gang Characteristics & Miscellaneous Crime

		Chi-Square				ANOVA	
	Group	Frequency		Chi-Square Value	p-value	F-value	Significance
		Total (Yes)	% of Group				
Age Groups	Youth	32	36.4	9.411	.002	9.588	.002
	Adult	65	20.6				
Gang Threat Levels	Tier 1	4	23.5	.001	.971	.001	.971
	Tier 2	40	26.7	.994	.319	.991	.320
	Tier 3	9	14.5	3.538	.060	3.552	.060
	Local	45	24.3	.033	.856	.033	.856
	National	0	0	.631	.427	.629	.428
Larger Gang Affiliation	Aryan	3	12.5	10.673	.099	1.795	.099
	Blood	9	30.0				
	Crip	10	18.5				
	Sureño	14	43.8				
	Tango Blast	3	21.4				

Drug Crime

A fair amount of drug activity was found to exist within the sample of arrested gang members; out of arrests, 19.3 percent included a drug-related offense (Table 4.1). This implies drug-related offenses demonstrated a medium sized role within the sample. There were 35 arrests for possession of marijuana, 19 arrests for possession of a controlled substance, eight arrests for drug paraphernalia, five arrests for the intent to distribute a controlled substance, and

one arrest for the delivery of a controlled substance. Possession of marijuana, the most widespread drug offense in the sample, was present in 10.5 percent of all arrests. Additionally, with the exclusion of warrants, it was the highest recorded individual offense in the entire sample of arrests, indicating that marijuana usage is popular amongst Arlington gang members. This finding supports MacKenzie et al. (2005) and Valdez et al. (2006), both of whom described marijuana use as widespread amongst gang members. Additionally, it reinforces the idea that gangs are not as involved with hard drugs such as cocaine and heroin and are turning to marijuana because it poses less "health, social, and legal risks" (MacKenzie et al., 2005, p. 104-5). This finding could also be a result of the changing social climate that has become more tolerant of marijuana use. Recent history suggests that the majority of Americans are for the legalization of marijuana (Galston & Dionne, 2013). While marijuana use is still considered illegal under federal law, gang members may be more active in using it if they believe society accepts it as nothing more than a petty crime. Further research should investigate whether or not the prevalence of marijuana usage in the sample is due to gang membership or overall public opinion.

Although the results indicated no significant relationships or differences between drug offenses and age, as seen in Table 4.2, 21.2 percent of adults and 12.5 percent of youths were arrested for a drug-related offense, making them the highest and second highest arrest percentages for each age group. Drug-related crimes displayed a significant connection to local gang members, as 32.9 percent of all drug-related arrests involved local gang members. Only Tier 2 gangs exhibited a higher representation (44.3 percent) in drug related arrests. Observations of each of the local gangs showed they were not as active as the bivariate analyses suggest. For instance, the Mexican Klan Locos were the only local gang arrested for more than five drug arrests. Compare this to 18th St, a Tier 3 gang and the South Side Crips, a Tier 2 gang, which recorded 13 and 11 arrests, respectively. Despite these low amounts, membership with a local gang was the only variable that demonstrated a significant difference in drug-related arrests.

None of the larger gang affiliates displayed a significant relationship or difference with drug-related crime. Based on the results concerning local gangs, it can be theorized local gang membership plays a role in drug-related crime in Arlington. The bivariate analysis shows drug crime was the only variable that displayed no significant correlation to age groups, indicating drug-related offenses and age are independent of one another. This finding stands to question whether or not drug-related crime is the product of other variables not shown in the data, such as race, ethnicity, and sex.

Compared to Bjerragaard (2010), who concluded gang membership is "weakly associated with drug involvement" (p. 3), these findings agree that four of the five gang classes show no significant connections with drug crimes. The findings by Bjerragaard (2010) and Bellair and McNulty (2009), which point to light gang involvement in the drug trade is enhanced by only five (1.2 percent) recorded arrests involving the intent to sell a controlled substance. On the other hand, 67 gang members were arrested for possession of marijuana or possession of a controlled substance, and the true nature of what they intended to do with these drugs is not established in the data. If the intentions of these members were to distribute the drugs, it could potentially undermine the results of Bjerragaard (2010) and Bellair and McNulty (2009) and reinforce the popularized idea that gangs "have been heavily involved in accumulating and selling drugs" (Jankowski, 1991, p. 120).

Table 4-8 Drug-related Crime Arrests 2010-2014

Yearly Frequencies	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	Percentage of Sample
Arrests involving offense	19	26	7	11	16	79	19.3
Most serious offense at time of arrest	19	25	7	11	16	78	19.0

Table 4-9 Chi-Square & ANOVA: Gang Characteristics & Drug-related Crime

		Chi-Square				ANOVA	
	Group	Frequency		Chi-Square Value	p-value	F-value	Significance
		Total (Yes)	% of Group				
Age Groups	Youth	11	12.5	3.346	.067	3.357	.068
	Adult	67	21.2				
Gang Threat Levels	Tier 1	1	5.9	2.043	.153	2.043	.154
	Tier 2	35	23.3	2.513	.113	2.516	.113
	Tier 3	17	27.4	3.120	.077	3.128	.078
	Local	26	14.1	5.892	.015	5.949	.015
	National	1	50.0	1.220	.269	1.218	.270
Larger Gang Affiliation	Aryan	10	41.7	12.580	.052	2.106	.052
	Blood	7	23.3				
	Crip	14	25.5				
	Sureño	5	15.6				
	Tango Blast	1	7.1				

