



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**A SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY TYPOLOGY OF GANG
VIOLENCE**

by

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June 2010

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A SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY TYPOLOGY OF GANG VIOLENCE

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

This thesis uses social movement theory to describe the formation of street gangs and account for their high levels of violence. By understanding street gangs as a social movement contributing to the gang cycle, my hope is that communities and law enforcement will be able to adopt better strategies for breaking the cycle. Likewise, the study of street gangs serves as a laboratory for counterinsurgency operations overseas. By understanding the potential effects of repression on a population, future counterinsurgent operators will better understand the complex environment in which they serve. As demonstrated by the case studies of Salinas and Oakland, continued coercive repression and negative channeling are recipes for creating isolation within a community that leads to fragmentation and increased violence.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Street gangs, in one form or another, have existed in urban areas of the United States for over two hundred years. Beginning with bands of Irish or Italian immigrants in 19th century Manhattan, street gangs have long provided a source of structure and identity to people who feel isolated from the broader community. Whether the feeling of isolation stems from political, social or economic divisions, street gangs often fill the gap between the needs of a particular part of the population and the services provided by the community or government. At the same time, street gangs propose two serious problems: street gangs often account for a majority of the violence in a given community, and street gangs are growing, evolving and networking throughout the country bringing increasing rates of violence. As street gangs evolve and grow, they follow a cycle of repression, collective identity, and networking that are often associated with high levels of violence. To explain gang violence, social movement theory connects the effects of varying levels of repression to the varying levels and sources of gang violence present in American society.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
BCYF	Boston Center for Youth and Families' Streetworker Program
BPA	Berkeley Policy Associates
CYO	California Youth Outreach
GTF	Gang Task Force. GTF in this document refers specifically to the Monterey County Joint Gang Task Force operating in Salinas, California.
NCCD	National Council on Crime and Delinquency
NFL	National Football League
PUEBLO	People United for a Better Life in Oakland
SVSP	Salinas Valley State Prison
SPD	Salinas Police Department

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I. INTRODUCTION

Street gangs, in one form or another, have existed in urban areas of the United States for over two hundred years. Beginning with bands of Irish or Italian immigrants in 19th century Manhattan, street gangs have long provided a source of structure and identity to people who feel isolated from the broader community. Whether the feeling of isolation stems from political, social or economic divisions, street gangs often fill the gap between the needs of a particular part of the population and the services provided by the community or government.¹ At the same time, street gangs propose two serious problems: gangs usually account for the majority of violence in a given community, and street gangs are growing, evolving and networking throughout the country bringing increasing rates of violence.² As an example, first generation street gangs are characterized as turf oriented, locally based, and opportunistic organizations, but many gangs have slowly evolved into second and even third generation gangs.³ Second generation gangs refer to those that “are organized for business and commercial gain...have a more centralized leadership, and members tend to focus on drug trafficking,”⁴ while fourth generations gangs “inevitably begin to control ungoverned territory within a nation-state and/or begin to acquire political power in poorly-governed spaces.”⁵ As street gangs evolve and grow, they follow a cycle of repression, collective identity, and networking that are often associated with high levels of violence. To explain gang violence, social movement theory connects the effects of varying levels of repression to the varying levels and sources of gang violence present in American society.

1 Rick Landre, Mike Miller, and Dee Porter, *Gangs: A Handbook for Community Awareness*, (New York: Facts on File, Inc, 1997), 18.

2 Sara Miller, “Murder Rates Rising, Cities Respond,” *CSMonitor.com*, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0811/p01s04-ussc.html?s=widep>, (accessed November 19, 2009).

3 Max G. Manwaring, “Street Gangs: The New Urban Insurgency,” <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssj>, (accessed February 25, 2009). 9.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*, 10.

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II. THE GANG CYCLE

A. REPRESSION, GANG FORMATION, AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

When considering street gangs, repression leads to gang violence through a self-reinforcing cycle as illustrated in Figure 1:

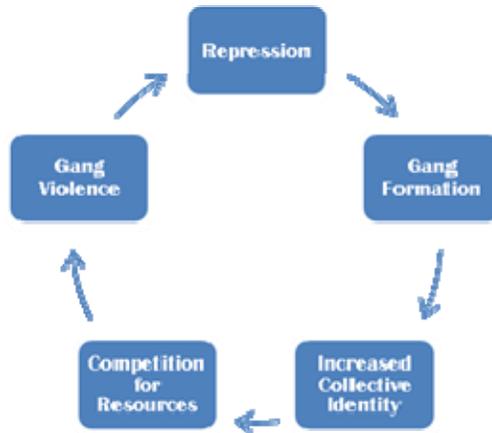


Figure 1. The Gang Cycle of Violence

According to the cycle, the continual repression of certain segments of society using less visible and illegitimate forms of coercion and channeling has created highly isolated segments of society. Over time, these isolated communities view outsiders and representatives of government as “as indifferent to their welfare and ...as agents of repression.”⁶ As an attempt at self-governance, street gangs develop in these isolated communities as a way for individuals to provide effective security, support, and other “primitive state functions,”⁷ which eventually develops into a strong collective identity centered on gang membership. The level to which gangs embrace their collective identity

6 Manwaring, “Street Gangs,” 10.

7 Stergios Skaperdas, “The Political Economy of Organized Crime: Providing Protection when the State Does Not,” Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~sskaperd/SkaperdasEoG01.pdf>, (accessed September 9, 2009).

is best characterized by the President of the Ventura, California chapter of the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club: “We are a society unto ourselves. We govern ourselves. We discipline ourselves.”⁸

B. RESOURCE COMPETITION AND GANG VIOLENCE

As the collective identity of street gangs supersedes the state, street gangs must compete with other gangs for control of the limited resources available to the isolated community. Just as with the nation-state system, competition for resources at the street gang level results in increasingly more organized forms of violence. Through the course of violence, street gangs further mirror nation-states and develop loose bureaucracies that allow for alliances and complex gang networks. This means that street gangs have gained the ability to form “a neural network...a network of cells” resembling a starfish.⁹ Once street gangs combine to form complex social networks, they become virtually unstoppable. The inability of police action to stop street gangs then invites further repression from the state, which continues the gang cycle indefinitely.

⁸ William Marsden and Julian Sher, *Angels of Death: Inside the Bikers' Global Crime Empire* (Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton, 2006), 362.

⁹ Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom, *The Starfish and the Spider* (New York: The Penguin Group, 2006), 35.

III. THE TYPOLOGY OF REPRESSION

A. INTRODUCTION

Stemming from America's dark history of slavery and social equality, the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s demonstrated the state's ability to use repression to "encourage or discourage certain types of actions on the part of protestors."¹⁰ As a form of social control, repression may vary from coercion to channeling. Coercive repression refers to the use of intimidation or direct force to control the population, while channeling refers to political, social or police actions that "affect the forms of protest available, the timing of protests, and/or the flows of resources to movements."¹¹ As demonstrated by the race riots of the 60s, excessive coercion can produce dangerous and costly reactions of the repressed population, while "channeling as a more indirect repression"¹² can sometimes yield similar results.

In addition to coercion and channeling, repression manifests itself in terms of varying levels of observation. The spectrum of the visibility of repression "could be placed on a continuum from entirely invisible actors, actions, and intentions to entirely visible actors, actions and intentions."¹³ As an example, police brutality in response to protest is an example of repression that is highly observable, where excessive criminal prosecution of members of African American communities during the 1986 "crack epidemic" is much less observable.¹⁴ Each of these repressive measures applies directly to the typology of repression concerning street gangs as related to their corresponding levels of violence.

10 Jennifer Earl, "Repression and the Social Control of Protest," *Mobilization* 11(2006), 130.

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*

13 Jennifer Earl, "Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression," *Sociological Theory* 21(2003), 48.

14 Pamela E. Oliver, "Repression and Crime Control: Why Social Movement Scholars Should Pay attention to Mass Incarceration as a Form of Repression," *Mobilization* 13(2008), 2.

Finally, repression also refers to legitimacy. According to Hess and Martin, “repressive events that are perceived as unjust have the potential to generate enormous public outrage against those seen as responsible.”¹⁵ This means that the social response to repressive measures of the state, even if technically “legal,” will vary greatly based on the perceived legitimacy of the actions of the repressing agent. For example, the Rodney King incident of 1991 demonstrates how police actions can be perceived as illegitimate. Public outrage in Los Angeles following the all-white jury’s acquittal of the accused police quickly erupted into riots, which resulted in fifty-four deaths and over 7,000 arrests.¹⁶

B. COERCION AND CHANNELING

As components of repression, coercion and channeling each come in distinct varieties. Coercion, regardless of visibility or legitimacy, can be employed by a repressive state either selectively or indiscriminately. As an example, members of a given community governed with good policing practices will characterize most policing policies as selective. This means that only those individuals who violate the law face legal punishment. However, if a given community views its policing efforts as indiscriminate, then members of that community will perceive most police action as random, undeserved, and illegitimate. In the case of channeling, states can use either positive or negative channeling. Positive channeling involves taking a preventative approach to controlling behavior by directing undesired social behavior to more preferred activities. For example, school sponsored sports teams channel the aggressive energy of young males away from violence and toward more positive and constructive ends. On the other hand, negative channeling involves controlling

¹⁵ David Hess and Brian Martin, “Repression, Backfire, and the Theory of Transformative Events,” *Mobilization* 11(2006), 249.

¹⁶ Doug Linder, “The Trials of Los Angeles Police Officers' in Connection with the Beating of Rodney King,” <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/lapd/lapdaccount.html>, (accessed November 6, 2009).

behavior by “regulating key resource controls to movements.”¹⁷ As an example of negative channeling to prevent “tea party protests” in Florida, “City governments all across the country are charging fees for ‘permits,’ forcing organizers to pay out huge sums for ‘insurance policies,’ and binding tea party organizers in all sorts of government red tape.”¹⁸ Instead of prohibiting the protests, the state is using negative channeling to prevent these protests from occurring.

