

FRATERNITIES: THE GANGS OF THE UNITED STATES' ELITE

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Research Proposal

The goal of my research paper is to demonstrate the similarities between street gangs and university fraternities, why one is considered criminal and the other prestigious, and the effect social class has on the path a person takes pertaining to gangs and fraternities. I intend to go against what is traditionally discussed in the classroom and show how fraternities are often dealt with differently than gangs, even though they are incredibly similar in terms of the crimes they commit. There is plenty of criminological literature on gangs and the impact they have on society, but there is a lack of literature on the subject of elite criminal organizations and the hidden impacts they have on society.

The research required for this project will include individual face to face interviews with gang and fraternity members. I will also use research from academics who are experts on the subject of gangs. Lastly, I will use the research of the few academics who have ventured into the subject of privilege and criminal activity. The paper will also implement social theories that help explain why one male may end up in a fraternity whereas his neighbor may end up in a street gang. No one theory explains the entire picture. Therefore, I will combine sociological theories to explain the social phenomenon discussed in the paper.

An Annotated Bibliography

1. Sanday, P. (1990). *Fraternity gang rape: sex, brotherhood, and privilege on campus*. NYU Press.

The foreword by Judge Lois G. Forer is a great view from someone who before meeting Sanday was under the impression that gang rape on a university campus was not common. After reviewing the cases Sanday talks about in depth, he now has a much different opinion. Judge Forer states, "There are some differences between college gang rapes and street gang rapes, particularly in the behavior of the victims. But the similarities are more striking." Sanday goes on to talk about a male dominated culture, campus party culture, and the false impression "she asked for it." This book has a heavy emphasis on fraternities and their criminal activities especially dealing with sex crimes.

2. Chambliss, W. (1973). The saints and the roughnecks. *Society*, Nov/Dec, 24-31.

The author of this journal articles studies two gangs of high school juveniles he names the 'Saints' and the 'Roughnecks.' The Saints consisted of eight upper middle class white males, whereas the Roughnecks was a group of six boys from lower class families. Chambliss followed the two groups and recorded their different behaviors. He found that the two groups were involved in many of the same activities, though, the Saints sometimes were involved in more riskier behavior, expensive behavior, and criminal behavior. However, from the community's perspective, the Roughnecks were the criminal gang.

The concluding results of Chambliss' study are amazing. Since the community viewed the Saints as good kids that are 'just being kids' and the Roughnecks as criminal kids it acted as a self fulfilling prophecy. Seven out of the eight Saints went on to a four year university and

graduated with their degree and some continued their education and others went straight into managerial positions. The Roughnecks went down a different route. Two of the Roughnecks went to prison for manslaughter charges, one has been unemployed for a long time with a waitress wife and a kid, another Chambliss is not sure what happened to him (he may be up north driving trucks), and the last two got lucky. The two lucky ones who played football earned sports scholarships to go play at University. This was their ticket out and they both ended up teaching and coaching at high schools. Chambliss' research will be very useful when addressing why some young adults get involved in street gangs and others go off to university and join fraternities.

3. Taylor, C. (1989). *Dangerous society*. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press.

The author of this book discusses the problems with urban youth gangs. The author explains the different types of gangs: Scavenger Gangs, Territorial Gangs, and Organized/Corporate Gangs. The Organized/Corporate gangs are the specific type of gang I will focus on for my research project since this type of gang has a well-organized structure with similar components to a university fraternity. In addition, the author gives a detailed description of the roles in the gang and includes numerous interviews with gang members on various topics.

4. Venkatesh, S. (2008). *Gang leader for a day*. New York: Penquin Books.

In this book Venkatesh emerges himself into the notorious Chicago gang called the Black Kings. He is able to study the organization, tasks, hierarchy, rules, and life of the gang. This book will be important when talking about levels of hierarchy, why people end up in the gang, and the role the gang plays in the community.

5. National gang center. (2003). Retrieved from <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/>

The national gang center government website has a comprehensive history of street gang in the United States, annual survey data since 1996 on gangs across the country, and different ways to address gang problems.

6. Siergel, L., Welsh, B., & Senna, J. (2006). *Juvenile delinquency: theory, practice, and law*. Wadsworth Pub Co.

This textbook discusses many issues pertaining to gangs. Some of the more important ones I will use for my research paper include: characteristics of members, communication, control, cultural transmission, formation/structure, illegal drug transactions, initiation, race, violence, and weapons.

7. Thrasher, F. (1927). *The gang*. The University of Chicago Press.

This book is still cited by many researchers today. Thrasher studies 1,313 gangs in Chicago and relates the issues of gangs to crime and politics in Chicago. The author addresses the question of, "What is a gang", types of gangs, life in the gang, organization and control in the gang, and the problems the gang creates.

8. Kinnear, K. (1996). *Gangs*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.

The author in this book starts with the most basic elements of a gang. After defining what a gang is, he discusses why people join gangs. This is answered by looking at bonding and control theory, opportunity and strain theory, labeling theory, cultural conflict theory, radical theory, and a combination of theories. Kinnear then discusses the social, racial, and ethnic factors that play a role in gangs. He also addresses the ways gang involvement can be prevented from the school level and what police departments are doing. Intervention and prevention programs sometimes work, but he also discusses the positive functions that can come out of a gang and finally why certain youth choose to leave the gang.

9. Decker, S., & Winkle, B. (1996). *Life in the gang*. New York: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.

In this book the authors address what it is like to be in the gang and how this affects your family and friends. This book is a study from the gang member's perspective. In order to do this, they studied the gang on their own turf with experienced field workers, and had a large sample size of ninety-nine active gang members and twenty-four relatives of active gang members. What differentiates this study from many others is the focus on the family which allows us to look out what role the family plays in youth joining gangs.

10. Branch, C. (1999). *Adolescent gangs: old issues, new approaches*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor and Francis.

This book compares the street organizations (can be called "gangs") Universal Zulu Nation, Latin Kings, and Netas. The author goes into detail comparing the structures of meetings and what characteristics each of the groups has in its organization. The author talks about how the street organizations have taught the youth great public speaking skills. Different intervention strategies now infiltrate the organization instead of trying to suppress it. This way they were able to take the positive learning experiences the youth have learned in the gang and show how they can be applicable to today's world. The author also talks about the public's perception that crime is generally the function of a gang, when in fact, there are many other positive functions that gangs have.

11. Cal poly greek life. (2010, May 05). Retrieved from <http://studentlife.calpoly.edu/greek/faq.asp>

The California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo Student Life and Leadership website lists multiple reasons why students should join Greek life. The end result is: statistics show you will be more successful if you join a fraternity while attending college.

12. Manning, M. (2009, March 24). Man dies after gang initiation; fourth suspect sought. Retrieved from <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2009/mar/24/man-dies-after-gang-initiation-fourth-suspect-soug/>

This article in the March 24th, 2009 issue of The Las Vegas Sun is an example of to what extremes some are willing to go to in order to become a member of an organization, in this case a street gang. This will be useful in my research paper when comparing fraternity hazing deaths.

13. National drug intelligence center. (2005, January). Retrieved from <http://www.justice.gov/ndic/pubs11/13157/index.htm>

This government website discusses the types of drugs street gangs are more likely to produce, transport, and sell. It also mentions the amount of gang activity in the United States.

14. Perry, T. (2008, May 07). How the police busted a college drug scene. Retrieved from <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/may/07/local/me-drugbust7>

The news article is about the San Diego Police Department's Operation Sudden Fall, where they infiltrated seven different fraternities and made ninety-six arrests (seventy-five students). Some of the students were well known, had been in publications, and were doing well in school. Chambliss would call this a classic case of the "Saints" finally being caught for crimes the Roughnecks had been arrested for all the while.

15. Phi delta theta fraternity structure . (2007). Retrieved from http://www.phideltatheta.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=41&Itemid=163

This website gives a detailed description of the fraternity Phi Delta Theta's structure. Because of the interviews I have done with fraternity members I know this hierarchy chart is very similar to other fraternities.

16. Zezima, K. (2008, November 21). 7 students pledging a fraternity are burned. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/22/us/22-hazing.html>

This New York Times article talks about a recent hazing at a small New Hampshire college where seven new pledges for the fraternity Sigma Alpha Beta suffered severe burns after a traditional branding ceremony. This will be useful when explaining the initiation processes of both fraternities and street gangs.

17. Padilla, F. (1992). *The gang as an american enterprise*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

“Having experienced failure while others apparently succeed, having so little while others apparently have so much, is likely to be a source of personal depression. It is within this context that gang participation makes sense.” Padilla emerges himself in a turf five miles northwest of Chicago known as the Diamonds' turf. The in depth interviews with gang members talk about why they joined the gang and what types of influences their neighborhood, school, teachers, and police treatment. The Diamonds must work to fund their organization, and the best way to do this is dealing drugs. The youth Padilla interviewed said it was “work” or just “hanging out.” Many youth see two types of jobs: Those older than them hustling and able to support themselves comfortably and then those who go into factory jobs who struggle to get by. With this narrow view of job possibilities, it is no wonder that they start hustling at a young age.

18. Sachs, S. (1997). *Street gang awareness*. Minneapolis, MN: Fairview Press.

The author explains the evolution of street gangs through American history and then discusses ethnic gangs (African American, Hispanic, Southeast Asia, and Caucasian gangs). He proceeds to talk about the “lure of the gang” and why youth are susceptible to joining gangs. Sachs also talks about the Vice Lord Manifesto. Many of the highly-structured gangs (similar to fraternities) have a hierarchy, rules, symbols, and rituals. Another section of his book I will use in my research is the “Language and Hand Signs” as well as the “Appendix Two: Slang Glossary and Number Codes.” Sachs has spent a long time composing a detailed explanation of gang terminology.