Violent Crime

In comparison to the other types of offenses, violent crime only comprised 6.3 percent of arrests, making it an uncommon crime within the sample. As seen in Table 5.1, an average of around five violent crimes occurred per year from 2010 to 2014. Only four types of violent crime occurred; there were six cases of aggravated assault, nine counts of aggravated robbery, five assaults, and three robberies. Table 4-B shows violent crime only shared a significant relationship with the age group variable, as 13 adults and 10 youths committed a violent crime. This finding is important, as it shows a gang member's age plays a role in committing violent crime. All gang tiers were independently from violent crime. Table 5.2 found very similar results, as the only significant differences in the means of violent offenses existed between age groups. Only two gangs in the entire dataset perpetrated than two violent incidents. 18th St was the most violent gang, as it was arrested five times for a violent offense, followed by Lynch Mobb, which had three arrests. Because homicide was not represented in the data, the question proposed by Delisi et al. (2014) and Adams and Pizarro (2014) that gang members were more or less prone to commit

homicide remains unanswered. Some of the violent crime statistics from the sample matched data from other research. For instance, in the sample used by Melde and Rennison (2008), 33 percent of the violent crimes were aggravated assaults and 15 percent were robberies. In the violent crimes contained Adams and Pizarro's (2014) sample, aggravated assault made up 36 percent, simple assault consisted of 13 percent, and robberies comprised 10 percent. In comparison with this sample's study, 26.9 percent of violent crimes were aggravated assaults, 19.2 percent were simple assaults, and 19.2 percent were robberies. The low percentage of violent crimes supports Melde and Esbensen (2012), who found gang activity equally comprised of violent and non-violent crimes.

However, much of the data does not support prior research. For instance, a higher percentage (11.4 percent) of youth gang members were arrested for violent offenses than adult gang members (4.1 percent). Based on the findings by Thrasher (1927) and Densley (2012), several of the results from this study undermine previous research in connection with violence and age. Thrasher (1927) and Densely (2012) describe violence as a tool utilized by older, organized gangs in order to further their evolved enterprises. However, according to Densely (2012) violence is also used by young gangs as an instrument for "expression"(p. 517). Violent crime also becomes more rampant as young gangs evolve past the "recreational stage" to the "criminal stage" of a gang, which Densley (2012) describes as involving a "reputation for violence" (p. 528). Another disputable example lies within the findings of Bellair and McNulty (2009) and Valdez et al. (2006), which claim drugs, violence, and gang membership were all intertwined. Only one case in the entire sample involved an arrest for both a violent and drug-related offense. Due to the anonymity of the sample, it does not reflect the possibility of members arrested for these two offenses at separate times. Overall, the lower representation of violent crimes and the absence of any significant relationship between violent crime, gang type, and larger gang affiliation question the beliefs of Melde and Esbensen (2012) and Melde and Rennison (2008), who claim gang members are especially violent.

Table 4-10 Violent Crime Arrests 2010-2014

Yearly Frequencies	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total	Percentage of Sample
Arrests involving offense	5	5	4	8	4	26	6.3
Most serious offense at time of arrest	5	5	4	8	4	26	6.3

Table 4-11 Chi-Square & ANOVA: Gang Characteristics & Violent Crime

		Chi-Square				ANOVA	
	Group	Frequency		Chi-Square Value	p-value	F-value	Significance
		Total (Yes)	% of Group				
Age Groups	Youth	10	11.4	6.738	.009	6.819	.009
	Adult	13	4.1				
Gang Threat Levels	Tier 1	0	0	1.201	.273	1.198	.274
	Tier 2	6	4.0	2.183	.140	2.184	.140
	Tier 3	5	8.1	.365	.546	.364	.547
	Local	16	8.6	3.021	.082	3.029	.083
	National	0	0	.136	.712	.135	.713
Larger Gang Affiliation	Aryan	0	0	7.639	.266	1.275	.268
	Blood	1	3.3				
	Crip	3	5.5				
	Sureño	0	0				
	Tango Blast	0	0				

Research Questions

What Are The Most Frequent/Infrequent Crimes Committed By Gangs?

The most widespread offense within the data was misdemeanor warrants, which composed 37.6 percent of all the arrests. However, warrants were not the focus of this study and it is unknown what crimes were related to these misdemeanor or felony warrants. In terms of a more precise offense that fits within the parameters of the research, the possession of marijuana recorded the highest frequency amongst arrests (10.5 percent). This was followed by possession of a controlled substance (5.6 percent), unlawfully carrying a weapon (3.9 percent), and failure to ID (2.7 percent). In contrast, no clear-cut offense was found to be the most infrequent, as there were several lone occurrences. These single incidents were typically for miscellaneous petty

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offenses, such as criminal mischief, disorderly conduct, driving while intoxicated, motor vehicle theft, parole violation, traffic violation, engaging in organized criminal activity, failure to attend, and interference with public duties. There were also two separate arrests involving Immigration and Customs Enforcement and one arrest for delivery of a controlled substance. These total counts of individual crimes only emphasize the evident diversity in gang-related crime.

Are Gang Members Especially Violent?