According to Figure 2, selective and indiscriminate coercion types along with positive and negative channeling can produce four potential combinations:

		Coercion	
		Selective	Indiscriminate
Channeling	Positive	Type A	Type B
	Negative	Type C	Type D

Figure 2. Coercion and Channeling

Type A repression represents the most ideal case as described by the above chart. This type of repression successfully provides members of society with opportunities for positive channeling and coercion is only used when necessary and only when perceived to be deserved. Type B repression occurs when social grievances are positively channeled, but members of society perceive use of coercive repression as indiscriminate or illegitimate. When indiscriminate coercion occurs, all members of that society are subject to the burden of coercion regardless of their actions. Type C repression occurs when the state only uses coercion selectively, but the presence of negative channeling also denies many opportunities for improvement or advancement. This type of repression can yield effective results in the short term but risks the possibility of

17 Jennifer Earl, “Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression,” *Sociological Theory* 21(2003), 48.

18 Warner Todd Huston, “Florida Gov Shut Down Tea Party,” <http://taxdayteaparty.com/2009/03/florida-gov-shuts-down-tea-party/>, (accessed November 6, 2009).

future protest of the population’s inability to escape the status quo. Finally, type 4 repression represents the most oppressive form of repression. In type D repression, not only does negative channeling deny opportunities for improvement, but also members of the community perceive the use of coercion as equally likely to occur, regardless of their actions. Without a highly resourced regime capable of constant repression, this type of repression is likely to trigger public outrage and backfire, especially when the actions of the regime are considered illegitimate. By understanding the expected results of each repression type, one can better understand how each type can drive other forms of behavior or result in other unintended consequences.

C. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VIOLENCE

As gang violence rises due to the actions of the gang cycle, this violence presents itself in two forms: street gangs commit violence either internally against rival gangs, or externally against the broad community. This range of gang violence produces four distinct types of violence as illustrated in Figure 3:

		External Violence: Gang Violence against the Community	
		Low	High
Internal Violence: Gang Violence against other Gangs	Low	Type 1	Type 2
	High	Type 3	Type 4

Figure 3. Typology of Gang Violence

Type 1 violence occurs when gang violence against other gangs is low and when violence against the broad community is low. This is the most preferred case for controlling gang violence and it is the result of more effective counter-gang strategies. Type 2 violence is characterized by low internal violence between rival gangs coupled with high levels of external violence directed against the community. To the community, type 2 violence is nothing more than regular community violence, meaning the benchmark level of violence

that a given community expects and is accustomed to. Type 3 violence occurs when violence between rival gangs is high, but violence against the community is low. This means that violence is mostly contained within the street gang structure and has little effect on the broad community. Finally, type 4 violence occurs when gang violence is high both internally and externally. This type of violence indicates that gang resources are increasingly scarce and violence has carried over to the broad community.

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IV. THE PATHWAY FROM REPRESSION TO GANG VIOLENCE

A. INTRODUCTION

To understand how repression and gang violence are related requires an understanding of how the causal mechanisms involved determine exactly how each type of repression leads to each particular type of violence. As previously indicated, repression and violence are connected according to four hypotheses: Type A repression leads to type 1 violence, type B repression leads to type 3 violence, type C repression leads to type 2 violence, and type D repression leads to type 4 violence. However, each of these variables connects through three distinct intervening variables following the gang cycle.

According to the gang cycle, gang formation follows repression. However, as stated by Opp and Roehl, “the effects of repression vary: increased repression may promote or impede mobilization processes.”¹⁹ This means that repression either increases or decreases the mobilization of street gangs depending on how the acts of repression elicit social, moral, or public goods incentives.²⁰ As previously described in the typology of repression, types A and B repression are characterized by positive channeling, which produces fewer incentives to create or join gangs, while types C and D repression are characterized by negative channeling which does provide such incentives. Likewise, types A and C repression are also characterized by selective repression, while types B and D repression are characterized by indiscriminate repression. The more that coercion seems to be selective; the more it will also seem to be legitimate. This means that gangs are less likely to form when repression appears more legitimate than when perceived as illegitimate.²¹

¹⁹ Karl-Dieter Opp and Wolfgang Roehl, “Repression, Micromobilization, and Political Protest,” *Social Forces* 69(1990), 521.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 525.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 526.

Following the gang cycle, gang formation leads to increased collective identity where gang membership supersedes all other identities. Therefore, as gangs develop, the level of collective identity produced by gang members results from how gang ideology is 'framed' and likewise resonated throughout the organization. According to Snow et al., frames contribute to a movement's identity by "rendering events or occurrences meaningful" that serves "to organize experience and guide action."²² Additionally, frames are "cognitive cues used to render or cast behavior and events in an evaluative mode and to suggest alternative modes of action."²³

As the collective identity of gang members rises, gangs essentially turn their backs on the initial source of repression. In doing so, gangs begin to disassociate themselves with the broad political system and concern themselves primarily with procuring needed resources. This is especially true in second and third generation gangs where profit and commercial interests are at stake.²⁴ When this happens, gangs enter into strict competition with other gangs for financial, economic, or social resources that are available at the street level. As this competition for resources increases and becomes a negative sum competition, the competition turns into violence.

In summary, the varying typologies of repression each affect the flow of the gang cycle individually and produce unique inputs on each phase of the cycle. By understanding how the intervening variables of mobilization, strategic framing and resource competition affect the gang cycle, provides insight into how each of the four hypotheses uniquely translates varying types of repression into varying types of violence.

²² David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51:4(1986): 464.

²³ Doowan Lee, Class Notes, Social Movement Theory, Naval Postgraduate School, November 19, 2009.

²⁴ Max G. Manwaring, "Street Gangs: The New Urban Insurgency," <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssj>, (accessed February 25, 2009). 9.

B. THE FIRST HYPOTHESIS—BEST CASE

The first hypothesis that explains the relationship between repression and violence is that type A repression leads to type 1 violence. However, as previously discussed, each type of repression has three intervening variables that produce varying types of violence. Therefore, to understand the first hypothesis requires understanding how repression characterized by positive channeling and selective repression affects the mobilization, strategic framing and resources according to the gang cycle.

Of the four hypotheses, the first hypothesis represents the best-case scenario for minimizing gang mobilization. As a combination of both positive channeling and selective repression, type A repression is perceived as the most legitimate. This means that the effects of any social or political grievances against the state are channeled effectively into positive activity. Likewise, the community also perceives only the use of appropriate and selective coercion by police and other authority figures. This means that community members recognize local police activity as necessary and legitimate.

By minimizing mobilization and gang formation, there are no opportunities for gangs to develop strong collective identity. Without excessive grievances leading to gang formation, the gang cycle effectively stops. If gangs do not exist, then they cannot use strategic framing to guide their grievances into “modes of action.”²⁵ Likewise, the lack of gang membership and framing eliminates the possibility for resource competition that eliminates gang violence and the need for continued state repression. However, the remaining hypotheses produce increasing circumstances that are even more difficult.

C. THE SECOND HYPOTHESIS

In cases of type B repression, the combination of positive channeling and indiscriminate coercion will likely contribute direct inputs to the gang cycle.

²⁵ Doowan Lee, Class Notes, Social Movement Theory, Naval Postgraduate School, November 19, 2009.

Although positive channeling directs some grievances into positive activity, indiscriminate coercion in a society that perceives authority as illegitimate is more likely to contribute to isolation and gang formation. As the gang cycle continues, type B repression will produce more type 3 gang violence where violence between gangs is high, but there is low violence directed against the community. This means that instances of gang violence will still occur as gangs compete for limited resources within the community, but gangs will not contribute to violence against the community due to the existence of positive channeling.

D. THE THIRD HYPOTHESIS

In cases of type C repression, the combination of negative channeling and selective repression will also contribute to gang formation that follows the gang cycle toward violence. However, the existence of negative channeling will produce type 2 violence. The existence of negative channeling in type C repression will fail to preempt violence against the community, but the existence of selective coercion will result in fewer gangs and therefore less competition. This means that although there will be violence against the community, there will also be less violence between gangs because of reduced gang competition.

E. THE FOURTH HYPOTHESIS—WORST CASE

Just as the first hypothesis described the best case for preventing the existence of the gang cycle and eliminating gang violence, the fourth hypothesis represents the worst case and the highest level of gang violence in a given community. Following the gang cycle, type D repression characterized by both negative channeling and indiscriminate repression leads to more and larger street gangs through increased gang mobilization. As more and larger street gangs develop, the sense of isolation rises as strategic framing creates high levels of collective identity centered on gang membership, as well as increased

competition for gang resources like weapons, drug markets, and social status. As competition increases, gang violence continually rises through frequent internal and external gang violence.

The combination of negative channeling and indiscriminate repression produces the greatest amount of gang mobilization. By using indiscriminate coercion, the state increases the number of grievances in a gang-influenced community by making the people feel equally vulnerable to coercion. When the state uses indiscriminate repression, members of the community expect to experience coercion, usually in the form of police harassment, regardless of their behavior. This leads the coerced community to resent all examples of government coercion and perceives all interactions with authority as illegitimate. When this happens, the community starts to think of everyone outside of the community as “outsiders” and the feeling of isolation develops.

Additionally, the existence of negative coercion furthers the feeling of isolation within a gang-influenced community as people cannot effectively protest or voice their grievances. By perceiving all ‘outsiders’ and the government as both illegitimate and unwilling to help, the community becomes increasingly uncooperative and hostile to any input from the government.

As type D repression increases the feeling of isolation from the broad community, incentives for street gang mobilization are greatly increased. By providing security, camaraderie, and the potential for economic prosperity, the government cannot provide social incentives that compete with gang membership. In many situations, the question is not ‘why join a gang’ but rather ‘why not?’ Likewise, when a community experiences type D repression, the state also loses the ability to provide moral incentives for avoiding gang membership. As a matter of hypocrisy, telling members of a community that experiencing government-lead violence to avoid gang violence does not make a compelling argument. Finally, the isolation produced by type D repression also eliminates the ability of the state to compete with street gangs using public goods incentives. When this happens, any social incentives offered by ‘outsiders’ are

perceived as illegitimate as the use of indiscriminate coercion. As the community becomes less connected to the outside world, the collective identity offered by street gangs becomes more and more appealing.