19. Sheldon, R., Tracy, S., & Brown, W. (2001). *Youth gangs in american society*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

The authors discuss various topics dealing with youth gangs. One of those pertaining to my research is gang-related crime where the authors discuss descriptors (more than just motives) which include representing, retaliation, street fighting, vice-related, recruitment, turf violations, other descriptors. The first four make up about 94% of all street gang related crimes in about a year period. The book further discusses stereotypes of gangs, joining a gang, the gang as a business, gangs and drugs, class, and race.

20. Spergel, I. (1995). *The youth gang problem*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

One section in the book focuses on the structure of the gang, and the author breaks it down by: gang organization and community structure, development of gang organization, pattern of organization of the gang, evolving gang organization, and limitations of the idea of gang organization. This is very useful in understanding how gangs start in communities and how the structure takes its form. Another focus area of the book is the gang member experience. In this section, the author discusses joining the possible reasons for joining the gang which may include:

personal safety, fun, money, or to substitute family. Lastly, the author mentions education and jobs for potential and current gang members are some of the best solutions to the problem.

21. Dichiara, A., & Chabot, R. (2003). Gangs and the contemporary urban struggle: an unappreciated aspect of gangs. In L. D. L. Kontos, Brotherton, Barrios (Ed.), *Gangs and society: alternative perspectives* (pp. 77-94). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

In this chapter, the authors discuss the idea that many people view gangs with a narrow lens and do not realize they can have positive functions. Some gangs are strictly involved in criminal activity, whereas others plan events such as voter registration drives, cultural awareness, and community cleanup. "One cannot generalize about all gangs, but it is important to recognize that some gang activity is an expression of the struggles of the urban underclass"

22. Geis, G. (2002). Ganging up on gangs: anti-loitering and public nuisance laws. In C. Huff (Ed.), *Gangs in america* (pp. 257-270). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

The author discusses the anti-gang laws, which he says is loosely translated as the anti-loitering or public nuisance provisions laws. These became passable shortly after the formation of the first juvenile court in 1899 in Illinois. Juveniles can be held responsible for truancy, sexual acts, and out of control behavior. However, once you turn 18, this is perfectly fine. The author talks about *Lanzetta v. New Jersey* (1939) which is basically the foundation of ensuing decisions pertaining to juvenile gang members.

23. Jankowski, M. (1991). *Islands in the street: gangs and american urban society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

The author describes the reciprocating relationship the gang and the community of the gang share. The gang tends to make a strong effort to help out the community so that they do not lose the relationship with the community, because in the end (though both parties will lose), the

gang loses the most. Jankowski also mentions the media and the role it has on public perception of gangs. He discusses the numerous gang myths that come out thanks to the media.

24. Whitehead, J., & Lab, S. (2009). *Juvenile justice: an introduction*. Anderson Pub Co.

This text is useful for gathering statistics of gangs in certain types of areas (large cities, suburban counties, smaller cities, rural counties) and the types of illegal activities they are involved in. It is also useful at looking at different gang types, characteristics, organization, and the reasons why youth join gangs.

Outline

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- C. What is a fraternity?

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 - Labeling theory
 - Opportunity and strain theory
 - Cultural conflict or subcultural theory
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- D. Gang Initiation
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Fraternalities: The Gangs of the United State's Elite

Introduction

There are places in the United States, where drugs are readily available, and where sexual assault is so common that signs adorn the walls offering warning to potential victims. Groups of young men roam the streets in similar attire, flaunting the colors of their organization – organizations responsible for much of the crime in the area. These places are not to be found in the inner-cities, but rather on college campuses, where the Nation's elite come for a higher education.

The criminological literature tends to focus on the crimes of the poor and lower income families; whereas, there is plenty of this literature on street gangs and the numerous burdens they have on society. However, there is no significant difference between fraternities and street gangs. The similarities between street gangs and fraternities are abundant; in fact, based off of legal definitions, both street gangs and fraternities can be categorized as gangs according to the law. Yet, we label one group prestigious and the other delinquent. Fraternities are merely a gang for the United States' elite, whereas street gangs are for poor inner-city youth. After a brief history description of gangs, I will proceed to show how fraternities are actually no different than gangs in terms of the reasons why people join, structure, initiation, characteristics, drug and sex crimes, and finally the role they often play in society. Throughout my paper I have interwoven gang member and fraternity member stories that I obtained after individual interviews with the members. Lastly, I will explain how the path for a fraternity member leads to the American dream, whereas the path of a gang member leads to America's prisons.

What is a Gang? What is a Fraternity?

It is important to start out with a basic definition of a gang, which is best defined by Frederick Thrasher. Thrasher conducted a study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago and found these gangs were made up of many poor youths who did not have access to resources. Many of the youth were homeless, immigrants, and were occupying an underprivileged area of Chicago. The gangs in Thrasher's study played the role of a family for the impoverished youth, served their basic needs, and through this experience the members were able to develop bonds and leadership. Many juveniles did not remain in a gang after adolescents because they would get legitimate jobs or start a family (Thrasher, 1927). Thrasher's comprehensive study is still cited today in a majority of gang-related literature. He defined a gang as:

An interstitial group originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict, and planning. The result of this collective behavior is the development of tradition, unreflective internal structure, esprit de corps, solidarity, morale, group awareness, and attachment to a local territory (p. 46) (Thrasher, 1927).

Since 1927, there have been few changes to the definition of a gang. The new definition generally incorporates some sort of delinquent act. For instance, the National Gang Center government website defines gangs as meeting certain criteria:

The group has three or more members, generally aged 12-24. Members share an identity, typically linked to a name, and other symbols. Members view themselves as a gang, and they are recognized by others as a gang. The group has some permanency and a degree of

organization. The group is involved in an elevated level of criminal activity (National Gang Center, 2003).

What does “elevated” mean in the definition? Is this the average crime for people 12-24, or the average crime that people are caught for ages 12-24? The way we define gangs is too vague. For this reason, I see no problem in classifying a fraternity as a gang under this definition. The group is composed of college age young adults, they share an identity (fraternity name and fraternity symbols), they view themselves as a cohesive group (a fraternity in their case), they are recognized all over the community as a specific fraternity group, they are organized, and lastly any police officer will tell you there is an influx of underage drinking, drug use and dealing, physical assaults, and sex crimes that occur at fraternity houses every weekend.

From the university's viewpoint, a fraternity is an organization formed of men who form a strong brotherhood, have common goals, and they make a lifetime commitment to one another. As part of a fraternity, the members share their knowledge and efforts to make the fraternity a stronger organization (Ball State University, 2010). On many university websites there is a list of frequently asked questions that often bring up the stereotypes of fraternities. Some of these are the hazing rituals, excessive drinking, and partying. Regarding hazing, the university claims they have a zero tolerance rule and post a link to report hazing. The university treats excessive drinking and partying by directing your attention to all the positive services the fraternities provide for the community and national foundations as if by doing enough positive actions you cancel out the negative actions.

How did two similar groups end up on opposite spectrums according to the criminal justice system? In order to see how and why we define one group as criminal and the other as prestigious we must start with the history of gangs and how they emerged in our society.

Street Gangs

Brief History of Gangs

Gangs have likely existed since the birth of human civilization, but the first documented development of gangs is in the early 1600s in London, England. Organized gangs such as the Bugles, Dead Boys, Hectors, and the Mims committed various crimes and were all rivals who wore colored ribbons to differentiate each gang. Serious gangs did not appear in the United States until the beginning of the 19th century. The first wave of immigration from northwestern Europe (mostly Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia) started to come over to the United States from 1776-1880. They did not have many marketable skills and thus had trouble finding jobs. The migrants tended to aggregate in urban areas where they were discriminated against by native-born citizens. This environment was prime for the onset of gangs since migrants had to stick together in order to survive in their new surroundings. The second wave immigrants (Irish, Italians, Jews, and Poles) came over from 1820-1920. This group was similar because they did not have many skills and were looking for any low paying work. Immigrants lived in areas known as slums and in this melting pot gangs became more structured and dangerous than they had previously been. These early gangs were made up of Irish, Jewish, Italians, and many mixed ethnic gangs because at this time many of the neighborhoods were not yet ethnically segregated. Gangs at this time were not considered criminal groups. Members often held steady jobs and violence was a normal part of their environment. Gangs continued to emerge and grow more violent as more immigrants arrived in the United States. However, when the Chinese arrived in 1860, they created a structured gang that surpassed previous gangs and were now in control of opium distribution, gambling, and other street crimes. Their power did not last long; shortly after the Italian mafia moved in and became a rival for the Chinese. African Americans and

Puerto Ricans started to move north and soon neighborhoods became interracial. City planners began to build cheap high rise buildings to house low income families which predominantly ended up being African Americans. These buildings became a home base for many of the gangs. A third wave emerged from 1950-1960 when large numbers of black and latino populations settled in the Northeast, and by 1960- 66% of New York gangs were African American or Puerto Rican (National Gang Center, 2003).

Similar to New York's history, Chicago followed the same pattern of gang formation up until the 1920's. At this point, the whites moved out of the slums and the African Americans and Mexicans moved in, however, the gangs did not leave with the whites (National Gang Center, 2003).

In California, gangs formed differently because of the late arrival of urban areas. This time, Latinos formed together in neighborhoods and created gangs. California was different from New York and Chicago because poverty was not as concentrated. Gangs probably started forming in the region in the 1890's. There has always been a heavy influence of Mexican culture in the west since the United States took the land away from Mexico at the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848. The Mexicans in the region became naturalized citizens, but were alienated by the emerging white population in the west. Large numbers of immigrants started arriving in the West at the beginning of the 20th century and found empathy with United States citizens of Mexican heritage. The Mexican gangs began to form as a way to cope with the cultural and physical marginalization they were experiencing. Anglo-Americans would not let the Latino population assimilate and consequently Latino youth started to take pride in their Latino heritage. Later generations formed groups that did not see a future for themselves, because they did not want to follow in their parents' footsteps. These poor neighborhoods did not

have many resources, poor education, and few legitimate jobs. Many youth in the neighborhood do not see a bright future for themselves because of the lack of education and their parents' poverty, which often attracts them to the gang life. The early segregation of poor Latino neighborhoods in the West created the problem of Latino gangs, and was fueled by the common history and problems many Latinos shared. On the other hand, Latinos in New York and Chicago were discriminated against because of the overall social disorganization that occurred throughout each state's history (National Gang Center, 2003).