Thompson, Young, and Burns (2000) addressed the ways media outlets cover gang-related crime and discovered that an oft-portrayed image is of mass gang violence in which "no one is safe" (p. 416). There is evidence for and against this notion. A significant relationship was only found between violent crimes and age groups. A disproportionate percentage of youths were involved in violent crimes in comparison to adults. While this is important, violent illegal acts made up the minority of this sample, followed by both miscellaneous and drug offenses. So, while violent crime did not occur as often as the other types of crime, youth gang members were especially violent. The fact that drug and miscellaneous crimes were more prevalent in the arrest records indicates Arlington gangs are engaging in more nonviolent crimes.

Can Motives Be Established?

Based on the types of nonviolent crime committed by Arlington gang members, it can be hypothesized that recreation acted as a key form of motivation in the sample. A majority of the offenses committed by gangs in Arlington were miscellaneous types of crime that did not demonstrate any deeper meaning for their occurrence, such as financial gain. Therefore, in the very least, it can be presumed that Arlington gang members committed these acts as a type of entertainment. This is especially true for younger gang members, as Densley (2012) states that youth gang members tend to engage in less serious types of crime. The finding that a higher percentage of youth engaged in miscellaneous offenses than adults, as shown in Table 2.2, supports this theory. Youth gang members are less organized than their older counterparts and tend to commit petty crime in order to satisfy their basic delinquent urges (Densley, 2012). The

high individual occurrence of arrests pertaining to possession of marijuana also reinforces this hypothesis, as marijuana usage is popular among gang members (Mackenzie et al., 2005; Valdez et al., 2006). While it is true that gangs sell drugs for financial gain (Bellair & McNulty, 2009), marijuana consumption is an integral part of gang member socialization (Mackenzie et al., 2005). Further research is needed to confirm the existence of recreational goals or even the presence of other motivators. Fiscal gain could have played a role in some of the miscellaneous offenses, as well as the cases involving possession of marijuana. However, if financial reasons did posses a larger role in the sample, it is not illustrated in the arrest records.

Do Any Connections Exist Between Different Gang-Related Crimes?

As is indicated in Table 6, only a couple significant relationships exist, regarding the co-commission of crimes, with violent offenses and miscellaneous offenses, as well as drug-related offenses and miscellaneous offenses. But, these significant relationships come with uncertainty because there were very few occurrences consisting of two separate offenses upon arrest. There was only one arrest that included violence and a drug offense, one for violence and a miscellaneous offense, and four for drug and miscellaneous offenses. Warrants frequently occurred as additional offenses during arrest, as about three quarters of multiple crime cases contained a warrant. However, the question of whether or not certain types of crime are connected remains unknown. The anonymity of the sample makes this question difficult to answer because members could have committed different types of crime at separate times but could not be identified through this sample.

Table 4-12 Chi-Square: Connections Between Types of Gang-related Crime

	Total Occurrences	Percentage of Arrests	Chi-square value	p-value
Violent & Drug	1	.24	3.504	.061
Violent & Miscellaneous	1	.24	5.168	.023
Drug & Miscellaneous	4	.98	18.888	.000

Summary

Based on the results and findings, it can be concluded that Arlington gangs engage in a higher amount of nonviolent crime than violent crime. While this low amount of violence goes against the theory that gang members are especially violent, a high proportion of violent youth gang members existed in the sample. Warrants were the most often involved offense at the time of arrest; however, misdemeanor and felony warrants are limited in the findings they prove. In regards to the types of gang-related crime that were the focus of this study, miscellaneous offenses were the most frequently committed types of gang activity, followed by drug-related offenses and, finally, violent offenses. Possession of marijuana was the most commonly committed individual crime by gang members in the sample. The high amount of miscellaneous offenses and arrests involving marijuana possession both point to recreation as a form of motivation, but more research is needed to confirm this theory. The existence of other motivators for gang activity cannot be confirmed or denied. Age demonstrated a significant role in nearly all types of gang activity. A high amount of youth were arrested for miscellaneous or violent crime, while drug-related crimes were much more likely to involve adults. Local gang membership possessed a signification relationship to drug-related crime, making it the only gang characteristic that demonstrated any sort of noteworthy connection with a type of gang-related offense. Lastly, the data is very limited in its ability to establish connections between certain types of gang-related crime. There were very few occurrences involving more than one type of offense and the anonymity of the subjects makes it impossible to establish criminal history in any of the gang members.

Chapter 5

Implications, Limitations, & Conclusion

Policy Implications/Response

Based on the results and findings, there are several policy implications that can be applied towards gang activity in Arlington. Before general and specific policy implications are suggested, Arlington's current policies will be discussed. The Arlington Police Department addresses gang activity by applying strategies involving suppression, prevention, and intervention. Suppression is achieved through APD's use of a Gang Identification Card. As mentioned earlier, this card applies specialized criteria onto suspected gang members by APD officers. The officers essentially label individuals that they believe fit the conditions of belonging to a gang. The idea behind this suppression approach is that it allows for APD to retain detailed records of gang members throughout their criminal careers. This identification method is not without its risks, as it brings into question whether or not this sort of targeting is causing self-fulfilling prophecies. If individuals, more specifically youths, are labeled gang members, are they more likely to engage in gang-related crime? While this suppression technique is beneficial in keeping up with the gang member population and criminal activities of gangs, it has its flaws in potentially mislabeling those that are not associated with a gang.