In terms of collective identity, the isolation produced by type 4 repression provides a highly hospitable environment for gangs to build solidarity through strategic framing. To achieve this strong sense of identity, there are five types of strategic framing. To begin with, identity frames are those that distinguish members of the organization from the rest of the world by defining “who we are and who they are.” For example, as “a group of people that form an allegiance based on various social needs,”²⁶ street gangs are “characterized by turf concerns, symbols, special dress, and colors.”²⁷ As an indication of the power of the gang identity frame, gangs tend to organized themselves along ethnic, racial and socio-economic lines that provide members with a shared sense of racial inequality or socio-economic hardship, making the culture identity of gang membership stronger than that of large families.

Secondly, diagnostic frames provide the organization with a shared understanding of “what the problem is and who is to blame.”²⁸ In the case of street gangs, the previous examples of state repression, discrimination, and limited economic potential in certain communities have framed the problem largely toward police as the visible representative of government repression. Therefore, the “public outrage” from unjust repression previously described by Martin and Hess has resulted in framing of the police, all levels of “legitimate government,” and the members of the broad community as the problematic source in gang influenced communities.

²⁶ Rick Landre, Mike Miller, and Dee Porter, *Gangs: A Handbook for Community Awareness*, (New York: Facts on File, Inc, 1997), 23.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Doowan Lee, Class Notes, Social Movement Theory, Naval Postgraduate School, November 19, 2009.

Following the development of diagnostic frames to help blame the source of the problem, prognostic frames translate the problem into action. By outlining the organization's goals as a potential solution,²⁹ diagnostic frames bring a sense of purpose to an organization. This will encourage more people to join the movement as the ideology of the movement indicates the potential for change rather than continued suffering and "Lip Service."³⁰ As indicated by Manwaring's definition of third generation gang, the pursuit of "commercial and political objectives" aimed at creating "political power in poorly-governed space" accurately describes the prognostic frames of many street gangs. Therefore, instead of trying to reenter the broad community, street gangs instead have embraced their social and economic isolation and elected to "renovate our [their] own interior world."³¹

Once organizations build prognostic frames that promise desired solutions to the problem in the future, the next step is to keep the movement from decaying over time. To solve this problem, organizations develop maintenance frames that remind members "why it [the movement] cannot fail" and prescribe "how to keep it [the movement] going."³² Considering the tendency for movements to degenerate over time due to generational changes, maintenance frames are especially essential in continuing a movement beyond the lifespan of its original members. In the example of street gangs, those originating in the 1960s would have started to die out as the original members become too old and incapable of maintaining a lifestyle centered on violence. However, continued recruitment of gang members across multiple generations has not been a problem. In fact, multigenerational gang membership within families, continued economic disparity

29 Doowan Lee, Class Notes, Social Movement Theory, Naval Postgraduate School, November 19, 2009.

30 David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51:4(1986), 465.

31 *The Invisible Committee, The Coming Insurrection*, (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009), 60.

32 Doowan Lee, Class Notes, Social Movement Theory, Naval Postgraduate School, November 19, 2009.

in low income neighborhoods, and continued observation of visible state repression have all functioned as maintenance frames in legitimizing gang culture. In fact, recent situations involving members of the National Football League (NFL) demonstrate the strength of gang ties on gang members. For example, in 2007 Denver Bronco's cornerback, Darrent Williams, was murdered while participating in a gang-related incident, while other NFL players have been fined for "flashing the hand signals of street gangs."³³

Finally, motivational frames provide members and potential members of an organization with an understanding of "why one is obligated to participate [in the organization] despite potential personal cost and sacrifice."³⁴ Motivational frames for street gang members come in multiple forms. For example, interfamily framing of the importance of gang membership serves as a compelling frame for members of multigenerational gang families. Likewise, the feelings of vulnerability and isolation experienced in areas with high levels of gang violence also serves as a motivational frame for many youths to join gangs in search of protection and camaraderie.

As the effects of type D repression follow the gang cycle through increased gang formation and collective identity, the final variable that produces type 4 violence is resource competition. As more and larger gangs fill the void left by a repressive government, street gangs must compete with each other for all available resources. For first generation gangs, resource competition was limited to territory and reputation. However, second and third generation gangs compete for much greater resources. As organizations "with ambitious political and economic agendas,"³⁵ second and third generations gangs must also

³³ Sam Farmer, "NFL is Looking At All the Signs," *latimes.com*, <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-nflsigns16-2008jul16,0,1332501.story>, (accessed November 19, 2009).

³⁴ Doowan Lee, Class Notes, Social Movement Theory, Naval Postgraduate School, November 19, 2009.

³⁵ Anand, "Impact of Technology on the Conduct of Warfare," *Strategic Analysis Journal* 23, no. 1(1999), http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa_99anv02.html, (accessed July 29, 2009).

compete for political power as well as market share in an illegal economy. As the competition for resources intensifies, street gangs must resort to varying levels of violence to survive.

Out of resource-competition grows the worst case of gang violence. Type 4 violence, characterized by both internal and external violence becomes either “backfire” or gang warfare. As a function of internal violence, gang warfare represents the violent extreme of resource competition that has evolved over several decades of modification and improvement. As an example, the Hells Angels’ use of warfare against other gangs has evolved to the point where they not only employ direct physical violence against competing gangs, but they also use acts of terrorism, as well as proxy organizations to defeat their enemies.³⁶ According to various news sources, Hells Angels members use explosives against police and other motorcycle gangs.³⁷ Additionally, due to the high status and notoriety of the Hells Angels, they delegate many criminal activities to smaller supporting motorcycle gangs that serve as part of the Hells Angels criminal empire.

Along with inter-gang warfare, type D repression also leads to external violence directed against the broad community. According to Hess and Martin, the “public reaction of outrage to an event that is publicized and perceived as unjust” is called ‘backfire.’³⁸ Just as with the Rodney King incident of 1991, backfire can spiral into violence directed against not only the government, but against those that are perceived as agents and supporters of the government. As organized members of an isolated community, street gangs have the potential for committing external violence both as a function of backfire against the ‘outside’ community or government, but also as an attempt at gaining additional financial resources to further gang competition. As an example, street gangs

36 David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.

37 Hells Angels Activities, http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Hells_Angels_-_Activities/id/5120318, (accessed July 29, 2009).

38 David Hess and Brian Martin, “Repression, Backfire, and the Theory of Transformative Events,” *Mobilization* 11(2006), 249.

might resort to armed robbery of non-community members as a way to gain money and to express resentment toward members of the 'outside' world.

F. CONCLUSION

Due to the production of type 4 violence, the fourth hypothesis remains the worst case for gang violence as indicated by the gang cycle. By resorting to type 4 repression, governments very often contribute to the problems that they had intended to stop. By following the gang cycle, type 4 repression contributes to more and larger street gangs, increased collective identity and increased competition for resources. Each of these intervening variables reinforces the others to create not only high levels of violence between competing gangs, but also to inspire backfire and violence against the 'outside' community. As an example of how the type of repression perceived by a community leads to violence, the city of Salinas, California demonstrates how a government's decision to change repression type has only lead to increased violence.

V. CASE STUDY—SALINAS, CALIFORNIA

A. INTRODUCTION

The city of Salinas, California is an agriculturally based town located in central California in Monterey County approximately 15 miles East of the city of Monterey and approximately 106 miles South of San Francisco. Salinas has the highest population in Monterey County and serves as the county seat. The 2009 population of Salinas is 152,597 and composed of 70 percent Hispanics, 18 percent White, 2 percent Asian, 1 percent African American, and 9 percent other.³⁹ As late as 2007, 16 percent of the population was reported to be in poverty with 22 percent of children under 18 living below poverty level.⁴⁰

The gang problem in the city of Salinas results from the intense conflict between two competing Hispanic gangs, the Nortenos and the Surenos. As stated in the 2009 Salinas Gang Assessment:

The formation of the Nuestra Familia prison gang in the mid-1960s at nearby Salinas Valley State Prison is a strong historical influence on the present gang problems experienced by the City of Salinas and Monterey County. In the early 1970s, Norteno street gangs became the dominant gang within the Salinas community. By the late 1970s, groups of migrant males often victimized by the Nortenos formed the earliest Sureno gang in Salinas, the Madeira Barrio Locos. Throughout the years, Surenos were continually targeted by the Nortenos who were larger in numbers, better organized, and are violent. However, in more recent years, the Sureno presence in Salinas has increased, fueling the long standing rivalry between the two gangs.⁴¹

³⁹ “Gang Threat Assessment: Salinas, California,” California Department of Justice, (September 2009), 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

The conflict between these two rival gangs has resulted in continued “spiraling retaliatory-based violence.”⁴² According to the Gang Assessment, “In 2007, Salinas homicides increased by 100 percent from the previous year from seven to fourteen. The following year, another 80 percent increase in homicides occurred with 25 homicides, 23 of which were gang-related. As of September 10, 2009, there have been 22 homicides in Salinas, all gang-related.”⁴³ The application of the previously described typologies of repression and violence to the gang cycle will better explain the causes of violence in Salinas, California.

Although these levels of gang violence are extreme, the specific examples of channeling and repression present in the city of Salinas demonstrates the severity of the fourth hypothesis. By producing a cultural and social environment in Salinas, characterized by the combination of indiscriminate repression and negative channeling, the type D repression experienced by the minority residents of East Salinas has contributed to increased gang mobilization and increased gang competition. Furthermore, this combination of inputs to the gang cycle has created the necessary conditions for high levels of both internal and external gang violence.

B. COERCIVE REPRESSION

To understand the cause of violence in Salinas, according to the gang cycle, first requires understanding the degree and type of repression experienced by members of the gang-infected community. The data presented in the following paragraphs clearly demonstrate several examples of indiscriminate repression used against certain members of the Salinas population. Examples of indiscriminate repression exist in the under-representation of Hispanic authority figures in the city, as well as with the disproportional arrest rates experienced by residents of East Salinas.