African American migrated to the west from the south in two major waves. The first wave was from 1915-1929 followed by the second wave from 1940-1950. African Americans came from the south in search of a better life because the west was supposed to be the place to reinvent yourself. However, once African American arrived they were faced with institutional racism. They were restricted in terms of education, employment, and housing which meant a large area of Los Angeles was off limits for minority groups. This ended up leading to violent clashes between "white social clubs" (definitely not to be confused with white gangs) and African Americans. African Americans started to form their own social clubs in order to protect black youth from white violence. Black gangs began to emerge in Los Angeles in the 1940s in response to white youth violence. Twenty years later, the groups that were originally formed to protect black youth ended up turning on one another and there were black gangs against black gangs (National Gang Center, 2003). The neighborhoods in which many African Americans lived had poor education, jobs, and housing when compared to their white counterparts. These factors ultimately play a major role in the outcome of an African American youth. The youth is not going to have access to the same opportunities as the white youth across town. In these types of scenarios it starts to become clear why some youth turn to the gang life. In the 1970s, the

Crips and Bloods started to take over previously Latino dominated areas of Los Angeles. Today gangs can be found in every major city (National Gang Center, 2003).

Why Would Someone Join a Gang?

Why do some people join gangs and others join fraternities? This process starts a long time before young men go to university. Researchers have argued on this subject for many years and there are multiple theories as to why youth join gangs. No one theory can explain why a juvenile joins a gang, and there will always be an exception to the theory. For this reason, it is best to have a combination of theories to explain why youth join gangs.

Labeling theory

William Chambliss studied two gangs of high school juveniles he named the 'Saints' and the 'Roughnecks.' The Saints consisted of eight upper middle class white males, whereas the Roughnecks were a group of six boys from lower class families. Chambliss followed the two groups and recorded their different behaviors. He found that the two groups were involved in many of the same activities. However, the Saints sometimes were involved in more risky, expensive, and criminal behavior such as: theft, endangering the lives of others due to hazardous pranks, driving under the influence, and much more. However, from the community's perspective, the Roughnecks were the criminal gang (Chambliss, 1973).

The Roughnecks were seen more in the community because they could not drive to the outskirts of the city since they did not own their own cars like the Saints. Since the Roughnecks presence was greater than the Saints, the community thought the Roughnecks were involved in criminal acts. Granted, the group was committing criminal acts, but often times less than the Saints group. The Roughnecks would constantly get stopped by the police for crimes as minor as loitering. In the two years the Chambliss followed the Saints, they only had two confrontations

with police. One was for speeding (which was something they did every time they got in a car) and the other was for disturbing the peace. The Saint's member talked his way out of the speeding ticket, and the disturbing the peace charge was promised to not show up on the juvenile's permanent record. Another important distinction between the two groups was the Saints skipped some amount of school every day. They were able to do this because of their transportation and ability to go where the immediate community would not recognize the group. The Roughnecks were stuck in school every day. Even with the amount of school missed, the Saints had a B average, and one of the members had straight A's. The teachers often knew the members were smart kids and capable of doing well. Chambliss never saw any of the Saints bring homework home. The Roughnecks managed to earn a C average, always getting by (Chambliss, 1973).

The concluding results of Chambliss' study are amazing. Since the community viewed the Saints as good kids that are 'just being kids' and the Roughnecks as criminal kids it acted as a self fulfilling prophecy. Seven out of the eight Saints went on to a four year university and graduated with their degree and some continued their education and others went straight into managerial positions. The Roughnecks went down a different route. Two of the Roughnecks went to prison for manslaughter charges, one has been unemployed for a long time with a waitress wife and a kid, another Chambliss is not sure what happened to him (he may be up north driving trucks), and the last two got lucky. The two lucky ones who played football earned sports scholarships to go play at University. This was their ticket out and they both ended up teaching and coaching at high schools (Chambliss, 1973).

Opportunity and strain theory

Americans are taught from a young age, “if you put your mind to it, anything is possible.” This is the American Dream- if you try hard enough you will be successful. Unfortunately, this goal is not attainable for everyone. Studies show that many juveniles who experience failure and are unable to achieve the goals society has told them they can achieve become depressed (Kinnear, 1996). Feliz Padilla, author of *The Gang as an American Enterprise*, studied poor urban ethnic youth minorities in the Chicago region and stated, “Having experienced failure while others apparently succeed, having so little while others apparently have so much, is likely to be a source of personal depression. It is within this context that gang participation makes sense” (Padilla, 1992). This depression can ultimately lead to criminal behavior, whereas a child who believes in the American Dream and still thinks he/she can do anything they put their mind to are more likely to join clubs or fraternities. The depressed juvenile is more likely to become involved in a juvenile gang. Under this theory, juveniles will only join gangs when they see their future as limited and their goals unattainable. Many researchers believe this theory explains juvenile gang involvement, whereas others show how it does not address why middle class youth join gangs or why not all poor juveniles subscribe to a life of delinquency (Kinnear, 1996).

In my interview with Savy, a Parkside Fresno State Bulldog gang member, I saw how his story exemplifies the opportunity theory. After dealing with a tragic family incident, severe depression ensued, and Savy no longer saw the importance in education or even in a future, and thus made the decision to become a gang member. As a result of Savy’s depression he did not care anymore and was attracted by the thrill of drive byes, fights, muggings, women, drugs, and other criminal activities. Before his depression resulted in his criminal involvement there should

have been an intervention stage; however, unfortunately where Savy lived there were no resources of this nature.

Cultural conflict or subcultural theory

Researchers who subscribe to this theory believe that juveniles are a product of their surroundings. If a minor grows up in an area where crime is rampant and the people around them are involved in criminal activities, they are much more likely to become involved in gangs. Someone who grows up in an area that has high crime rates may believe that what they have experienced is normal. In addition, if a juvenile's father, brother, uncle, or best friend is involved in a gang, it may be an attractive route for the juvenile (Kinnear, 1996).

In my interview with Shorty, a King Kobras gang member, who has been involved in the gang for 22 years joined because "We all kinda just knew we'd either join or move away". Growing up in East Los Angeles, Shorty said the streets were tough. In an area like this if you do not have a group to back you up, you may find yourself in a lot of trouble. Most of the families where Shorty grew up were low income. Their parent(s) could not afford to put them in after school sports or programs to which many middle and upper class youth have access. Children become a product of their environment, and in Shorty's case this is exactly what ensued. In middle class neighborhoods you often have youth aspiring to be business professionals, doctors, lawyer, or engineers because they are able to look up to people living around them. However, in low income neighborhoods males often see success in successful gang members. Shorty, for example, stated,

In the gang I had a homeboy named "silent" epitome of what a gangster was. He was a big 6'1" Mexican/Hawaiian dude. Always had money, women, and a gun. Never hesitant, always in the middle of whatever fight, chase or shooting was going on. I did what I

could to hang out with him. I did my best to pick up on everything about him. From slang to mannerisms and even the way he fought. I wanted to be him (Anonymous, personal communication, January 5, 2011).

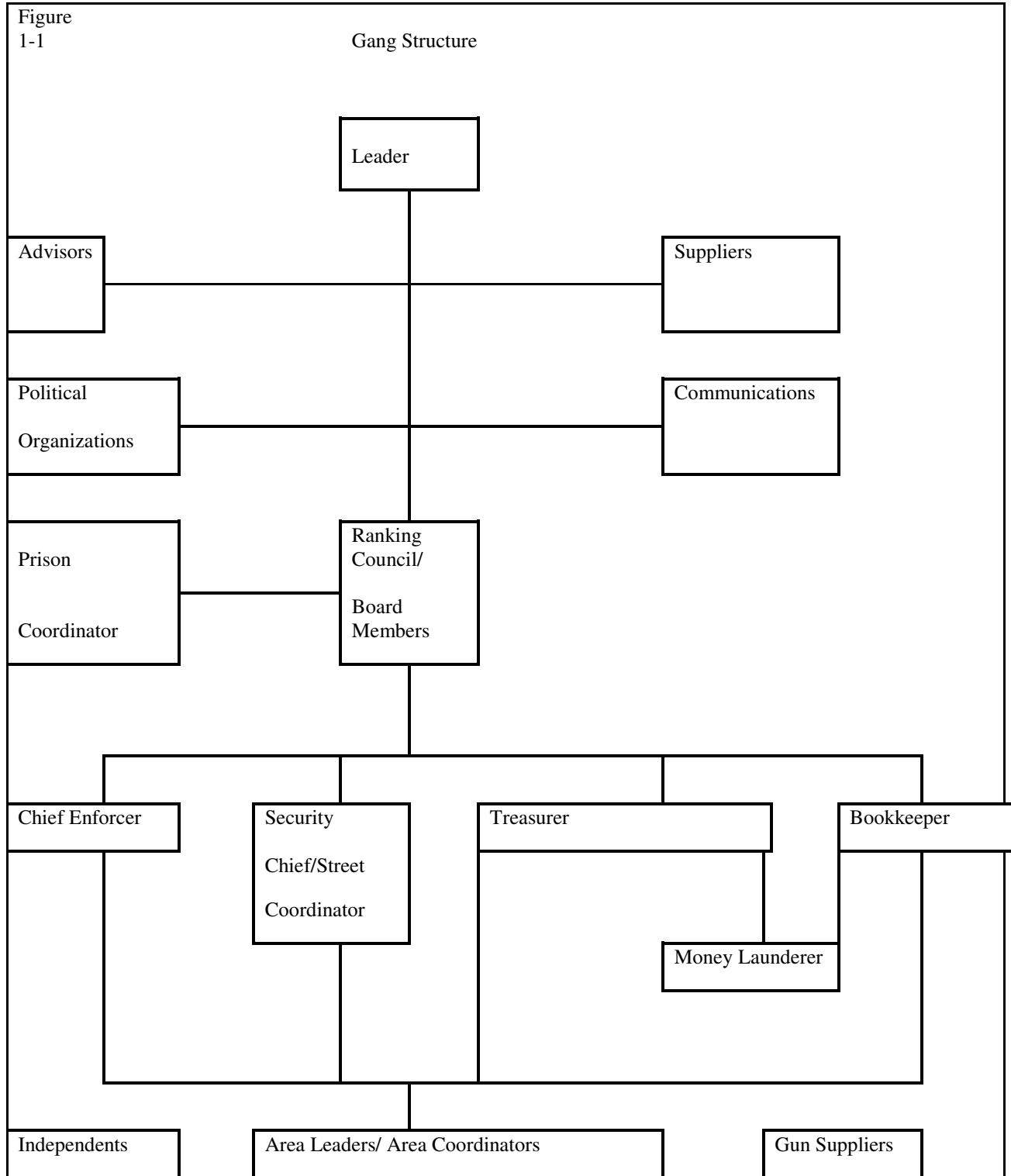
Few middle and upper class youth aspire to be gang members, but in an environment where youth are subject to constant violence, police are seen as handicappers instead of helpers, and the gang is what the youth refers to as his family – it is within this context that youths' desire for the traits of the toughest (most successful) gang member make sense.