A combination of prevention and intervention is observed in APD's education and community outreach programs. APD's "educational campaigns" are briefly mentioned in its 2013 annual report, with the objective of reducing the overall occurrence of gang activity in Arlington (Arlington Police Department, 2013, p. 20). The advancement of APD's educational strategies against gangs is elaborated further in its 2014 report, which goes into greater detail about the APD gang unit's Home Visit Program (Arlington Police Department, 2014). This community outreach program arranges for APD gang officers to meet with youth who "show the initial signs of gang involvement but are not yet identified as gang members" (Arlington Police Department, 2014, p. 33). The goal of this program is to prevent these kids from joining a gang and making

their parents aware of gang activity (Arlington Police Department, 2014, p. 33). While the complete results of these tactics are not disclosed by APD, the Arlington Police Department (2013) cites these methods as the cause for a "large decline in shootings and homicides that are attributed to gangs" (p. 20) from 2010 to 2013. Additional research should observe how these community programs have affected violent crime. Although shootings and homicides were not disclosed in this sample's data, other types of less extreme violent crimes were present. Specifically, assault, aggravated assault, robbery, and aggravated robbery represented a lesser portion of the sample in comparison to other types of gang-related crime. To a degree, the fact that these violent crimes made up the minority of the committed types of crime demonstrates the effectiveness of APD's utilization of educational awareness and pursuance of gang members in an effort to reduce forms of violent gang activity. A hypothesis can be drawn that the education and outreach program's prevention and intervention techniques also impacted the rates of miscellaneous and drug-related offenses. However, a future study would be needed to evaluate the extent of these practices on possible fluctuations in violent crime and other forms of gang activity.

　　　　While APD's exact gang policy is only partially outlined, it is evident that it implements gang member prevention, intervention, and suppression. Based on the current policies and findings presented here, one policy recommendation would be to form a general gang policy that concentrates on all types of gang-related crime through prevention efforts. This sort of wide-ranging strategy is not a unique phenomenon, as many gang policies have used comparable approaches that focus on gang-related crime in its entirety (Lafontaine, Ferguson, & Wormith, 2005). The thought behind this type of general policy is if gang membership, the source of gang-related crime, is prevented or diminished, then resulting criminal offenses are less likely to occur, regardless of the type. Taking drug-related gang crime as an example, some studies argue that drug usage depends on an individual's level of gang involvement (Katz et al., 2005). Therefore, preventing gang membership altogether could have an impact on drug-related crime. The same

can be said for violent and miscellaneous crimes, as they often result from individuals joining a gang (Weisel, 2002; Melde & Esbensen, 2012). Prevention efforts usually consist of factors including public education programs that educate youths and other individuals regarding the dangers surrounding gang involvement, family-based intervention programs, peer and individual-focused programs, community programs that offer alternatives to gangs, and community policing (Howell, 1998). Intervention steps are also taken with individuals considered to already be gang members or are at risk of joining a gang. The general objective of these interventions is to replace criminal opportunities with legitimate chances within society. Interventions often include interpersonal skills training, job training, and education. The last method, suppression, does have its previously mentioned faults, but it still plays a role in general gang policies. Gang suppression often targets gang members through the criminal justice system, utilizing sanctions like priority arrests, adjudication, intensive probation, and incarceration (Howell, 1998, p. 337). While these suppression methods can be deemed excessive, they are sometimes necessary to achieve public safety. When paired with the other aspects of gang policy, prevention and intervention, suppression can play an essential role.

Although arrests connected to violent crime were the least recorded cases in the sample, gang-related violence poses a more serious threat than drug-related or miscellaneous crime, as it can result in severe bodily harm or even death. Therefore, especially violent gang members deserve special recognition compared to others. One relatable policy implication for APD would be to turn its attention to these violent gang members and utilize a direct focus that combines suppression and intervention with another component, reintegration. This tactic consists of: (1) "targeted control of violent or potentially hardcore violent youth gang offenders" through "increased probation department and police supervision and suppression" and (2) "provision of a wide range of social services and opportunities" in order to "encourage their transition to conventional legitimate behaviors" (Howell, 1998, p. 333). In other words, place an emphasis on arresting the especially violent individual gang members in an effort to get them off the street and

away from people they could directly or indirectly harm. However, once they have been arrested and issued fair sanctions, these violent gang members should be given opportunities to learn how to correct their violent behavior. Examples of legitimate assistance for these members include anger management, education, job training, family support and counseling (Howell, 1998). A limitation of this policy implication is it assumes violent gang members want to get help. This may not hold true with all gang-associated offenders, as they may just go back to the gang lifestyle once they have fulfilled their sentences. However, this policy at least gives them an opportunity to better themselves while also keeping public safety a top priority.