⁴² “Gang Threat Assessment: Salinas, California,” 1.

⁴³ Ibid. The Salinas Gang Threat Assessment indicates that the perpetrators of the murders in 2007 are attributed to gang violence.

The first example of indiscriminate repression found in Salinas concerns the under-represented Hispanic community of East Salinas. Not only are the residents of East Salinas poorly represented in local government, but they are also poorly represented in law enforcement. To begin with, although the city of Salinas is 70 percent Hispanic, only a very small percentage of the political decision makers is Hispanic. As an example, between the Mayor, Chief of Police, and six elected city council members, only one of eight prominent government representatives is Hispanic. This means that only 12.5 percent of the Salinas government is of the same ethnicity as 70 percent of the Salinas population. For members of Salinas' majority Hispanic community, such under-representation in local government contributes directly to the sense of isolation. If very few of the authority figures present in the city are fellow Hispanics, then there is little cause for this community to feel welcomed or encouraged to participate in society outside the invisible confines of the lowest socio-economic barriers.

Worse than under-representation in local government, the residents of East Salinas are under-represented by law enforcement. For example, as the most visible representatives of the government, of the Salinas Police Department's (SPD) consists of 189 sworn officers. Of the total, fewer than 25 percent are Hispanic and only 25 percent speak Spanish. In contrast, of the 106,817 Hispanic residents of Salinas, 38 percent were born outside the United States, 90 percent speak Spanish and a full 58 percent report not speaking English.⁴⁴ This means that not only are the residents of Salinas racially isolated from the broad community, the uniformed authority figures who most directly represent the government control are not capable of communicating with this isolated community. By living in a community where neither Hispanic culture nor the capacity for effective communication is adequate, the relationship between the SPD and the population is difficult to maintain.

44 "Gang Threat Assessment: Salinas, California," 4.

However, to make matters worse for the under-represented Hispanics in Salinas's government, the actions of the SPD have further isolated the community. In fact, the history of exceedingly high arrest rates for Hispanics in the already under-represented community describe acts of coercion as the visible trends observed by the SPD arrest records further paint a picture consistent with indiscriminate repression. According to SPD arrest records, although only 70 percent of the population, Hispanics comprise a full 86 percent of the total number of arrests made in Salinas.⁴⁵ To some, a 16 percent increase in Hispanic arrests above the overall population may not indicate indiscriminate coercion, but the rates for violent crimes tell another story. Of the 189 violent crimes reported in 2009, 100 percent of the arrests are against Hispanics.⁴⁶ This trend, along with a history of poverty and isolation, has created the perception among the poorest Salinas Hispanic communities of indiscriminate use of coercive repression.

The result of indiscriminate repression for the members of Salinas' Hispanic community is almost complete isolation. With only very few Hispanic representatives in local government and increasing frustration with a police force they cannot adequately communicate with, it is not surprising that many Salinas residents avoid interaction with the broad community altogether. Not to mention, when Hispanic residents do encounter SPD officers, the result is rarely positive. High arrest rates, especially for crimes involving violence, have made life difficult for many Hispanic residents. For many, the actions of the police commonly equate to harassment and coercion. This has created a climate within the most gang-infested areas of Salinas where police presence is perceived at best as coercive and more often than not as illegitimate.

⁴⁵ Salinas arrest records, October 2008 to October 2009, accessed at Naval Postgraduate School.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

C. NEGATIVE CHANNELING

In addition to the indiscriminate repression observed by the Hispanic residents of the City of Salinas, the typology of type D repression also exists in the population's frequent observation of negative channeling. For members of the East Salinas population, both gang and non-gang members of the community equally observe negative channeling through large discrepancies in funding for federal, state and local law enforcement when compared to other programs designed to educate, assist, or mentor those 16–22 year-old youths most affected by gang violence.

One source of fiscal inequality found in Salinas is in local laws like 'Measure V.' This measure passed with 61.74 percent of voter support on November 8, 2005, resulting in a half-percent sales tax increase designed to fund "police, fire, street and park maintenance services."⁴⁷ 'Measure V' also authorized the creation of an "independent committee with authority to both recommend the use of the tax revenue and provide oversight as to the use of the funds."⁴⁸ According to the City of Salinas, 'Measure V' is a "general tax" meaning that the "City may use the revenue from the tax for any general governmental purpose, including without limitation police, fire safety, paramedics, libraries, crossing guards, graffiti removal, anti-gang programs, and street and park maintenance."⁴⁹

Although 'Measure V' provides possibilities for positive channeling in the East Salinas community, the approved appropriations for these funds actually results in negative channeling, as observed in the following financial breakdown of 'Measure V' funds for fiscal year 2006–2007:

⁴⁷ "Measure V," <http://www.ci.salinas.ca.us/residents/pdf/MeasureVHistory.pdf>, (accessed January 29, 2010).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Administration	\$295,000.00
Development & Engineering & Permit Services	\$595,000.00
Finance	\$185,600.00
Fire	\$332,500.00
Legal	\$181,900.00
Library	\$3,600,000.00
Maintenance Services	\$834,100.00
Parks and Recreation	\$1,145,900.00
Police	\$2,830,000.00
Total	\$10,000,000.00 ⁵⁰

According to the following chart, the percentages of each of the above funding appropriations for ‘Measure V’ illustrate how funding is disproportionately allocated to the Salinas Public Library and the Salinas Police Department:

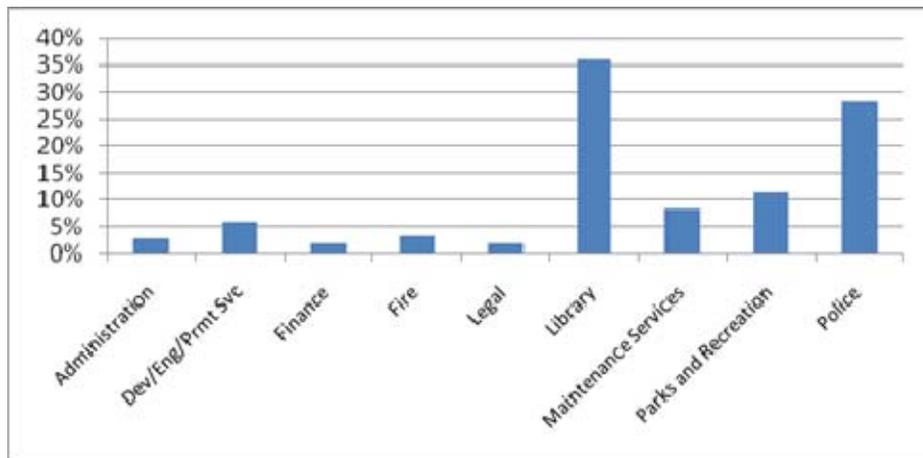


Figure 4. Salinas Crime Data 2005–2007⁵¹

Furthermore, Figure 4 reveals that none of the ‘Measure V’ money funded a single “anti-gang program” as indicated by the City of Salinas. Although there is little doubt that a modern library can serve as a beacon for youth education, there is little to suggest that this 36 percent of the ‘Measure V’ funds constitutes an “anti-gang program.”⁵²

Additionally, Figure 4 reveals that a full 28 percent of ‘Measure V’ funded the SPD. For the average member of Salinas’ gang influenced community,

⁵⁰ “Measure V.”

⁵¹ Data is converted from dollars to percentages from the above source.

⁵² “Measure V.”

'Measure V' does nothing more than take more money out of resident's pockets in order to provide \$2.83 million to the very source of the community's indiscriminate coercion. As an example, of the funds designated for law enforcement, 'Measure V' will provide an additional seven police vehicles and eleven police officers.⁵³

Therefore, not only has excessive coercion by the SPD and the broad community increased violence in Salinas, but the city's use of negative channeling has also increased the size of the problem. Although potentially designed to promote positive channeling, 'Measure V' in Salinas has instead created a dismal situation where members of the repressed community must suffer higher taxes to fund the very source of their repression. By channeling money from East Salinas' taxpayers to the Salinas Police Department and GTF, 'Measure V' only typifies the existence of indiscriminate coercion and negative repression characterized by type 4 repression.

In addition to 'Measure V,' the City of Salinas has most recently proposed another tax raise designed to fund the Salinas Police Department. 'Measure K,' recently proposed in October—November 2009, "failed at the polls... garnering less than 40 percent of the vote."⁵⁴ If 'Measure K' had passed, the City of Salinas "would generate \$18 million a year and eventually fund Police Chief Louis Fetherolf's wish list for 84 more cops."⁵⁵ Although supporters of the plan mourn the potential loss of seven Salinas Police officers, the poor turnout at the polls serves as a potential indicator of the community's negative perception of 'Measure V.' However, the political climate surrounding Salinas has made the prospect for dramatic changes to police funding extremely difficult to change.

53 "Measure V."

54 Zachary Stahl, "Measure K' Fails, Leaders Look Ahead to Another Measure," Monterey County Weekly, October 29-November 4, 2009, 18.

55 Zachary Stahl, "'Measure K' supporters mourn loss of police-funding plan," Monterey County Weekly, November 5, 2009.

When the City of Salinas petitioned for state and federal funding in 2005, Mayor Anna Caballero worked closely with state and federal legislators for the required additional funding and authorization. Likewise, Mayor Caballero was also serving when 'Measure V' became effective. However, in 2006 Mayor Dennis Donohue replaced Caballero when she became a California Assemblywoman, continuing to represent the City of Salinas at the state level. With Caballero remaining in the political picture, it remains difficult for Mayor Donahue to push for new anti-gang measures until the end of 'Measure V's' ten-year sunset period. Despite the political challenges, the City of Salinas under Mayor Donahue hired a new police chief on April 6, 2009 with hopes that new leadership and a new approach can finally reduce the continued high levels of gang violence in Salinas.

In addition to financial negative channeling by the City of Salinas, members of this gang-influenced community also experience negative channeling through the prison system. Ironically, the negative channeling associated with prison is also the direct result of the indiscriminate repression in Salinas characterized by the actions of the SPD. According to the Salinas Gang Threat Assessment for 2009, "the close proximity of two state prisons to the city" is listed as the first of eleven key factors contributing to the current level of gang violence.⁵⁶ What makes prison proximity such an issue for the City of Salinas is the high rate of "incarcerated gangsters directing gangster activities outside of the prisons."⁵⁷ Instead of deterring gang violence, the state prison system has become a source of negative channeling.