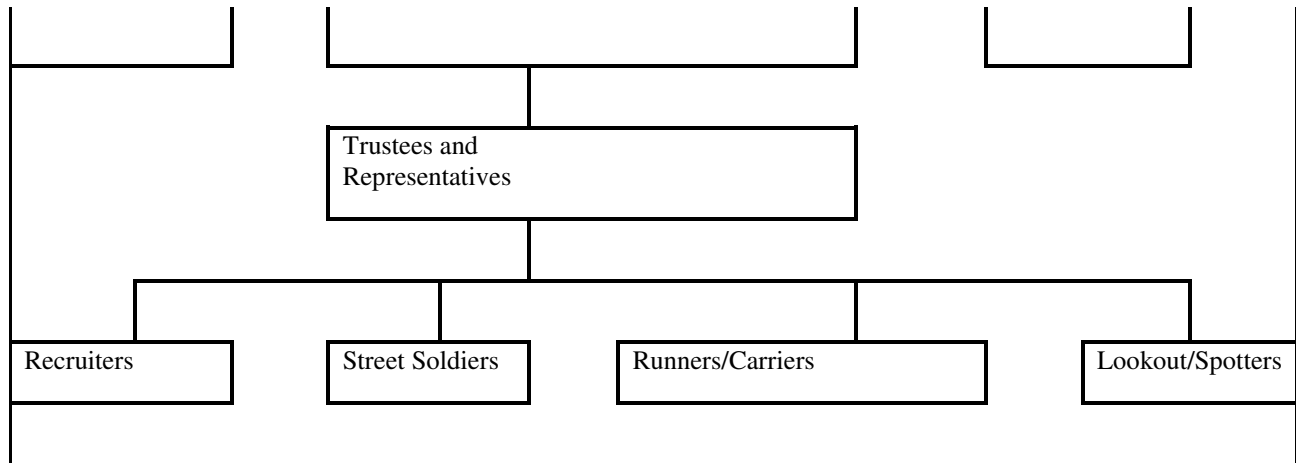
Gang Structure

For the most part, gangs can be placed into one of three categories: scavenger, territorial, or corporate. Scavenger gangs tend to be unstructured, lower class, and spontaneous. The leadership changes daily and the crimes are usually petty and not planned out. The group does not have a collective goal. Territorial gangs are gangs that have defined a territory, commonly known to gang members as a “turf.” This turf is now their area for business and they will do anything to keep business competitors out. This turf will be where they conduct all their illegal activities for profit and the only defense against rivals is physical enforcement. Lastly, organized/corporate gangs are highly structured, have a strong leader, promotion is based on skills not personality, and the goals of the gang are similar to a Fortune 500 corporation. The gang is structured so that different segments handle different aspects of the illegal money-making businesses. In contrast to the scavenger gang, all crimes in the organized gang are committed for a purpose (Taylor, 1989).

The structure of an organized street gang can be seen in Figure 1-1. The leader of the gang is responsible for the overall operations of the gang, He gives his orders to advisors and

ranking council/board members. The leader is normally locked up in prison, but still is capable of managing and overseeing the gang operations (Chicagoland Gangs, 1996).

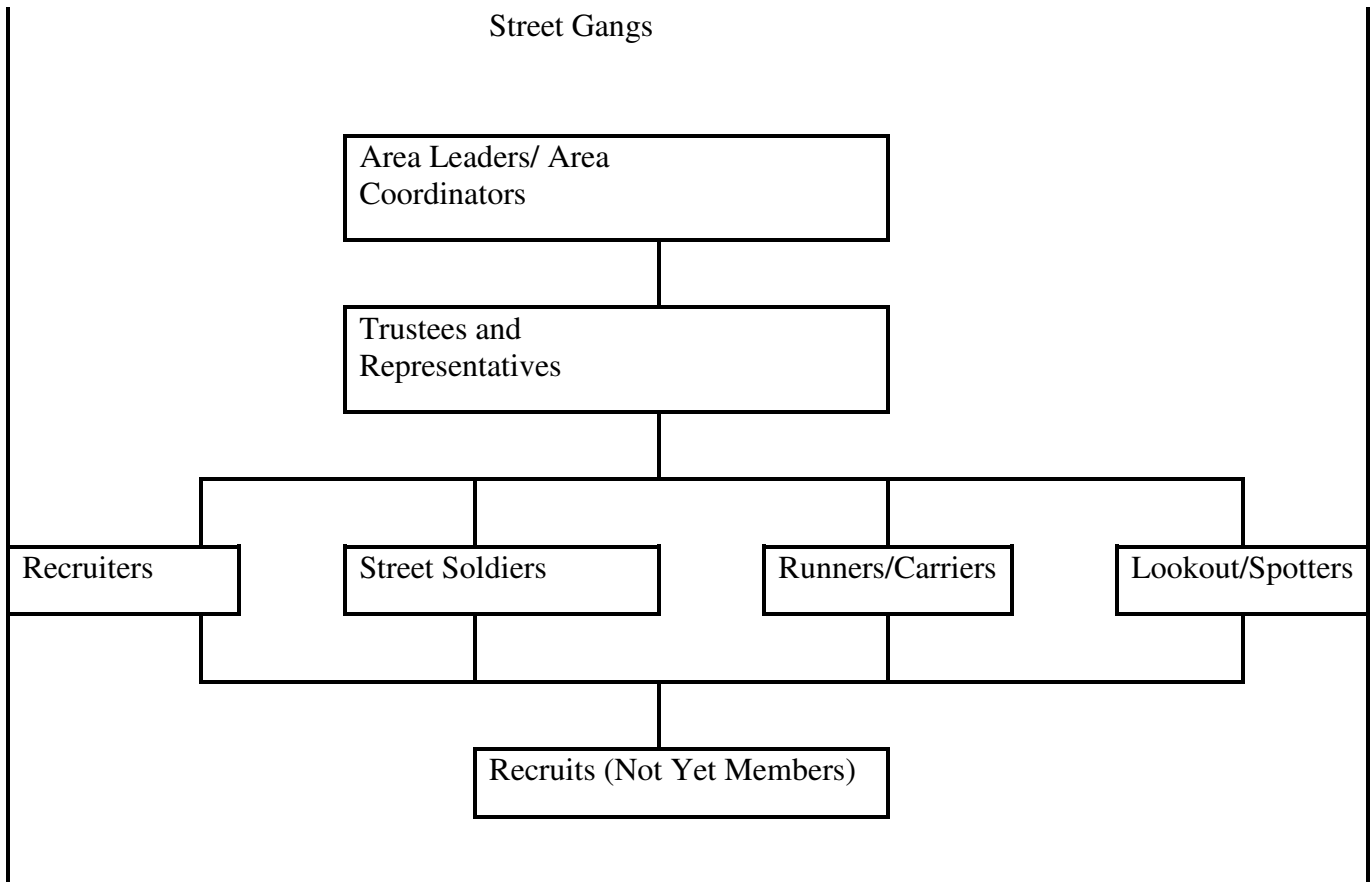




(Chicagoland Gangs, 1996)

Figure 1-3 shows the street level of the gang where you have the area leader/coordinator who is responsible for overseeing all activities and lower gang members in the leader's area. In order to become a gang area leader/coordinator you have to have worked your way up through the chain of command and have the respect of fellow gang members (Chicagoland Gangs, 1996). Trustees and representatives are the recruiters, street soldiers, runners/carriers, and lookout/spotters in the gang. The trustees and representatives can number in the thousands depending on the size of the gang (Chicagoland Gangs, 1996). Recruiters are responsible for finding new recruits. They focus on schools, parks, shopping malls, and other places where juveniles hang out. Recruiters are usually selling drugs and lure youth in by showing the quick profits they make. Street soldiers is a broad category within the gang. Street soldiers include marginal to hardcore members. Hardcore members are dangerous because they are trying to attain status within the gang and are therefore very active in the gang. Street soldiers can be involved in drive-bys, gang fights, graffiti, drug sales, and intimidation. They are also commonly referred to as gangbangers or home-boys (Chicagoland Gangs, 1996).