According to the results, drug-related crime was the only offense category to have a significant connection to a type of gang (local). Additionally, marijuana possession was the most popular individual offense among gang members. Based on these findings, a policy discussion concerning gangs and drug-related crime are necessary. One specialized, extreme policy change that could be utilized by APD is lessening the penalty or even decriminalizing the possession of certain drugs. The fact that possession of marijuana was the most prevalent individual crime within the results should be taken into account. Earlier studies mentioned the prominence that marijuana plays in the gang lifestyle. While its distribution does play a fiscal role in gang enterprise, gang members also primarily use marijuana as a way to socialize amongst themselves (MacKenzie et al., 2005). In lieu of arresting individuals for possessing marijuana, consideration should be given to issuing citations instead of arrest. While this policy change would obviously cause a decline in drug-related gang arrests, it could also have an effect on other aspects of gang activity. For example, marijuana decriminalization could decrease the likelihood of youths engaging in more severe forms of crime that would normally result from a "criminal" label placed on them by a drug-related arrest. Furthermore, this policy change would allow for APD to shift its attention towards more serious forms of gang-related crime. Instead of making minor arrests for marijuana, APD could focus on gang violence and gang involvement in more serious drugs.

Miscellaneous crime demonstrated a prevalent role in the study, as it accounted for the highest percentage of gang-related crime and possessed a signification connection to age. A policy implication should reflect the fact that miscellaneous crime was the highest recorded crime by youth gang members. A relatable miscellaneous crime policy is mentioned by Beare and Hogge (2013), who discuss carrying out gang prevention programs. Programs could be implemented that provide legitimate opportunities for at-risk and current gang-affiliated youth in various ways. For youth, prevention programs should focus on diverting individuals away from illegal miscellaneous activities that they would typically engage in for recreational satisfaction as a gang member. An emphasis should be put on strategies such as after-school programs, mentoring and outreach programs, sports leagues, and other extracurricular activities. A similar philosophy can be applied to adult gang members, with the focus on helping them achieve acceptance into society and professionalism in an acceptable occupation. Compared to youth, this approach is based on reintegration instead of prevention, since these adults are already established gang members. Programs should offer counseling, life skills and job training, positive social guidance, and general methods in which adult gang members can better themselves and get along within society. A major obstacle to a program like this one mentioned is it takes cooperation with the community to fully accept gang members and give them legitimate opportunities. Therefore, getting citizens involved and allowing them to witness the effectiveness of the program is essential to its success.

All of these specific policy implications offer possible models APD could explore. It is evident in all of these gang responses, including APD's current strategy, that one of the main goals is to prevent gang membership altogether, thus eliminating any resulting gang-related crime. However, it is evident that gang prevention programs are not infallible and elimination is unlikely. While utilizing severe suppression tactics on current gang members is certainly an option, the effectiveness of these strategies remains in question. On the contrary, a major piece of gang policy that deserves more recognition is the reintegration of hardened gang members

back into society. Some ways this rehabilitation could be achieved are by offering legitimate possibilities for gang members, either through job opportunities or social training. Of course this sort of reintegration can be difficult to accomplish, as it calls for interactions between recovering gang members and non-gang involved citizens, which can become critical without "fundamental changes within the society" (Beare & Hogg, 2013, p. 442) that views gang members as a threat. Any future gang policy enacted by APD should seek to incorporate reintegration into its strategy in a manner that is both beneficial to the gang member and satisfactory to the general public.

While all of these policies offer different approaches of dealing with gangs, it has to be noted that a police department cannot effectively implement these strategies on its own. It is not practical to expect any type of police agency to have all the necessary resources to formulate and utilize an entire gang policy. Instead, a working relationship should exist between police departments and other organizations that possess knowledge more suited to deal with certain aspects of gang strategies, such as other law enforcement agencies and community programs. For instance, while APD currently incorporates gang prevention, intervention, and suppression, perhaps gang member reintegration could be overseen by a probation department that specializes in offender rehabilitation. Another specific example would be utilizing community programs that provide alternative, legitimate activities for young gang members or youth who are at risk of joining a gang. The inclusion of outside organizations in the implementation of gang response techniques that are typically handled by police has its advantages. Specifically, this would help take the pressure off police agencies and involve other community-oriented agencies in the process of gang procedures. Overall, this cooperation allows for support from outside sources, as well as opinions from professionals who are not in law enforcement. Comparing views from both officials in law enforcement and those from other backgrounds could prove to be beneficial if complications in a gang policy arise, as they offer diversity in possible solutions.

Limitations

Like most studies, this one was not without its limitations, the most significant of which falls within the simplicity of the data. The data provided by APD was limited to only a few variables, including the offender's age, the committed offense, and gang affiliation. While gang activity can be explored using these few variables, they only provide a very minimalistic demonstration in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. As a result, this restricts the available instruments for measurement of the data and also limits the potential findings. If additional variables, such as individual demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, were available, they would allow for a more in-depth investigation on gang crime.

Another issue with the data is the anonymity of the subjects, which is called for due to ethical reasons. This concealment makes it nearly impossible to differentiate between subjects and could lead to duplications in the data. For instance, gang members could have been counted more than once if they were arrested on separate dates. This would influence the data by possibly containing repeating results for the same individual. In turn, this would affect subsequent findings by overrepresenting different types of offenses and gang types. An example would be a local gang member committing a violent offense one year and then a drug-related offense later. Because the data is undisclosed and forces the researcher to observe each case individually, these two cases were measured as if the offenses were committed by two separate individuals, instead of the same gang member. A more accurate method would involve identifying the gang members in an ethical manner. A technique that would help eliminate this validity threat would be using customized arrest records, which account for repeat offenders by assigning an ID number to each member and omitting their personal information.