The negative channeling represented by Salinas' proximity to state prisons is the systematic failure of these prisons to provide rehabilitative services to promote education, stimulate employment, and therefore reduce recidivism. According to the Salinas Valley State Prison (SVSP) 'Quadrennial and Warden

⁵⁶ "Gang Threat Assessment: Salinas, California," California Department of Justice, (September 2009), 8.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Audit' conducted by State Inspector General David Shaw in October 2008, SVSP Warden Michael Evans failed to properly support education and work programs for inmates. The first official finding of this report states, "Salinas Valley State Prison does not appropriately place inmates in work and education assignments, resulting in ill-prepared parolees and prolonged periods of costly incarceration."⁵⁸ Likewise, Shaw's report also describes the importance of these work and education programs to the overall prison system. According to the 2008 report's executive summary, "Improving inmates' access to educational and vocational programs may reduce recidivism and save state funds."⁵⁹ Therefore, by denying SVSP inmates access to the programs most suited to reducing the problems with gang violence in Salinas, Warden Evans has further channeled valuable opportunities away from incarcerated Salinas's residents. In fact, the SVSP report further states "SVSP assigned other inmates to available work or education slots, such as inmates sentenced to life terms or inmates convicted of violent felonies, both of which are ineligible to receive day-for-day credit."⁶⁰ According to the report, unqualified inmates worked in 32 of 41 work and educational assignments (78 percent).⁶¹ The results of this failure denies "opportunities to inmates who are most likely to be paroled," while also "exacerbates[ing] its [SVSP] overcrowding problem and wastes[ing] tax dollars by prolonging the inmates' periods of incarceration."⁶²

As indicated by the SVSP report, prison recidivism also plays a large part of the negative channeling associated with the California system of corrections. According to the Office of the Governor, "California's recidivism rate is, at 70

58 "Salinas Valley State Prison (SVSP) Quadrennial and Warden Audit," Bureau of Audits and Investigations, Office of the Inspector General, (October 2008), 13.

59 Ibid., 2.

60 Ibid., 13.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

percent, the nation's highest."⁶³ The Governor claims that this is the result of the state's poor reentry procedures for released inmates as "Currently, prisoners receive almost no preparation for release, increasing the likelihood that they will violate parole, commit crimes, and create more victims."⁶⁴

By denying incarcerated gang members opportunities for education, the ability to gain post-prison employment, and keeping inmates incarcerated for longer periods of time, the prison system near Salinas functions as a positive feedback loop. As a complete system, Salinas's high rates of indiscriminate coercion by law enforcement personnel combined with few education and employment opportunities, and the nation's highest recidivism rates, have produced positive feedback into the system that exacerbates problems with both indiscriminate repression and negative channeling as part of type 4 repression. Instead of reducing the problem, the prison system has instead created a vicious cycle where the system used to deter and punish gang activity has become a large part of the system that causes it. By keeping prisoners locked up longer, street gangs are afforded greater opportunities for using prognostic frames that further drive incarcerated gang members toward pursuing a criminally violent lifestyle.

The impact of type D repression on the gang-infected community of East Salinas provides several unwanted inputs into the gang cycle. In accordance with the predictions previously described in hypothesis four, the indiscriminate repression and negative channeling observed in Salinas contributes not only to the sense of isolation from those outside the larger community, but they also help frame the actions of the SPD as illegitimate and corrupt. In turn, street gangs acquire stronger moral incentives for gang membership as a vehicle for providing protection from the outside world and a seemingly more legitimate social structure.

⁶³ Office of the Governor, "Backgrounder," <http://gov.ca.gov/index.php/fact-sheet/1084/>, (accessed January 31, 2010).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

The perceived benefits of gang membership in Salinas have not only outweighed or eliminated the costs, but they have also drastically elevated the collective identity of gang membership. The result of this increase in collective identity has produced two prominent street gangs whose sole identity lies in Norteno or Sureno membership. With all emotional, financial, and pragmatic connections to the outside world severed, street gangs are free to creatively inject strategic framing back into the isolated population. Therefore, as gang membership soars in Salinas, competition for territory, prestige, respect, and financial gain between the two street gang superpowers continuously rises. Not only does severe inter-gang competition further internal violence, such competition also provides incentives for gang members to take directly from the local community.

D. VIOLENCE IN SALINAS

According to hypothesis four, a high level of indiscriminate repression, coupled with negative channeling, contributes to the worst-case scenario for gang violence. As demonstrated thus far, the repression in Salinas is exactly characteristic of the type D repression described in hypothesis four. Therefore, to evaluate hypothesis four properly requires understanding the typology of violence observed in Salinas. As shown in the following Salinas crime trends, two competing gangs in Salinas have contributed to high level of both internal and external gang violence. However, the crime data will also demonstrate how specific changes to the SPD have backfired. Aggressive attempts to 'crack down' on gang violence in 2005 has only succeeded in transitioning Salinas from type C to type D repression resulting in increasing type 4 violence.

To begin with, the nature of being home to two competing gangs has made Salinas no stranger to internal gang violence. According to the Salinas Gang Assessment, the competing gangs in Salinas are "predominant contributors to illicit drug and violence problems," which "consists of, but is not limited to, auto theft, burglary, check fraud, identity theft, homicide, narcotic

sales, and robbery.”⁶⁵ Furthermore, additional economic factors related to drug sales also contribute to inter-gang violence. To account for the high degree of internal violence between rival gangs, both Nortenos and Surenos “acquire narcotics from [the same] Sinaloan cartel suppliers.”⁶⁶ This means that the gangs share a high degree of direct competition for control of drug profits and market share that lends itself to internal violence. As the two rival gangs commit acts of violence inside of their isolated community, the nature of the “drug business rivalry” has contributed a viscous cycle of “greater spiraling retaliatory-based violence.”⁶⁷ Therefore, each act of violence on either side contributes to continued retaliation regardless of the current level of market competition.

In addition to frequent and intense internal violence, the two gangs of Salinas also commit acts of external gang violence. Armed robberies by gang members, as well as violence directed against the community to prohibit cooperation with the SPD primarily accounts for the high degree of external violence conducted within the community. This means the strong majority of violence in Salinas is gang related with only a small percentage falling outside gang involvement. For example, there were 25 homicides in Salinas in 2008, of which 23 were gang related.⁶⁸ As of September 2009, there are already 22 homicides, 100 percent being gang related.⁶⁹ This means that violence, outside of the realm of street gangs, is almost non-existent in Salinas. Therefore, analysis of the overall violent crime statistics for the city of Salinas almost translates directly to analysis of gang violence.

As illustrated in Figure 5, violent crime is composed of four categories: murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Figure 5 shows the specific

65 “Gang Threat Assessment: Salinas, California,” California Department of Justice, (September 2009), 9.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.

crime data for Salinas, California for the years 2003–2008.⁷⁰ Of the four categories of violent crime, murder is indicative of internal gang violence while rape, robbery and aggravated assault are indicators of external gang violence:

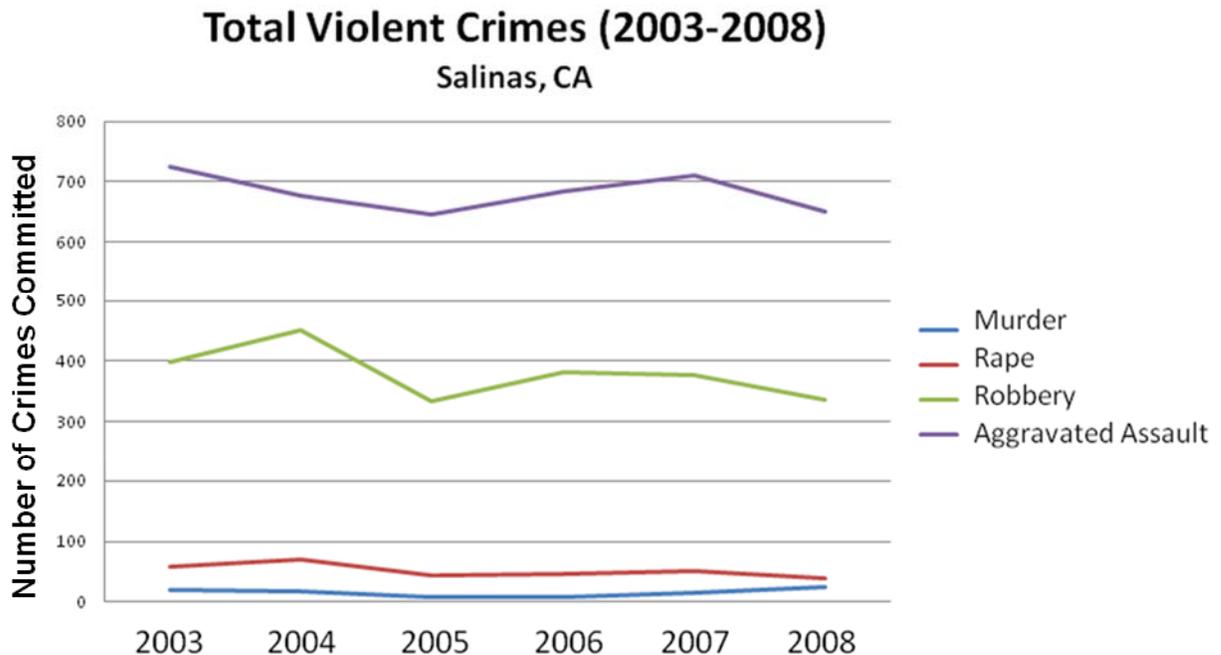


Figure 5. Violent Crimes in Salinas

As shown by the graph, the indicators of external gang violence (aggravated assault and robbery) are in decline, while the indicators of internal gang violence (murder) have remained stable. These conflicting trends indicate that gang violence in the city of Salinas is slowly shifting from type 4 violence (high internal gang violence and high external gang violence) to type 3 violence (high internal gang violence and low external gang violence). Normally, this trend would indicate that repression in Salinas has transitioned from type D (negative channeling and indiscriminant repression) to type C (negative

⁷⁰ All crime data is from the FBI Uniform Crime Reports available at <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm#cius>. Data for each year is available in Section 11, Table 8. (accessed November 22, 2009).

channeling and selective repression). If so, then the transition from type 4 violence to type 3 violence is an indicator that community outrage and backfire is on the decline.