Figure 1-3



(Chicagoland Gangs, 1996)

Gang Initiation

Since gang members do not want a “snitch” or someone who will not represent the group’s image properly, they are selective in who they invite into their group. Gang initiation seems to make news headlines frequently and is generally accepted that the process to join a gang is violent. The Vice Lords have a manifesto that establishes rules and a chain of command the members must follow. A copy of the Vice Lord Manifesto was confiscated by police and has provided a major insight into the behavior of the gang. The Vice Lord Nation Code of Conduct contains rules on respect, discipline, meetings, dues, horseplay, fighting, and movement. The Code of Conduct allows the gang to maintain order and keep up its integrity. Members are reminded that they represent the gang and should conduct themselves according (Sachs, 1997). There are multiple ways you can become a member of a gang. Some members are “blessed in”

which means that one of their family members is already a member in the gang. The most common method is being “jumped in” or “beat in.” This method involves the initiate being able to fight a certain amount of gang members and be able to take a beating for a certain length of time (Carlie, 2002). This method sometimes results in death as seen in the recent Las Vegas Sun article reading “Man dies after gang initiation” where a man died after being “beat in”(Manning, 2010). Before Shorty was an official member of the King Kobras he was beat in for thirty seconds by four members and a fifth was counting out loud. He said that if you do not fight back then the initiation will not count. Initiates can also be “sexed in”, which is generally used for female initiates. This involves the female initiate providing sexual services for one or more members of the gang. Some members are “jacked in”, which means they commit a theft or larceny to be accepted. The list of possible initiation methods goes on such as, drive-by shooting, Russian roulette, blood in blood out, punched in, and many more. Many of the methods are dangerous and can involve the initiate being killed (Carlie, 2002).

Gang Affiliation

Many law enforcement agencies know how to identify gang members because of their specific dress code. Different gangs choose different symbols and clothing brands to represent their group. For example, the Crips will often wear the shoe brand British Knights because the BK represents Blood Killer. Even the color of shoelaces can represent membership to a particular gang. In addition, the color, symbol, brand, or whatever other image the gang adopts is portrayed when wearing sweatshirts, hats, shirts, pants, and even air fresheners. The Latin Kings use crown shaped air fresheners in their vehicles (Sachs, 1997). Gangs also have secret handshakes, a YouTube search of this topic will give you a multitude of videos showing you how to do the specific gang handshakes.

Criminals and Active Community Members

Gangs are the main distributor of drugs in the United States. Street gang members often smuggle in powder cocaine, convert it to crack cocaine, and proceed to sell it on the streets. Gangs primarily import major quantities of powder cocaine and marijuana. Within the United States, gangs transport and sell powdered cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, MDMA (ecstasy), and PCP. Selling drugs, in addition to selling stolen property, trafficking weapons, and operating prostitution rings can make some gangs millions of dollars per month (National Drug Intelligence Center, 2005).

In Thrasher's book, he mentions a favorite form of entertainment for gangs known as "The Stag Party." The stag parties are incredibly demoralizing and use females as sex objects for entertainment. The scene starts with men talking to women with crude language. The nude women then dance provocatively, and then go around to the audience collecting money from the men. The men are encouraged to give more money, because then the women will do more. The night ends with a raffle of one female to one of the men who holds the winning ticket in the audience. The man will then get the woman for the rest of the night. The frequency of these types of events is not clear because the gangs go through many measures to try to keep them hidden from authorities (Thrasher, 1963). There is another event that takes place amongst the gang, which is known as "the gang shag." The gang shag is an activity that involves as many as thirty male members from age 16-22 that have sexual relations with one woman for a few hours. The location does not really matter, and it often occurs on a mattress in some alley (Thrasher, 1963).

Gangs often are portrayed as having a negative impact on the community. Whereas, this may be the case most of the time, it is also important to realize some of the positive impacts gangs have on a community and how they evolve in a community. In Sudhir Venkatesh's novel

Gang Leader for a Day, he focuses on the Black Kings and how this intricate gang functions and what their role is in the larger community of Robert Taylor Homes. J.T. was the Black Kings' leader, and took it upon himself to connect the gang with community-based-organizations (CBOs). These organizations were responsible for bringing jobs and housing to the area, provide recreation programs for kids, and was also responsible for enacting truces amongst rival gangs. The CBOs also provided workshops for the youth on how to conduct yourself in public, lifeskill workshops, and vote registration drives. J.T. and other gang leaders made it mandatory for their young members to attend these workshops. J.T. was also responsible for creating community events such as pick-up basketball games and community BBQs. The gang would use their funds to pay for everything. The Black Kings also were responsible for keeping order at the Robert Taylor Homes projects because the police would rarely enter this area. They had their own ambulance system setup where a member would drive an injured community member to the hospital because the city ambulances would often take an excessive amount of time before they finally showed up to the projects, if they did at all (Venkatesh, 2008) There were still plenty of negative activities the gang was involved in (i.e. extortion, drug sells, and prostitution), but they did have some positive roles in the community. The reason that they had to fill these roles was because the city had basically given up on this urban poor area. When public services are no longer provide to an area, someone must step up to still provide these basic services (protection, jobs, transportation), an in this case it was the Black Kings (Venkatesh, 2008).

The Black Kings, Krips, Bloods, Latin Kings are all well known street gangs that are covered in the massive amount of literature dedicated to gangs, but what is overlooked in all this literature is a gang that is hidden in plain sight—the university fraternity. This organization's

history evolved slightly different than gangs, but today they are similar in multiple aspects; yet, we continue to label gangs criminal and fraternities prestigious.

Elite Gangs (Fraternities)

Brief History

On November 26, 1825, at Union College in Schenectady, New York, five seniors formed what is known as the first fraternity, Kappa Alpha Society. Sigma Phi and Delta Phi followed in the subsequent two years. Fraternities quickly spread to other colleges and by 1925 were incorporated in most colleges. These organizations were a way for young men, many of whom were far away from their home and family, to have a group of close friends that turned into their family away from their family. Fraternities came up with the idea of “brothers” which meant that each member would stay loyal to his brother until death. This created a great opportunity for connections once graduated from university in the ever-increasing competitive world. It was not long before hazing freshman became a common occurrence (Syrett, 2009). Nicholas Syrett, author of *The Company He Keeps*, writes in regards to hazing activities, “These included jeering and teasing, removal of possessions from a freshman’s room to the center of campus, and ‘smoking out’ (a process whereby smoke was blown into a room whose keyhole and windows were closed, forcing the student within to exit). Freshmen were kidnapped, stripped, carried off on trips, painted, shorn of their hair, tarred, feathered, bound, gagged, and left in cemeteries” (Syrett, 2009). The purpose of the hazing rituals was to show the freshman their proper place in the hierarchy. During the 19th century fraternities were secret and exclusive. Men said they joined the fraternity for two reasons: “literary/intellectual pursuits or camaraderie/brotherhood” (Syrett, 2009). The literary aspect is often disputed, however, diaries and minutes from meetings show that many fraternities would have debates on current events

and important historical documents. The camaraderie is evident by each fraternity's pledge, since they normally have something along the lines of treating their fellow members like family.

University authorities would try to make sure students did not meet in secret because they were afraid university rules would be broken (i.e. swearing, drinking, etc.). In 1847, at Princeton University, thirty-six students were dismissed from the university because they met in secret. When fraternities would start up on campus, university officials would try to do everything in their power to disband them; however, most universities were unsuccessful. With the creation of more and more fraternities, rivalries ensued. Before the civil war there were no recruiting or pledging guidelines, which basically meant the fraternity members could do whatever they wanted to the pledge class (Syrett, 2009). In the late 1800s and early 1900s, due to the racial discrimination in the United States, African Americans were not allowed to join the traditionally white fraternities and in response created their own fraternity in 1906 on Cornell University's campus (Ross, 2000). Although today blacks are allowed to join white fraternities, this rarely occurs, and some scholars say the Greek System is one of the most segregated systems within universities (Gose, 1997). Throughout the last century, fraternities have continued to grow, and in recent years many schools have created rules forbidding hazing, but the ritual continues in many fraternities.

Why Would Someone Join a Fraternity?

Similar to gangs, there are multiple reasons why college students may join fraternities. The idea of brotherhood may be a strong attraction since the male is away from home for the first time. The fraternity can be a way to instantly have thirty or more friends. The fraternity lifestyle (drinking, partying, philanthropy, and access to women) may be an attractive aspect for freshmen. Possibly, the "Saints" have left their group back home and are looking for a

replacement group that can still fulfill their criminal interests while at university. The organization might seem like a good idea to join for those wanting connections to possible high paying internships during university and great jobs after graduation.

In an interview with a Cal Poly Phi Kappa Psi fraternity member, he stated the reason for him joining the fraternity was because it was the best way for him to meet people as a new student at Cal Poly. The fraternity acts as an instant social mechanism for meeting hundreds of students within the Greek System. Similarly, a member of Cal Poly's Zeta Beta fraternity told me the attraction for him was the brotherhood and partying that the organization had to offer. Fraternity members, like gang members, join because of brotherhood, social networks, activities, and the excitement and thrill both groups can offer the member.