On a similar note, the data does not reflect whether any of the committed offenses pertain to a gang member acting independently from the gang at the time of arrest. While it is assumed gang membership played a significant influence in the sample's committed criminal offenses, crime is not a phenomenon exclusive only to gang members. The debate of whether or

not gang members are more likely to commit crime than non-gang affiliated individuals could be the focus of further research. However, the concept of crime existing in society in general is not up for argument and has long been established. It can be argued that some of the criminal incidents within the sample would have occurred regardless of the presence of gang attachment. Therefore, the sample could be overrepresented with arrests in which gang membership did not play a role in the committed offense.

Limits also fell within the sample's setting, as these results exclusively depict offenses committed by gangs in Arlington. Although Arlington appears to be a prime setting for gang activity based on its location in a major metropolitan area, the sample and results may not be consistent in portraying gangs in other locations. Based on the evidence from the research conducted by others, gangs are "diverse" and vary by "ethnic composition, criminal activities, age of members, propensity toward violence and organizational stability" (White, 2002, p. 5). Therefore, the criminal activities conducted by individual gangs can vary upon numerous aspects that are different, depending on the area. Two international examples of this differentiation are the studies by Webb et al. (2011) and Bennett and Holloway (2004), which took place in the United Kingdom and China, respectively. Both of these studies cited social characteristics such as different ethnic backgrounds (Bennett & Holloway, 2004) a traditional culture (Webb et al., 201) as potential influencing factors on gangs in their research. This reinforces the possibility that data similar to this study could end up different when replicated elsewhere.

The literature review cited gang membership as a "robust correlate of homicide offending" (Delisi et al., 2013, p. 125). More specifically, forms of homicide relating to drive-by shootings and drug trafficking are often viewed as notorious features of gang culture. The Arlington gang sample is unable to confirm or deny these claims, as homicide is not shown in any of the arrest records. Outside sources do verify that gang-related homicides have occurred in Arlington. In it's annual report, Arlington Police Department (2014) confirms at least six gang-associated homicides between 2010 and 2011. There is the possibility that homicides are represented within a portion

of the felony warrants, but this cannot be assumed. The origin of this data, preexisting public records, could indicate why homicides were omitted.

The bivariate analysis methodology used by the researcher was not without its own weaknesses, as the chi-square and ANOVA measurements were limited in what they could ultimately present. While both chi-square and ANOVA found significant results for Arlington gangs, but because the data was very uncomplicated, these measurements only present a small portion of potential findings. Chi-square managed to find some significant relationships between the gang variables and offense variables, but it could not present causal relationships within these connections. For instance, age groups were significantly connected to violent and miscellaneous offenses. This is an important discovery, as it shows these age levels play a role in violent and miscellaneous crimes. However, it still is not completely known if fitting within a certain age group causes gang members to become more or less likely to commit violent or miscellaneous crimes. In another example, ANOVA was able to present significant differences between age groups and miscellaneous and violent crime. Although this is a critical finding, ANOVA fails to explain how the two age groups are specifically different from one another in regards to these variables. The only evidence of how these groups differ can be seen in the descriptive results of the chi-square bivariate analyses. So while these two styles of measurement complement each other, they only illuminate a small portion of gang-related crime. The researcher implemented some subjectivity in recategorizing offenses as either miscellaneous, violent, or drug–related and labeling gangs as Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and/or local and national. While this was necessary to organize the variables, similar research may not categorize the offenses and gangs as fitting within these categories or may use completely different subgroups altogether. The researcher also had to be careful not to reflect bias in the interpretations of the data. As stated earlier in the literature review, it is often considered common knowledge that gangs are highly involved in criminal activity. This could not be assumed when running the calculations and deciphering the data. The researcher had to be careful not to

anticipate specific results based on these conventional ideas, as it could lead to fabricated

findings and false implications regarding gang-affiliated crime. For instance, although researchers

and policy often portray gang members as violent criminals, it cannot be presumed that gangs in

Arlington will meet this violent expectation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research study sought an investigation into the types of crime

suggested by the phrase "gang activity." In regards to the research question, what types of crime

are committed by Arlington gangs, the results show gangs in this area prefer more nonviolent

offenses involving petty criminality or drugs. More specifically, possession of marijuana was the

most frequently committed drug-related offense and the most prevalent individual offense in the

sample. Additionally, different forms miscellaneous crime made it the most commonly committed

offense amongst gang crime. Both of these findings suggest that the primary form of gang activity

in Arlington is the engagement in diverse, nonviolent crime that stems from thrill seeking,

recreational behavior in order to avoid basic monotony. As for the concerns over gang violence, it

cannot be concluded that Arlington gangs are highly involved in violent crime. Violent offenses

were much more of a rarity in comparison to the other offenses and simply did not possess a

major implication in the study, besides showing a significant connection to age. In other words,

the only major conclusion that can be drawn from violent gang crime in Arlington is that age

appeared to dictate a gang member's engagement in violence.

Some of the other research questions were still left up to interpretation due to the

limitations of the data. For instance, the severity of gang members' goals and intentions can only

be conjectured. The reasons as to why Arlington gangs tended to commit more drug-related

and/or miscellaneous offenses are hidden by the limitations of the data. While these limitations

are addressed earlier, there are some speculations explaining the influencing forces behind drug

and miscellaneous crime. One such explanation is that Arlington gangs seek recreation over

financial gain or power. In other words, instead of striving to achieve fiscal or authoritative power,

Arlington gang members focus more on avoiding common tedium and fulfilling their demands for delinquent excitement. Gang members in the sample were extremely active in miscellaneous crime. A majority of these miscellaneous offenses were petty crime that served no greater purpose besides illustrating the delinquent lifestyle of gang members. While it is true that gang activity often involves the drug trade, arrest for drug sales was a very infrequent offense in the sample. Although it is true possession of marijuana and possession of a controlled substance were both very popular crimes, it cannot be confirmed or denied that a drug sale was going to be the ultimate result.