However, when observed more closely, the data in figure 5 also shows that aggravated assault and robbery were on the decline until 2005. At that point, the trends have reversed themselves and are currently rising. This means that prior to 2005, Salinas was experiencing type C repression and something changed in 2005 that ignited a change from type C (selective coercion) to type D (indiscriminant coercion). As it turns out, the year 2005 ushered in significant changes to Salinas' law enforcement that has come to symbolize excessive coercion and repression in Salinas' gang inflicted areas. According to hypothesis four, more type D repression only serves to increase levels of violence, not the other way around. The following graph shows the trends of the Salinas crime data in the three years prior to 2005:

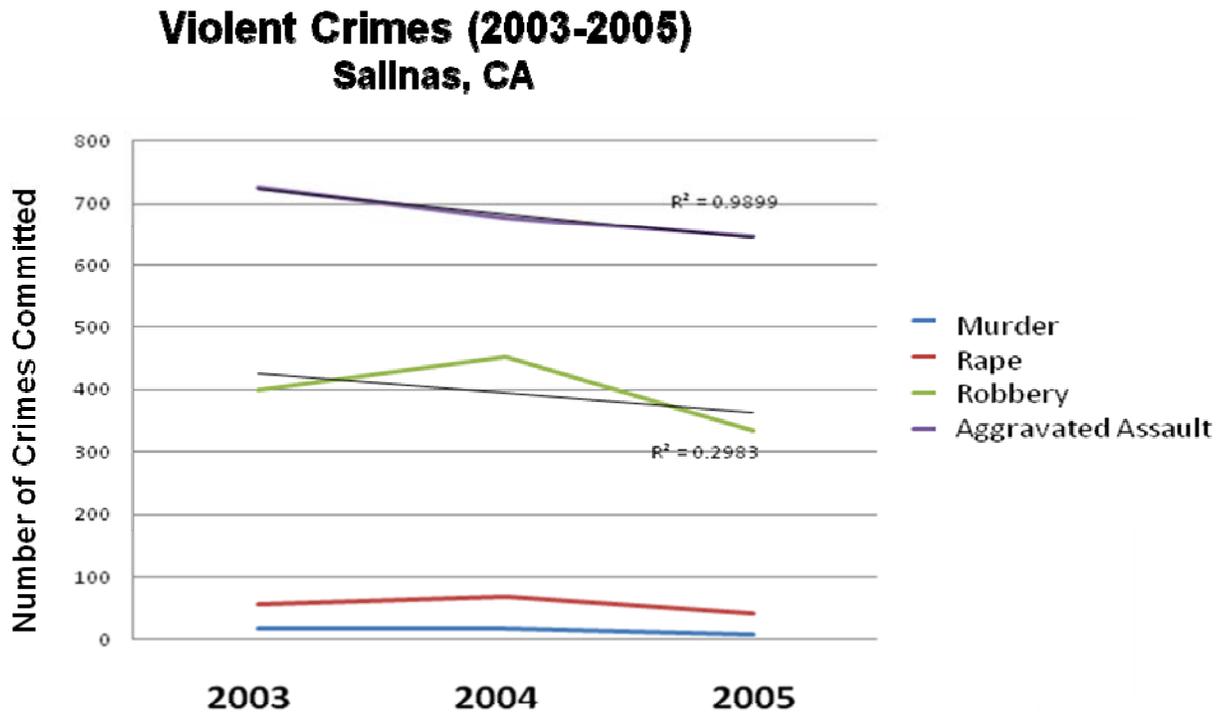


Figure 6. Salinas Crime Data 2003-2005

In 2004, gang related criminal activity in Salinas, despite the declining trend, remained well above the national average for several years. To gain an edge against gang violence, the city of Salinas petitioned Senator Barbara Boxer and Congressman Sam Farr for additional funding to start a specialized law enforcement unit focused on reducing gang violence. In March 2005, the City of Salinas received the requested funding and authorized the formation of the Monterey County Joint Gang Task Force (GTF).⁷¹

To form the GTF, members of several law enforcement organizations across Monterey County transferred to the new organization. The broad spectrum of law enforcement personnel would allow the GTF to eliminate many local jurisdictional issues that street gangs in Salinas have used to shield themselves against legal prosecution. After only two weeks of training, the GTF “hit the streets” in April of 2005 with the mission “to effectively combat gang violence and gang associated problems.”⁷² Despite its best efforts, the GTF has not been able to accomplish its primary goal of “reduce[ing] the occurrence of gang related crimes.”⁷³ Unfortunately, gang violence in the city of Salinas and Monterey County spiked to a record high point in 2007, and it continues to remain well above the national average.⁷⁴ The following chart shows the trends in Salinas’ violent crime following the activation of the GTF:

71 “Monterey County Joint gang Task Force – Home Page,” <http://www.gangtaskforce.org/home.htm> (accessed November 22, 2009).

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 “Salinas, California (CA) Detailed Profile - Relocation, Real Estate, Travel, Jobs, Hospitals, Schools, Crime, Move, Moving, Houses News, Sex Offenders,” <http://www.city-data.com/city/Salinas-California.html> (accessed November 22, 2009).

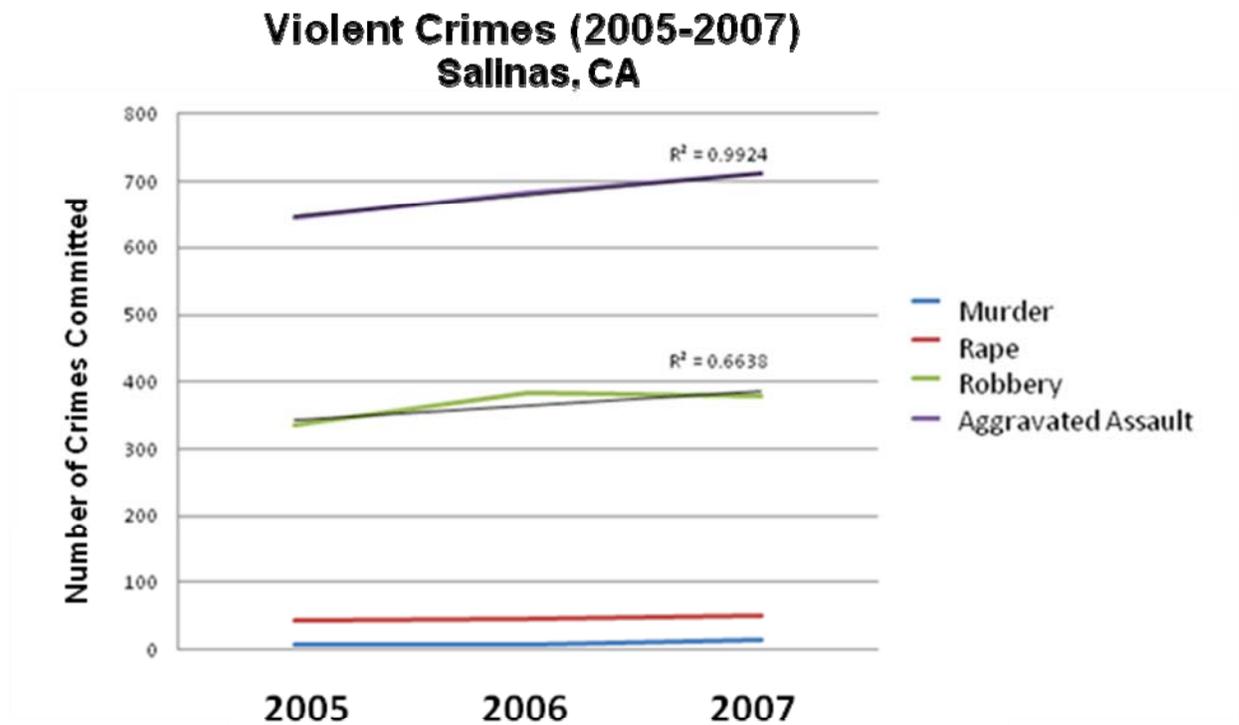


Figure 7. Salinas Crime Data 2005–2007

However, despite the allocation of state and federal funding designed to reduce gang violence, there is little evidence to show that the existence of the GTF has reduced the perception of indiscriminate coercion for members of Salinas’ gang influenced communities. In fact, according to Salinas Police Chief Louis Fetherolf, “So much of the community views us as an occupying force rather than an integrated fabric.”⁷⁵ Therefore, even after witnessing a murder, members of the community frequently resist cooperating with Salinas Police. As one reporter noted, “witnesses in a position to see everything share nothing with police. Their silence is so absolute that after a killing in August [2009], a department spokesperson told the local paper that police were ‘absolutely

⁷⁵ Zachary Stahl, “The Loading Zone,” Monterey County Weekly, October 29–November 4, 2009, 18.

begging' for witnesses."⁷⁶ The poor relationship between the community and the police echoes in the words of one father of a gang murder victim in 2008: "Lots of people are afraid of the cops."⁷⁷