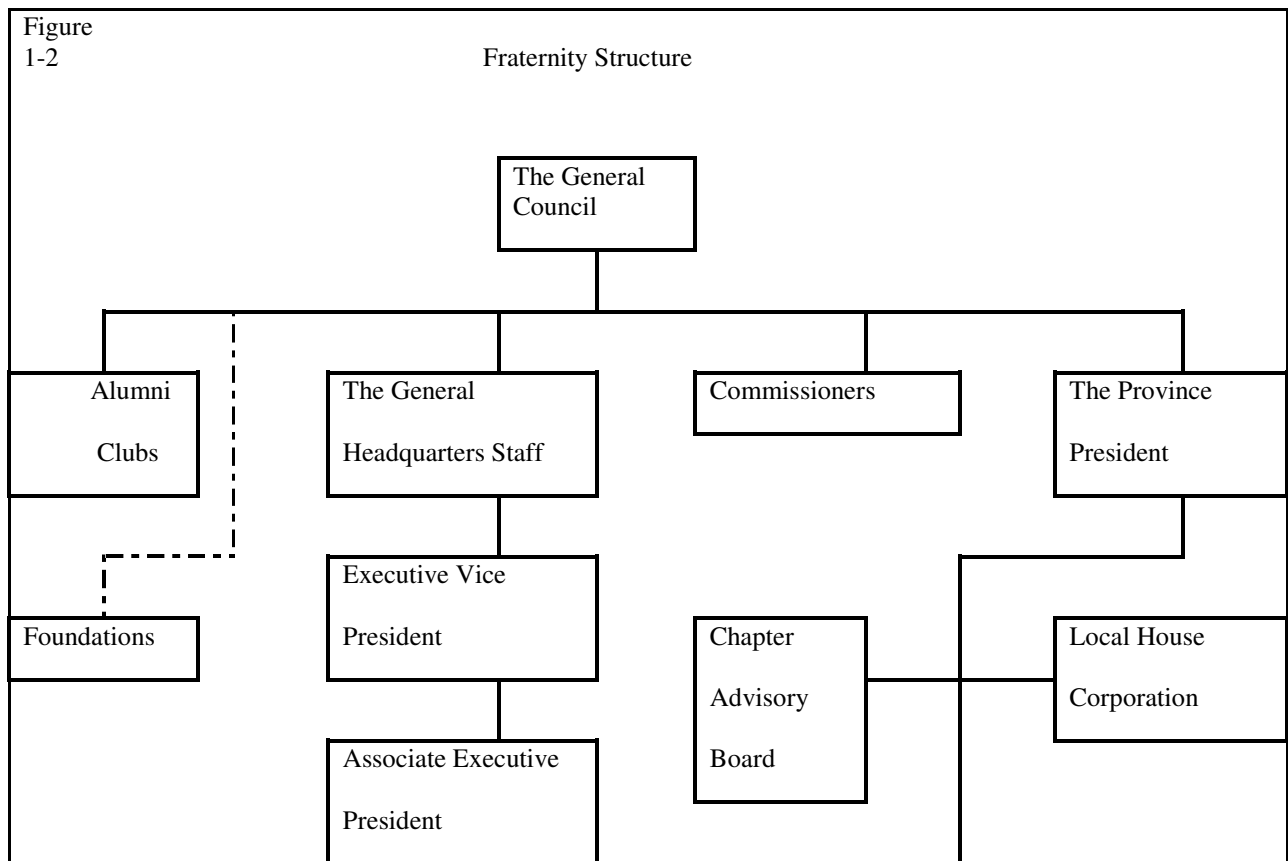
Cultural conflict or subcultural theory

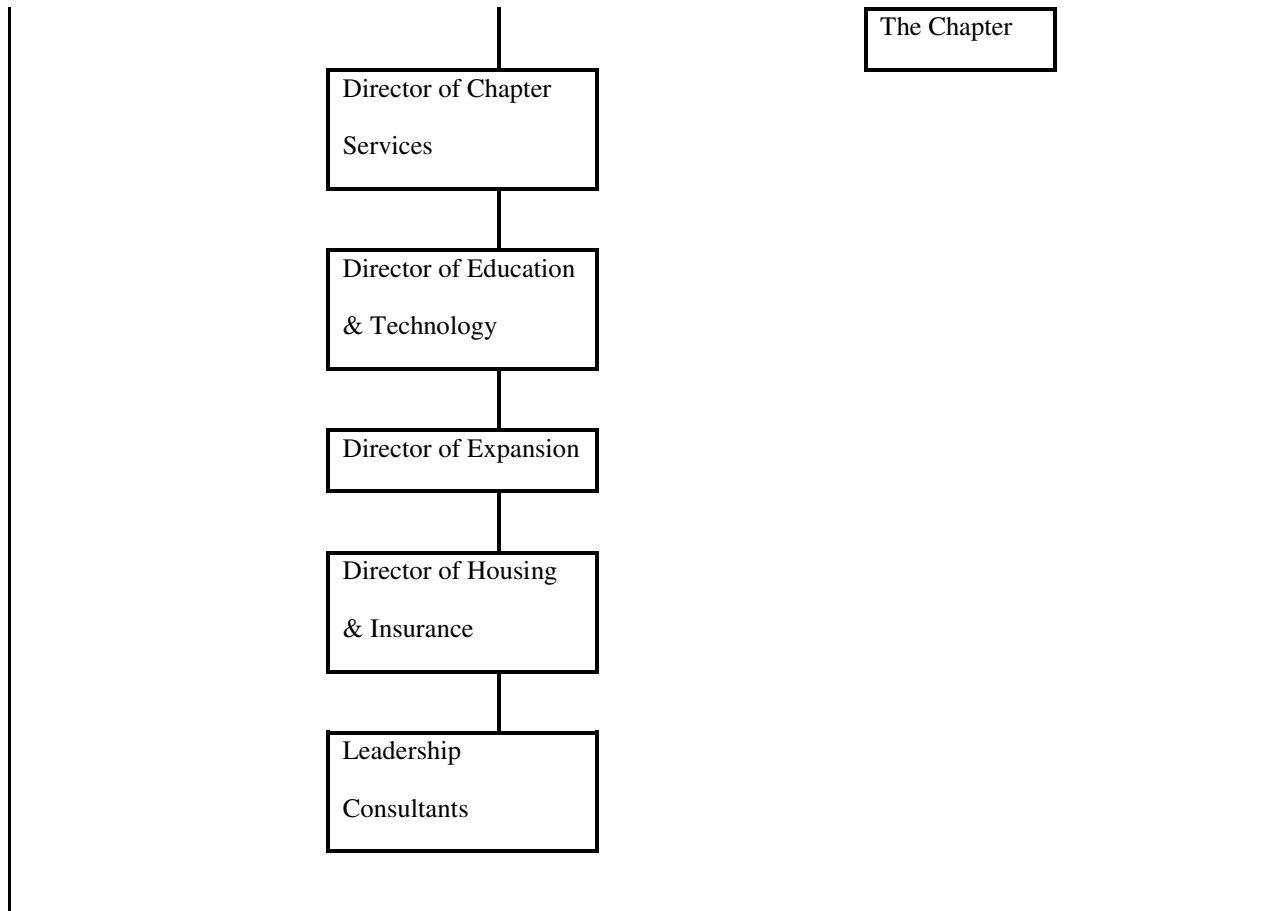
As stated earlier, this theory deals with the environmental factors in a person's history. If a young male is from a middle or upper class family, they often are expected to attend college. In order to get into university, it is often necessary to not only do well in your academics but also be involved in extracurricular activities such as clubs and sports. These groups serve the purpose of not only looking good on college applications, but also forming brotherhood, masculine identities, and an instant group of friends. After four years of this type of environment, it instantly feels like there is something lacking when the youth comes to university. The answer to fulfill this missing piece for many is some sort of on campus group (sports team, club, or fraternity).

Fraternity Structure

The structure of fraternities and gangs are strikingly similar (Refer back to Figure 1-1 and to Figure 1-2). Similar to the leader of the gang, the general council of the fraternity is

responsible for the appointment of executive and administrative level positions. These positions include the President, Treasurer, reporter, and two other members responsible for promoting the general welfare of the fraternity (Phi Delta Theta, 2007). As we go down the structures there are similarities throughout in the power allocated to certain levels of the hierarchy. In the gang structure, the area leader/area coordinator is comparable to the chapter in the fraternity hierarchy.





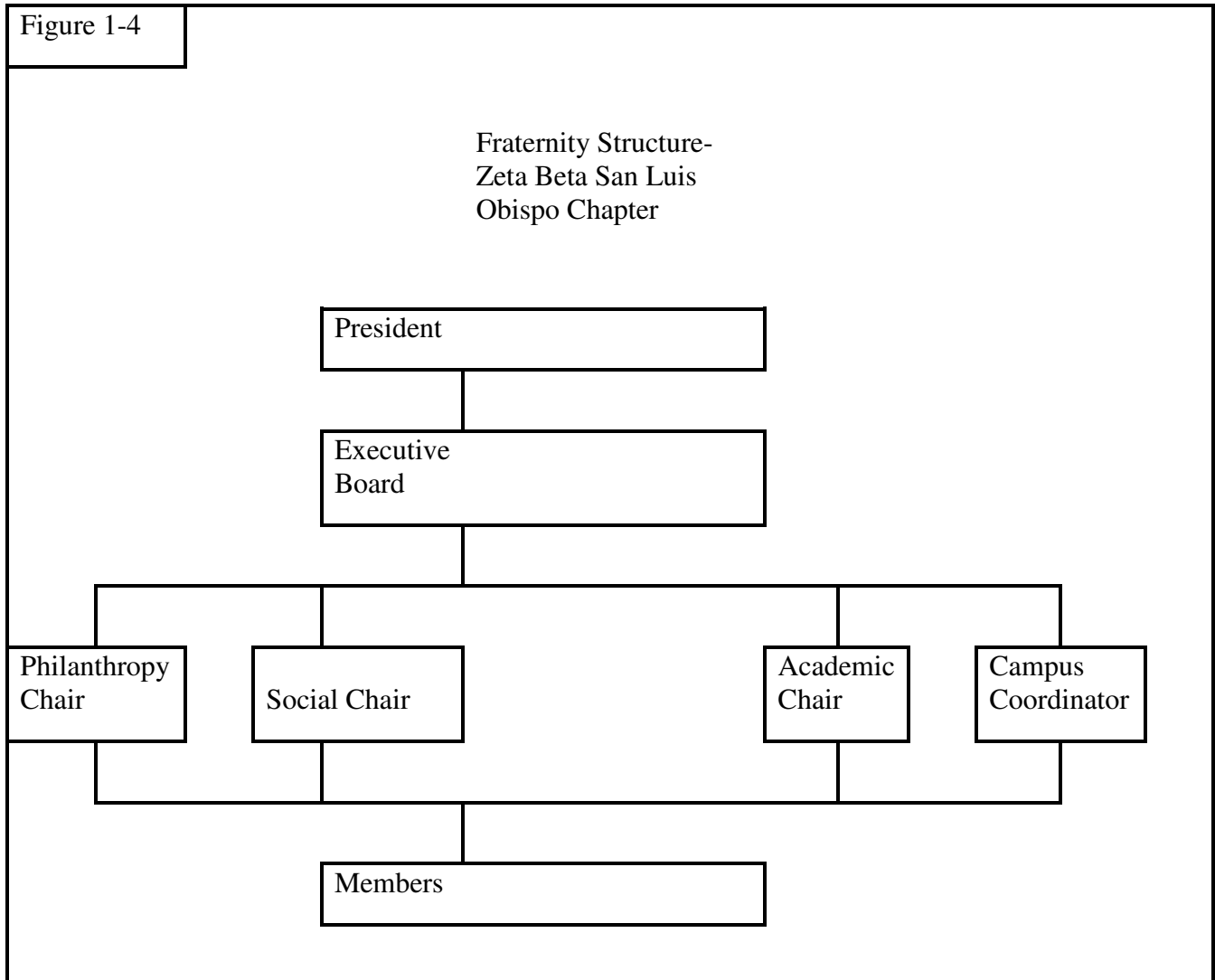
(Phi Delta Theta, 2007)