Another research question that could not be completely answered was whether or not certain offenses were tied to other types of crime or specific gangs. There were very few occurrences in which more than one type of crime was committed simultaneously. There were cases in which a felony or misdemeanor warrant was an additional offense at the time of arrest, but warrants were not the focus for this research due to their inability to fully clarify the offenses they represent. Of course, gang members could have been arrested at different times for different offenses, but the data is unable to depict this because of its ethical anonymity. Observing the individual gangs showed no significant trends in the connections they possessed with types of crime or even individual offenses. The only notable connection existed between drug offenses and local gangs.

Regarding the relationships associated with these three types of gang offenses, age displayed a significant connection to violent and miscellaneous crimes. This finding indicates age plays an important part in the engagement of gang-related miscellaneous and violent offenses in Arlington. While the majority of arrests involving either of these two offenses usually contained an adult, a higher ratio of youths committed a violent or miscellaneous crime. This finding signifies that Arlington gangs fit into the gang evolution theory proposed by Thrasher (1927) and Densley (2012), who stated that younger gangs tend to engage in violence and petty crimes in order to achieve recognition.

Each gang's typology (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, local and national) only displayed a noteworthy role in the association between local gangs and drug crime. While this result was difficult to decipher, it at least shows there are features possessed by local Arlington gangs that link these gang members to drug-related crime. It is not uncommon for gangs to possess unique characteristics, which play a role in determining a gang's ultimate goal and means of reaching that goal. In this case, local Arlington gangs possess some sort of exclusive qualities that cause them to be more notably linked to drug-related crimes than the other types of gangs. However, since the only available attribute in the data is age, this sample does adequately reveal the local gangs' features that could be causing this relationship.

Future studies that focus on gang activity should include additional demographic characteristics, such as the ones mentioned prior, like gender and race. Incorporating this tactic into bivariate measurements, such as chi-square and ANOVA, could result in additional significant relationships and differences between gang characteristics and types of crime. Other studies may also wish to categorize the variables in a different manner than this study. The use of a different gang classification system than the one provided by the Texas Department of Public Safety (2014) or, alternatively, breaking down the offenses into more categories may result in additional noteworthy findings. A larger, more complete sample would also benefit other studies. This investigation was limited by a medium sample size of 410 arrests. While this is not a small sample, only half of the arrests could be identified as specific crimes. As a result, no thorough investigation could be conducted on around half of the cases, as they contained no detailed information regarding the characteristics of the committed offense. Lastly, further research should identify each gang member in order to eliminate the possibility of offender duplicity. A simple to way to do this would be to assign numbers to each gang member. Using an identification system like this would allow for a more accurate, longitudinal study that follows individual gang members over time. This could bring additional evidence for or against the gang evolution theory proposed by Thrasher (1927) and Densely (2012). With the opportunity to follow gang members as they

age and progress through adulthood, a longitudinal study would truly demonstrate the phases of gang organization and how they compare with original studies like Thrasher (1927) and Densely (2012).

Despite the limitations of this research, it is still able to demonstrate the true nature of gang crime. As illustrated in this research, gang crime does not necessarily fit within one type of parameter. Gang crime is a not a singular issue, in that it primarily consists of one major type of crime. On the contrary, gang-related crime is a much more complex problem because it is derived from multiple offenses that could directly harm other gang or non-gang-related individuals, involve drugs, or transpire as a petty violation. This multidimensional nature of gang crime is what makes it such a difficult subject to address. Many policies often tend to focus only on one portion of gang activity, without taking into account the other types of crime that are involved. Another popular method is to concentrate on preventing gang involvement in general, with the hopes that stopping individuals from joining gangs will result in a decrease in gang activity. Gang-related crime requires necessary action that can recognize each different criminal aspect and handle its transformative, diverse nature. While it may not be as simple a criminal justice issue as others, the first step towards addressing gang activity requires figuring out a practical way to address all of its criminal attributes, not just the ones society deems important.

Appendix A

Gangs in Arlington Divided by Tier

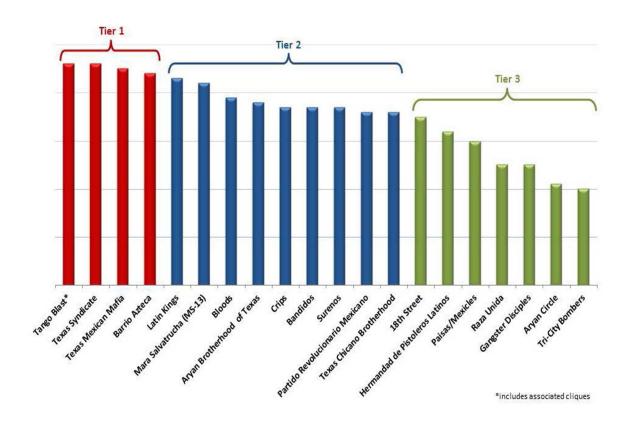| Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Local	National