Unfortunately, members of the GTF and the SPD have failed to accept or understand the effects of indiscriminate repression on the residents of Salinas. However, reports indicate that both SPD and GTF leaders admit that the results of the GTF have not been what they anticipated. According to reports as recent as February 2010, SPD and GTF leaders "acknowledged...that a reversal of the upward trend in violent crime is still not in sight."⁷⁸ Because of the aggressive and productive nature of the GTF, the failure to reduce crime has left leaders frustrated. Although since its stand-up, the GTF has made a total of more than "2,800 arrests; 5,000 probation and parole searches; and 21,000 traffic and pedestrian stops," Police Chief Fetherolf considers the continued upward trend in violent crime a "sign of the times."⁷⁹ Instead of taking the crime trends as an indication of failure or poor performance on the part of the GTF, law enforcement leaders blame the insurgent nature of street gangs. According to Sherriff Mike Kanalakis, "This [the GTF report] is not a report card, but rather a barometer of criminal street gang activity."⁸⁰ Likewise, District Attorney Dean Flippo added "There really is an insurgency out there by a small group of individuals who are in gangs and determined to commit as much violence as they can."⁸¹ The unfortunate consequence of these kinds of statements from law enforcement leaders and city officials is the likelihood that it will only lead to a redoubling of

⁷⁶ Karl Vick, "Iraq's Lessons, On the Home Front," [washingtonpost.com, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/14/AR2009111400915.html?wpisrc=newsletter](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/14/AR2009111400915.html?wpisrc=newsletter), (accessed November 22, 2009).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Mike Hornick, "Monterey County Joint Gang Task Force Report a 'Barometer,'" [thecalifornian.com, http://www.thecalifornian.com/article/20100202/NEWS01/2020304/Monterey-County-Joint-Gang-Task-Force-report-a-barometer](http://www.thecalifornian.com/article/20100202/NEWS01/2020304/Monterey-County-Joint-Gang-Task-Force-report-a-barometer), (accessed February 11, 2010).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

efforts. Instead of searching for the true cause for the law enforcement failure, GTF leaders are likely to continue the failed course of indiscriminate repression against the residents of Salinas. In fact, GTF Commander Bob Eggers states that violent crime would have been worse had it not been for the efforts of the GTF.⁸² Furthering the denial of GTF failure, Sherriff Kanalakis remarks on the extremely low rate of complaints filed against the GTF. With only 11 formal complaints, Sherriff Kanalkis stated “Over a five year span [that] is remarkably low.”⁸³

However, despite these claims of denial, the GTF report ends up being much more telling of the GTF penchant for coercion and repression. As GTF Commander Bob Eggers states:

The 11 [formal complaints], they’re not the only ones. There were plenty of other people that were initially disenchanted with us [the GTF] being there. But most never filed a formal complaint. The unfortunate by product of having a family member on parole or probation is that we are allowed to enter their place of residence to conduct a compliance check. Family members become upset because we’re doing that. They don’t understand the legal ramifications of having that person living with them, what it surrenders them to in terms of us being able to come in and take a look.⁸⁴

This statement certainly clarifies the perception of police repression from the perspective of the gang-influenced community. As this community becomes increasingly isolated from the values and norms of normal society, this type of police activity only increases the perception of the police as illegitimate and corrupt. Not to mention, the family members of parolees or those on probation will fail to view their loved ones as criminals. Instead, the community regards parolees as victims of corrupt “invaders” or “outsiders.” When people believe that any member of a repressed community, regardless of individual actions, has

⁸² Hornick, “Monterey County Joint Gang Task Force Report a ‘Barometer.’”

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

an equal chance of receiving punishment, the situation can only be described as tyranny. Because of the increased level of indiscriminant repression, the creation of the GTF in 2005 marked the transformation from type C repression to type D repression that has likewise contributed to the rise of type 4 violence in Salinas.

In response to the failures of the GTF to reduce gang violence, the city of Salinas has recently borrowed from a successful program that has produced incredible results in Chicago. According to the Finn Institute for Public Safety in 2008, the CeaseFire-Chicago Program's "theory rests on three factors that contribute to violence—norms, decision making, and risks."⁸⁵ To counter the norms associated with gang violence, CeaseFire-Chicago "provides for community mobilization, public education, and mentoring via outreach workers."⁸⁶ To change decision making associated with gang violence, CeaseFire-Chicago relies on "violence interrupters," not police officers, to "provide immediate alternatives to violence at the time when individuals are making decisions about retaliation."⁸⁷ Finally, to address the risks involved in committing acts of violence, members of the program produce messages to communicate "a classic deterrence message."⁸⁸ One important aspect of the CeaseFire-Chicago Program is that they do not rely on police to reduce the violence. Instead:

The outreach workers and violence interrupters are streetwise individuals who are familiar with gang life in the communities where CeaseFire is active. Many of them are former gang members and many have spent time in prison, but they are now 'on this side of the line' and eager to give back and help young people in their neighborhoods."⁸⁹

85 Heidi S. Bonner, Sarah J. McLean, and Robert E. Worden, "CeaseFire Chicago: A Synopsis," <http://finninstitute.org/uploads/CeaseFire-Chicago.pdf> (accessed February 11, 2010), 1.

86 Ibid., 2.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

89 "High-Risk Conflict Mediation by Outreach Staff," Ceasefire.org, http://www.ceasefirechicago.org/conflict_mediation.shtml, (accessed February 11, 2010).

Of the Chicago areas studied statistically, “violence was down by one measure or another in six of the seven areas.”⁹⁰ Overall, shootings decreased 17-24 percent and “persons actually shot or killed” declined 16–34 percent.⁹¹ By relying on members of the gang infected community instead of police or other representatives of repressive authority, the CeaseFire-Chicago Program continues to serve as an effective source for violence reduction. Unfortunately, the program adopted by the city of Salinas uses a similar name, but very different techniques.

The Salinas version of the successful Chicago program is much different from its namesake. According to local news sources, the Salinas Ceasefire program “aims to reduce gang violence by giving gang members an ultimatum to give up their criminal ways or face prosecution and hard time.”⁹² Those taking part in the program receive “employment opportunities and training.”⁹³ In the ceasefire Salinas program, the SPD invites known gang members to attend ‘call-ins.’ At these meetings, the SPD meets with small groups of gang members and offers job training opportunities for those willing to participate. As far as the types of jobs offered, Deputy Chief Kelly McMillian states “Remedial jobs don't work...[But] we're not looking at \$100,000 a year jobs either, [just] one that can provide the dignity of good employment.”⁹⁴ The other side of the ultimatum offered at the ‘call-ins’ is the threat of enhanced aggressiveness to those who fail to commit to the Ceasefire Program.

90 Wesley G. Skogan, “Brief Summary: An Evaluation of CeaseFire-Chicago,” [ceasefirechicago.org, http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications/ceasefire_papers/summary.pdf](http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications/ceasefire_papers/summary.pdf), (accessed February 11, 2010). 3.

91 Ibid.

92 Kimber Solana and Sunita Vijayan, “Salinas Ceasefire Program Seeks Jobs For Ex-Gang Members,” *The Californian*, <http://www.thecalifornian.com/article/20100112/NEWS01/1120314/Salinas/--Ceasefire-program-seeks-jobs-for-ex-gang-members>, accessed February 11, 2010.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid.

Unfortunately, the Salinas Ceasefire program does not offer the same alternative to repression as the program successfully employed in Chicago. The primary difference with the Salinas program is that it relies on the use of cops as the intervening tool, while CeaseFire-Chicago uses actual reformed members of the community. This means that gang members are being encouraged to reduce violence by a person who shares a similar history and background rather than by a visible “agent of repression.”⁹⁵ By neglecting this step, Salina’s Ceasefire program will likely appear to Salinas gang members as another example of police repression. Additionally, the only carrot involved in the Salinas Ceasefire program is the promise for job training. However, in a city with 17 percent unemployment, the financial benefit for a gang member to exchange gang life for a low-paying job is minimal. Not to mention, any ex-gang member who leaves his protective fold is thereby making himself an easy target for retaliation by members of rival gangs. Therefore, promises made by police officers who are perceived as ‘illegitimate,’ for jobs that are already perceived as ‘non-existent,’ in return for leaving the safety of one gang only to be vulnerable to retaliation by another, only shows the extent to which the City of Salinas underestimates the effects of repression on violent crime.

⁹⁵ Max G. Manwaring, “Street Gangs: The New Urban Insurgency,” <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssj>, (accessed February 25, 2009), 10.

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VI. CASE STUDY—OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

A. INTRODUCTION

The City of Oakland, the eighth largest city in California, is located across the bay from San Francisco,⁹⁶ immediately south of the city of Berkeley in Alameda County. Compared to Salinas, Oakland's population of 400,000 is approximately 2.5 times larger,⁹⁷ with a more diverse racial composition. Oakland's residents are only 21.9 percent Hispanic compared to 70 percent in Salinas and consist of 35.7 percent black, 23.5 percent white, 8 percent Chinese and 3.7 percent other. Additionally, compared to Salinas' strong agricultural based economy, Oakland is "a major center of commerce and industry...in just 56 square miles of land...known for its thriving economy and world-class cultural attractions."⁹⁸ However, like Salinas, Oakland is home to a prominent gang problem, as well as the "state's highest homicide rate for cities with populations higher than 100,000."⁹⁹

The gang problem in the city of Oakland is also more diverse than in Salinas. Along with the same two competing Hispanic gangs of Salinas, the Nortenos and the Surenos, Oakland is also home to various other gangs:

You have the drug dealing gangs, who are also territorial. They have a certain area where they make their money and they defend that with violence. There are motorcycle clubs like the Hells Angels and the East Bay Dragons. And then you have robbery-type gangs, people who get together and just rob people randomly.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Introduction to Oakland California, CityTownInfo.com, <http://www.citytowninfo.com/places/california/oakland>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

⁹⁷ Oakland, California, City-Data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Oakland-California.html>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

⁹⁸ "Introduction to Oakland California," CitytownInfo.com, <http://www.citytowninfo.com/places/california/oakland>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

⁹⁹ Emile Raguso, "Gang Injunction on Oakland's Horizon," Oaklandlocal.com, February 5, 2010, <http://oaklandlocal.com/article/gang-injunction-oaklands-horizon>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

With such a large gang population, city leaders in Oakland, just as with city leaders in Salinas, also passed sweeping anti-gang legislation designed to reduce gang violence.