Focusing on the street level aspect of the gang and the chapter level of the fraternity, it becomes apparent that they are set up the same (Refer back to Figure 1-3 and to Figure 1-4). Analogous to the gang's leader/coordinator, the fraternity president must put his time in, work his way up the chain of command, and have the respect of his fellow members. The fraternity president leads meetings and helps conduct interviews for new members. The minimum qualification for becoming president is to have been a member on the executive board for at least a year (H. Richter, personal communication, March 15, 2010).

The executive board in the fraternity consists of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, brotherhood development director, and recruitment chair. Even though the president is in the executive board, I have placed him higher up on the hierarchy because of his specific

responsibilities. The vice president helps run the meetings and assists the president. The secretary keeps all members updated through email and text messaging, and takes minutes at the meetings. The treasurer is in charge of all finances. He has the ultimate say in whether any event can take place if it requires money. The treasurer is also responsible for collecting the dues of the members, which can range from \$200-\$600 a quarter, depending on the fraternity. The brotherhood development director is responsible for going to all the meetings that new members are required to go to. He also makes sure new members are aware of the fraternity's history and various facts pertaining to the fraternity. The recruitment chair makes his appearance at rush week events (rush week events are where all the prospective fraternity members will be.) He does everything in his power to try and get students interested in the fraternity. Later on in the year, he encourages new members to sign up for different events that allow members to have direct contact with incoming freshman. For instance, at California Polytechnic State University, there is Welcome Orientation Week (WOW) that has all freshmen go through a week long orientation process introducing them to their new town and school. WOW leaders are Cal Poly students that have been at the university for at least a year. There are two WOW leaders per group, and they have about ten freshmen in their group. This is a perfect opportunity for fraternity members to become leaders, spend a week with possible new recruits, and then proceed to recruit new freshman. Below the executive chair are members such as the philanthropy chair, social chair, academic chair, and campus coordinator (H. Richter, personal communication, March 15, 2010). At the bottom of the gang structure are new recruits who have not gone through initiation yet. The fraternity Zeta Beta Tau does not have a rush class, or we would see a category for rushees below members. Rushees, are students who are interested in

joining the fraternity and must go through an initiation process before becoming a member of the fraternity (H. Richter, personal communication, March 15, 2010)



(Alves, personal communication, March 13, 2010)

Fraternity Initiation

Fraternities are also very selective in who they allow into their group. This is the main reason for having a rush class so members of the group can choose who they think will represent the group in the way they see best for the group's current interests. As I stated earlier, gang initiation is often a violent process which is commonly on newspaper headlines. However, what

is normally kept from the media is the initiation process fraternity members go through to become members. Fraternities participate in hazing practices as part of the process of going from a pledge to a member. The definition of hazing is “any action taken or situation created, intentionally, whether on or off fraternity premises, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule” (Baker). One type of hazing used is psychological hazing. Psychological hazing includes all acts in which the pledge feels embarrassment, psychological harm, emotional strain, and malicious ridicule. Hazing can also include, deception, physical activities not related to the fraternity, collective spanking, pranks, stealing, painting objects, harassing other organizations, forced nudity, and members encouraging pledges to drink excessive amounts of alcohol (Texas A&M, 2009). For example, a new article from the New York Times called “Students Pledging a Fraternity Are Burned” (Zezima, 2008). The males were burned in a “hazing ritual” that included being branded by upper classmen in the fraternity (Zezima, 2008). Hazing is illegal at many universities, but the act still continues. Hazing has been associated with over 50 deaths amongst college fraternities (Baker).

Chad Meredith at the University of Miami died of drowning as a result of hazing (“Hazing: florida law,” 2005), Alfred University student Benjamin Klein committed suicide after hazing rituals that included tying him up with duct tape, beating him, and forcing him to stay in a hotel (“News au press,” 2003), Mr. Jennings who attending New York State University died after being forced to consume gallons of water after previously being force to drink copious amounts of alcohol until he vomited (Huckabee, 2007). At San Luis Obispo’ California Polytechnic State University, the fraternity Sigma Alpha Epsilon was holding a party on December 1, 2008 where many pledges were present and were going through the fraternity’s hazing rituals. As a result of this hazing activity, one member died the following morning because of alcohol poisoning

(Romburgh, Loggins, & Magnoli, 2009). Fraternity initiation serves the purpose of teaching new recruits discipline, respect, honor, the code of conduct, and the group's history (H. Richter, personal communication, March 15, 2010). Once you are a member of a fraternity you are considered a brother, and the fraternity emphasizes brotherhood. Once someone is a member of a gang, "all members [in the gang] are brothers, or members of a family" (Shelden et. al, 2001).

Fraternity Affiliation

The characteristics fraternities share with gangs are so similar that one may start to call into question (if they have not already) how the two groups are viewed and dealt with so differently in terms of the criminal justice system. Fraternity members will often wear clothing items such as shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, sweat pants, head bands, pins, and much more which include their fraternity insignia. This behavior shows membership to the group and unity amongst the group as they represent their organization in the community. Certain fraternities have different reputations on university campuses, and they often will try to upkeep this image by making sure their members fit their image. Certain fraternities will require members to be at the gym pre-rush week to portray a masculine image amongst their group. Members will always have fraternity clothing on while working out to further impose a masculine image of the group. Fraternity members often have a handshake that is specific to that group. This secret handshake furthers the group unity and image since only members within the group will shake hands with one another in this particular fashion.

Fraternity Crimes and Community Relations

Gangs are commonly associated with drugs in the media, but what is less common to hear is that fraternities act as gangs (or the drug distributors) on college campuses across the country. According to a *Los Angeles Times* article back in 2008, law enforcement at San Diego State

University “seized evidence included 4 pounds of cocaine, 50 pounds of marijuana, 48 hydroponic marijuana plants, 350 Ecstasy pills, 30 vials of hash oil, methamphetamine, psilocybin (mushrooms), various illicit prescription drugs, a shotgun, three semiautomatic pistols, three brass knuckles and \$60,000 in cash” in a bust known as Operation Sudden Fall (Perry, 2008). These findings were the result of a six-month undercover investigation that started at the university fraternity houses. After the arrests, six fraternities were suspended from San Diego State University due to their involvement with the drug bust (Perry, 2008). The status of fraternity members allows them to avoid any serious action in the criminal justice system. As seen in Mohamed and Fritsvold’s text, *Dorm Room Dealers*— a text that goes into detail on the prevalence of crime amongst college students, college crime is rampant and most of the time goes completely undetected. However, in their years of ethnographic research following drug dealers, only one of the dealers received serious consequences from the criminal justice system (Mohamed, & Fritsvold, 2010). Law enforcement officials are looking for drug dealers who fit the stereotypes, not successful college students. This is backed up by Mohamed and Fritsvold’s text which in the end discusses Operation Sudden Fall. The reason such an operation was initiated was because a white, middle-class, pretty female student Jenny Poliakoff overdosed on a combination of alcohol and cocaine. This operation arrested many students who were carefree in their dealings with whoever wanted to buy drugs (Mohamed, & Fritsvold, 2010). A year’s worth of resources were directed at SDSU to fulfill the operation, but it is naive to assume that SDSU is the only college campus that drug dealing occurs on, or to think that there are no longer drugs at SDSU. Authorities focused their attention on middle to upper-class students for one year and made a huge bust, now it is back to focusing on low income neighborhoods. In Mohamed and Fritsvold’s study, every drug dealer they interviewed ended up graduating, stopped dealing

drugs, and went on to have successful careers. Because the authorities choose to look the other way to campus crime, this was allowed to happen. As you can see, fraternities do not get caught because the authorities simply do not spend their time and resources there (with the exception of Operation Sudden Fall, which was only a year).

Similar to Operation Sudden Fall, three months ago Operation Ivy League produced drug sales charges for five students at Columbia. Operation Ivy League had officers buy almost \$11,000 in cocaine, marijuana, ecstasy, Adderall, and LSD. Most of the drug sales did not take place on the street; instead, most transactions were carried out in fraternity houses: Alpha Epsilon Pi, Pi Kappa Alpha, and Psi Upsilon (Secret, & Zraick, 2010). Fraternity members often do not have to deal with the same criminal justice system that gang members go through. Crimes that occur on campus are often dealt within the campus judicial system, which occurs on 3600 of the nation's colleges and universities. Thousands of criminal offenses, that could potentially serve time if dealt within the criminal justice system, disappear and are kept quiet when dealt within the campus system (Bernstein, 1996). Both groups are involved in drug trades, and drugs are definitely widely available on college campuses, but one group seldom gets caught. The two primary reasons for this are because of the way in which the crimes are often dealt (as previously described) as well as where police focus their attention which was previously described under labeling theory with Chambliss' study.