• Tango Blast
  ➤ Vallucos
• Texas Syndicate
	• Aryan Brotherhood of Texas
	  ➤ Aryan
	• Bloods
	  ➤ 5 9 Bloods
	  ➤ Eastwood Bloods
	  ➤ Piru Bloods
	  ➤ Rolling 20 Bloods
	  ➤ South Side Bloods
	  ➤ Truman Street Bloods
	  ➤ United Blood Nation
	• Crips
	  ➤ 5x2 Hover Crips
	  ➤ NABA Crips
	  ➤ Neighborhood Crips
	  ➤ Rolling 60 Crips
	  ➤ South Side Crips
	  ➤ Trey 57 Crips
	  ➤ Latin Kings
	• Sureños
	  ➤ Sur 13
	  ➤ Sureños Por Vida
		• 18th Street Gang
		• Aryan Circle
		• Gangster Disciples
			• 7-Tre
			• A Dub G
			• Agg Town Locos
			• Brown Pride
			• Bustin Heads Daily
			• Certified Gorilla Clique
			• Certified Sliders Bitch
			• Crucial
			• Dalworth
			• Down For Whatever
			• East Side
			• Fuck Your Clique
			• Krazy Latin Boys
			• Little Young Thugs
			• Lynch Mobb
			• Maniac Latin Disciples
			• MOB
			• MS-18
			• NA
			• North Side Gangsters
			• Original Boys
			• Peckerwoods
			• Puro Little Mafia
			• South Side Locos
			• Tew Throwed Gang
			• Texas Mafia
			• Trill Fam
			• TYG
			• Unk
			• Untamed Gorillas
			• Vagos 18
			• West Side 12
			• Wolf Pack
			• YHG
				• Vice Lords

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Appendix B

Gang-Related Offenses Divided by Type

Warrant	Miscellaneous	Drug	Violent
• Felony • Misdemeanor	• Burglary • Criminal Mischief • Criminal Trespass • Disorderly Conduct • Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) • Driving While License Suspended • Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity • Evading Arrest • Failure to Attend • Failure to ID • Graffiti • Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Arrest • ICE Deport • Interference • Miscellaneous Offense • Motor Vehicle Theft • Parole Violation • Pedestrian Violation • Public Intoxication • Possession of a Firearm • Probation Violation • Resisting Arrest • Tampering with Evidence • Theft • Traffic Violation • Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle	• Delivery of a Controlled Substance • Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance • Possession of Drug Paraphernalia • Possession of a Controlled Substance • Possession of Marijuana	• Aggravated Assault • Aggravated Robbery • Assault • Robbery

Appendix C

Gang Tiers Outlined by Texas Department of Public Safety

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

Tango Blast*
Texas Syndicate
Texas Mexican Mafia
Barrio Azteca
Latin Kings
Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)
Bloods
Aryan Brotherhood of Texas
Crips
Bandidos
Surenos
Partido Revolucionario Mexicano
Texas Chicano Brotherhood
18th Street
Hermandad de Pistoleros Latinos
Paisas/Mexicles
Raza Unida
Gangster Disciples
Aryan Circle
Tri-City Bombers

*includes associated cliques

Appendix D

Arlington Police Department Gang Identification Card

Gang Identification Card

Gang Name:

Name:

DOB: Alias:

Race: Sex: Hgt: Wgt:

Hair: Eyes: Build:

Scars, Marks, Tattoos:

DL#:   State: SS#:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

H Phone: C Phone:

Work/School:

Nature of Contact

Call/Incident #:

Date: Time: Arrest: _ Y _ N

Address:

To process a new member, two (2) of the below items must be checked and supported with specific documents, photos, and other evidence pertaining to gang affiliation. Be prepared to testify to validity in court.

NOTE – FILL OUT CARD EVEN IF ONE (1) OF THE CRITERIA IS OBSERVED

☐ A self admission by the individual of criminal street gang membership

☐ An identification of the individual as a criminal street gang member by a reliable informant or other individual

☐ A corroborated identification of the individual as a criminal street gang member by an informant or other individual of unknown reliability

☐ Evidence that the individual frequents a documented area of a criminal street gang, associates with known criminal street gang members

☐ Evidence that the individual uses criminal street gang dress, hand signals, tattoos, or symbols

☐ Evidence that the individual has been arrested or taken into custody with known criminal street gang members for an offense or conduct consistent with criminal street gang activity.

☐ Evidence that the individual visited a gang member (other than a family member) while the gang member was in a penal institution.

☐ Evidence of the individual's use of technology, including the internet, to recruit new criminal street gang members.

Officer: ID#:

PLEASE FILL OUT REVERSE SIDE

Associates:

Hangouts:

Vehicle Information

Year: Make: Model:

Style: Tag: State:

Color:

Driver Name/DOB:

Passenger(s) Name/DOB:

Narrative/Clothing/Tattoos

Gang Unit Use Only: ____ GN ____ GP ____ VGTOF

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Zane Nash has studied the fields of criminology and criminal justice for the past five years. This study is his first significant, individual project. He was awarded his Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin in 2013 and his Master of Arts degree in Criminolgoy and Criminal justice from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2015. His research interests include gangs, illegal drugs, firearms, and the criminal mind. Zane's future plans are working for a law enforcement agency and advancing his educational career by obtaining a Doctorate degree.