In addition to traditional street drugs, fraternities are often involved with date-rape drugs like Rohypnol. Commonly referred to as "Roofies", they are prevalent in fraternity houses across the nation. Rohypnol can be consumed with alcohol, cocaine, or marijuana. The substance is odorless and creates a sense of sleepiness, relaxation, and a drunken feeling. The goal of the

fraternity members is that the woman will have impaired judgment and will become a victim of sexual conquest (Staten, 1996).

Sexual conquest is a common occurrence in fraternity houses. The term 'gang-rape' is often used to describe what fraternity brothers participate in. Fraternities are often involved in gang rape, yet we do not consider them a gang. An excellent book written by Peggy Sanday titled, *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood, and Privilege on Campus*, describes the problem of fraternity gang rape at universities. The process starts out with fraternities advertising for their parties. Posters will often portray women as sexual objects. When men and women come to the party, men will often have to pay one or two dollars, but women always get in free. The mindset behind this is that women pay for the alcohol with sex. Many women go to parties looking to have fun and have a good night out with their friends. In Sanday's study, many of the men were looking for sex. They do not want a relationship with a woman, but a one-night stand would be nice. There are countless stories of women who are brought upstairs to rooms at fraternity houses and are raped. Many women are very intoxicated and unable to consent. By definition, women who have consumed alcohol are not able to legally consent, meaning that fraternities are guilty of rape. Fraternity members will seek women out who are in a vulnerable state and there are many instances of women being gang-raped by multiple fraternity brothers (Sanday, 1991). Fraternity members often view women as sexual objects to be conquered. After discussing this particular topic with a Cal Poly fraternity student (he has chosen to remain anonymous), he mentioned the word 'slam piece.' I had not heard of this word and asked him to elaborate. He stated that the word 'slam piece' is used to describe a girl who you would not want to date but is a girl you would want to have sex with, and they are typically 'easy' (Anonymous, personal communication, March 15, 2010). I could not have asked for a better piece of evidence to show

that some fraternity members view women as objects or as stated, 'slam pieces.' The Cal Poly fraternity Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) was allegedly accused of giving a Cal Poly sorority member the date rape drug gamma-Hydroxybutyric acid (GHB). The sorority member was attending a SAE and Alpha Omnicron Pi exchange when the incident occurred. The woman went to the Cal Poly health center, where she tested positive for GHB. The perpetrators were not discovered, so the fraternity was put on social probation by the university (Romburgh, Loggins, & Magnoli, 2009).

Fraternities have both a positive and negative effect on the community, although they are often portrayed to have more of a positive effect. For instance, the California Polytechnic State University Greek life website states, "48% of all U.S. presidents, 42% of U.S. senators, 40% of all U.S. supreme court justices, 30% of U.S. congress members, [and] 30% of all Fortune 500 CEOs" have all been Fraternity members (Cal Poly Student Life and Leadership, 2010). Of course, the student life website is not going to inform you about the recent deaths related to hazing, in fact, they will tell you hazing is against university policy. The website will not tell you about the influx of crime that occurs in fraternity houses. The website will mention the community service projects that fraternities are often involved in. Fraternities help out around the community, host social events, and participate in campus-wide events.

Street Gang Members go to Prison and Elite Gang Members Achieve Success

California has a database called Cal Gang which allows law enforcement officials to stop a suspected gang member and if they deem the person a gang member, all of their personal information is entered into a statewide database that allows any law enforcement officer to stop and search the suspect since he/she is now a known gang member (California Gang Node Advisory Committee, 2007). The database policy and procedures informs law enforcement

officials that two of the following criteria must be fulfilled in order to enter the person into the CalGang database,

1. Subject has admitted to being a gang member.
2. Subject has been arrested with known gang members for offenses consistent with gang activity.
3. Subject has been identified as a gang member by a reliable informant/source.
4. Subject has been identified as a gang member by an untested informant.
5. Subject has been seen affiliating with documented gang members.
6. Subject has been seen displaying gang symbols and/or hand sign.
7. Subject has been seen frequenting gang areas.
8. Subject has been seen wearing gang dress.
9. Subject is known to have gang tattoos (California Gang Node Advisory Committee, 2007).

A major part of this is the definition of what it means to be in the gang. The California Gang Node Advisory Committee defines a gang as,

a group of three or more persons who have a common identifying sign, symbol or name, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of definable criminal activity creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation within the community (California Gang Node Advisory Committee, 2007).

As seen by the previous facts given, a fraternity is then by definition a gang. They are a group greater than three, have a common symbol and name, engage in criminal activity, and as seen by

the previous stories on drugs, rape, and hazing rituals they can be feared by some people in the community.

Both Shorty and Savy have experienced the implications of the CalGang database. At age 15, Shorty was sentenced to California Youth Authority (CYA) and in addition to his criminal charges he received gang enhancements which resulted in him spending seven years in the institution. Savy is on probation and since he is a known gang member he is not allowed to wear the color red, go to certain neighborhoods, associate with other gang members (a majority of his friends), and can be searched by any law enforcement officer that comes into contact with him, even if there is no probable cause. This strict system often sets gang members up for failure because many do not have the access to resources allowing them to move and they often have family members in their home involved in the gang.

Fraternalities and gangs are different in their ethnic and class make-ups. The National Youth Gang Survey found the gang population consisted of 49% Hispanic/Latino, 34% African American, 10% Caucasian, 6% Asian, and the remainder considered themselves another race/ethnicity (Siegel, 2006). California State Universities are composed of 27.3% Mexican American/Latino, 5.2% African American, 33.7% whites, and 13.6% Asian (California State University, 2011). There is a significant difference amongst the percentages of who joins a gang and who attends university. This ultimately relates back to the history of gangs. Many gangs are in urban areas and, for the most part, low income neighborhoods. Youth in these areas often see the direct result of budget cuts as they watch after school programs disappear as well as community clubs, organizations, and extracurricular activities. The schools are poorly funded, a direct result of indirect institutional racism. Many youth see adults around them unable to find work, which means it is going to be much harder for the youth to find a part time job. In poor

environments like this, gangs seem like an okay solution. College bound youth or youth who are able to gain access to legitimate jobs are not joining street gangs. Street gangs are the direct result of impoverished communities, poor social infrastructure in urban areas, broken families, drug and alcohol abuse, and the environment in which youth are exposed to.

However, college bound youth are often involved in many illegal activities, as seen in Chambliss' study, that are just overlooked or not seen by authorities. According to Mohamed, and Fritsvold's text *Dorm Room Dealers*, it is clear that the Saints do not stop their criminal activity after high school. Some of the college students in *Dorm Room Dealers* were making profits between \$2,500 and \$5,000 a week. These students go through their four years of University making enormous sums of money and then quit their dealings after graduation and move onto a legitimate career. These students are able to do this because law enforcement rarely ever focuses on the elite college campuses throughout the nation. The Rough Necks are set up for failure after their first contact with law enforcement, and nowadays once they are entered into the CalGang database. Privilege is what keeps most youth out of the criminal justice system.

Conclusion

Fraternity organizations will continue to roam the vicinity of universities showing off their symbols and seeking out new clientele for their drug operations and inviting unsuspecting women into their homes where most rape goes unreported. Universities will continue to have signs in the hallways offering services from organizations like SARP (Sexual Assault Recovery and Prevention), but will also make sure many crimes are just dealt within the university's judicial system (as seen in SAE GHB case) where the perpetrators will not have contact with the criminal justice system the unprivileged members of society often deal with. Most members of these elite gangs will graduate from university, proceed to earn legitimate jobs, and retire from

their hidden criminal lifestyles that privilege kept them from coming into contact with the criminal justice system. Ultimately, fraternities and gangs have more similarities than they do differences, but some of their key differences are what makes one prestigious and the other criminal. What attracts people to fraternities and gangs is dependent upon the environment in which they grew up in and the resources to which they have access. The structures and the different roles of the members within each organization parallel each other in all characteristics. Initiation and hazing rituals vary slightly amongst the two groups, but they use many of the same tactics. As a result, this process injures/kills many individuals from both groups. Fraternities are involved in a majority of the sex crimes that occur on campus (most go unreported) and are rarely dealt within the criminal justice system. Gangs are involved in many of the same sex crimes as fraternity members, and both groups view women as sexual objects. Fraternities are responsible for most major drug distribution networks across the country on college campuses, whereas Gangs are responsible for the major drug distribution networks in low income poor neighborhoods throughout the United States. The community generally has mixed feelings about fraternities. Communities tend to not like gangs; however, they can play an important role for neighborhoods that do not have access to the basic resources that predominantly middle class neighborhoods have. The two groups' biggest difference is how they are addressed in the criminal justice system. Fraternity members rarely ever make it in the criminal justice system because the police are not focusing their attention on the upstanding elite university students. In addition, fraternity members' access to resources often allows them to escape the criminal justice system. The story is much different for gang members who may get charged for a basic crime but because they are a known gang member in CalGang they get time added to their sentence. What would happen if law enforcement officers started adding gang enhancements next time they were

citing a fraternity member? However, we know that many are not cited, as seen in Mohamed and Fritsvold's study as well as Chambliss'. Nevertheless, if the citation was able to make it as far as court, most likely the fraternity member would be represented by a top-notch lawyer who would first explain how the gang enhancement laws were not created for prestigious groups such as fraternities. For the sake of argument, if the judge decided they did in this case, the lawyer would be quick to point out how their client is an active member in society, is involved in community service, leadership activities, and so on. It is too bad the Rough Neck gang member starts out in a place where the chances of him going to prison are greater than going to university, yet, as a society we do not address the problem at the foundation.

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