B. VIOLENCE IN OAKLAND

In 2004, with a vote of 7 to 1 in the city council and 69.6 percent of the popular vote, the City of Oakland Passed ‘Measure Y,’ the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act. According to the official Berkeley Policy Associates (BPA) report on ‘Measure Y’ dated December 12, 2008, “Measure Y’ increased property taxes and parking fees to fund violence prevention programs, police and fire services.”¹⁰¹ According to the provisions of ‘Measure Y,’ funds should support certain community-oriented policing programs like “Problem Solving Officers...who provide community policing in Oakland neighborhoods,” as well as other community programs designed “to prevent teenagers and young adults from engaging in criminal activity. Some of these programs are intended to deter youths who have never committed a crime; others focus on individuals who are on probation, or who are returning from prison and are at risk of committing additional crimes.”¹⁰² Compared with the provisions of ‘Measure V’ in Salinas, Oakland’s program at first glance appears to channel public funds away from repressive, police focused programs into more local level, community based ones.

According to the official Web site, “The Measure Y network weaves together social services, nonprofits, police, employment, schools, criminal justice, faith based agencies and community members at the neighborhood level to address the symptoms of violence.”¹⁰³ However, since 2004, Oakland’s violent

101 Tommy Smith, Hannah Betesh and Johannes M. Bos, “Measure Y Evaluation: Year 2 Outcomes Report on Violence Prevention Programs,” <http://www.abetteroakland.com/documents/MYevaluationDec08.pdf>, (accessed February 27, 2010). 1.

102 Ibid.

103 About Measure Y, <http://measurey.org/index.php?page=about-measure-y>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

crime rates, especially for ‘external gang violence’ has risen drastically. The following chart shows Oakland’s crime rates from 2001–2008:

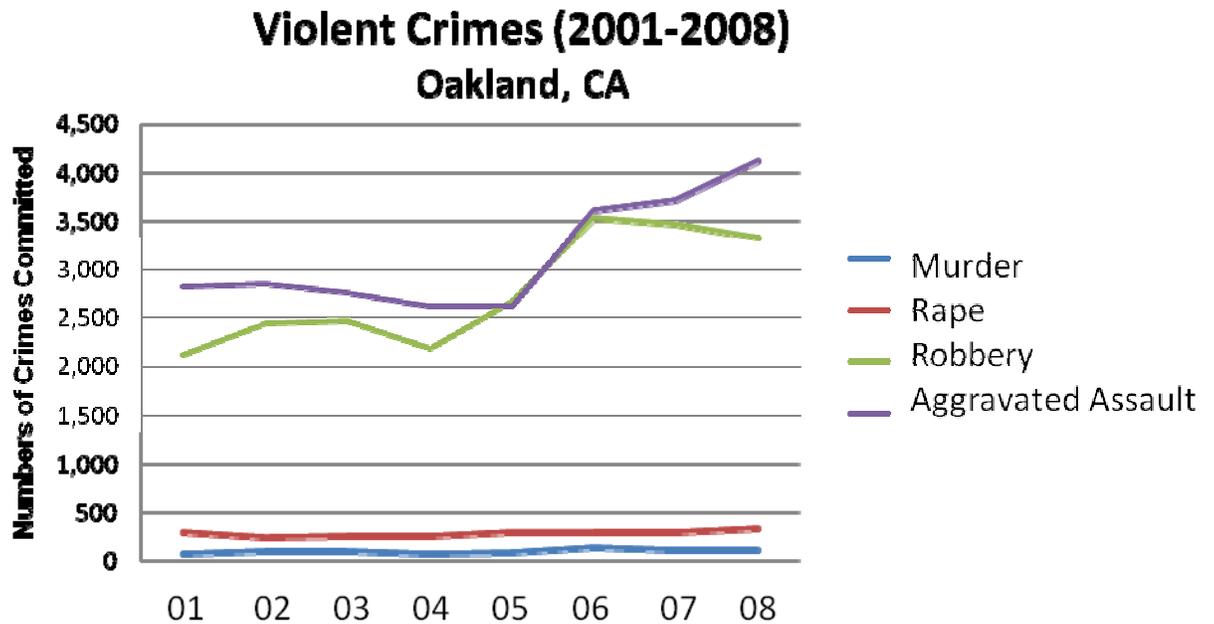


Figure 8. Oakland Crime 2001–2008

As demonstrated by the gang cycle, the typologies of repression and violence, and the Salinas case study, the provisions of ‘Measure Y’ in Oakland should have drastically reduced external gang violence, whereas the above chart shows the exact opposite effect. Since the implementation of ‘Measure Y,’ robbery and aggravated assaults have actually increased 152 percent and 158 percent, respectively.

Although ‘Measure Y’ has appropriated “\$19 million every year for ten years”¹⁰⁴ to fund both police and violence prevention programs, “it is possible that the Measure Y services were not intensive enough to make a real difference, especially for juvenile offenders with a record of serious prior offenses.”¹⁰⁵ As an

¹⁰⁴ Overview of the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act, <http://measurey.org/index.php?page=who-we-are>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

¹⁰⁵ Smith et al., “Measure Y Evaluation: Year 2 Outcomes Report on Violence Prevention Programs,” 23.

example, the budgetary split for 'Measure Y' funds has been 40 percent for violence prevention programs and 60 percent for police services.¹⁰⁶ This means that for every dollar spent on funding the police, only \$0.66 is spent on violence prevention. Therefore, as with Salinas, the isolated members of the gang infested community observe 'Measure Y' as another example type D repression consisting of coercive repression and negative channeling.

C. COERCIVE REPRESSION

Even though the City of Oakland has spent more 'Measure Y' funds on programs designated for 'violence prevention' when compared to the City of Salinas, the Oakland Police Department still maintains a reputation for coercive policing. According to the People United for a Better Life in Oakland (PUEBLO), a group dedicated to "advocate[ing] for the needs of low-income residents of Oakland, most of them people of color, by grassroots organizing, offering leadership training and initiating policy reform," "police misconduct is a major concern."¹⁰⁷ According to PUEBLO, "In 2008 alone, the Oakland Police Department shot ten civilians, six of whom died. In none of those shootings were police charged with crimes or fired for their involvement. In fact, no officer in the Oakland Police Department has been charged with criminal activity or fired for civilian shootings since 2004."¹⁰⁸

As a specific example of police brutality, the group cites Captain Edward I. Paulson: "the head of the Oakland Police Department's Internal Affairs Department, [who] was suspended following allegations that he viciously beat a suspect, who later died, and then demanded that subordinates keep his brutality a secret."¹⁰⁹ Following her son's death, the victim's mother claimed that she

106 FAQ, <http://measurey.org/index.php?page=measure-y-faq>, (accessed March 15, 2010).

107 About PUEBLO, PeopleUnited.org, <http://www.peopleunited.org/pueblo/about.php>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

108 Community Safety and Police Accountability, April 15, 2009, <http://www.peopleunited.org/cspa/article.php?id=14>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

109 Ibid.

“almost filed suit but was dissuaded from doing so by affirmative and misleading statements and conduct by Oakland police.”¹¹⁰ This case and the actions of the PUEBLO organization provide insight as to how ‘Measure Y’ failed to reduce violence in Oakland.¹¹¹

In addition to the Paulson Case, the Oakland Police have initiated other programs that are likely to have unintended effects on gang violence. According to *Oakland Local*, City Attorney John Russo plans to file an injunction targeting specific gangs and specific areas in Oakland. Supporters of such measures believe that “they make neighborhoods safer by cracking down on gangs and crime.”¹¹² According to Alex Kats, spokesperson for the city attorney’s office, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has been consulted to “discuss ways to craft the order.”¹¹³ Some common restrictions included in similar injunctions include “no association with other gang members; no using gang signs or wearing gang colors or clothes; no possession of drugs or alcohol; no possession of weapons; no graffiti; and no intimidation or harassment.”¹¹⁴ Violators of the injunction risk legal charges to include “contempt of court, a criminal

110 Kelly Rayburn, “Judge Clears Way for Case Against Oakland Police To Move Ahead,” MercuryNews.com, http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_14465540, (accessed February 27, 2010).

111 According to local reporter, Vic Lee, the Paulson incident from 2000 resulted in the death of Jerry Amaro after he was arrested for buying illegal narcotics. Following 30 days of hospital treatment, “Amaro died from pneumonia caused by broken ribs and a collapsed lung.” According to the official investigation, “officers on the scene told police internal affairs that Paulson told them to lie and say he did not kick Amaro.” (Vic Lee, “FBI Investigates Oakland Police Captain,” January 23, 2009, http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/local/east_bay&id=6622235, (accessed February 27, 2010.)) Additionally, the Paulson case has made local news headlines when U.S. District Court Judge William Alsup “clears[ed] the way for a case the [Amaro] family filed in 2009 to move forward after the city wanted it tossed out.” (Kelly Rayburn, “Judge Clears Way for Case Against Oakland Police to Move Ahead,” MercuryNews.com, http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_14465540, (accessed February 27, 2010.))

112 Emile Raguso, “Gang Injunction on Oakland’s Horizon,” Oaklandlocal.com, February 5, 2010, <http://oaklandlocal.com/article/gang-injunction-oaklands-horizon>, (accessed February 27, 2010).

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid.

misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.” However, those opposed to injunctions view them as additional sources of repression:

Activists charge that instead of targeting individuals for their criminal activity, gang injunctions sweep entire communities into a net of police surveillance. Moreover, they argue, injunctions, for the most part, are imposed not on the largest gangs or the most notorious gang neighborhoods but rather in areas that are near to white neighborhoods or those most attractive for gentrification. At a (Los Angeles-area) council hearing on these injunctions held in May 2006, community residents from areas under injunction complained of severe curtailment of basic freedom and routine police harassment.¹¹⁵

In other words, injunctions in a city already frustrated by cases like Captain Paulson are likely to increase frustration in the community. According to Jory Steele, managing attorney for the ACLU, "What they [injunctions] do is make everyday activities a crime. People under them face probation-like restrictions without ever (in many cases) having been able to go to court to defend themselves." ¹¹⁶

According to the typology of repression, the actions of the Oakland Police Department and the City Attorney’s Office, from the perspective of the isolated minority population, are characteristic of type D repression. This means that the community considers the actions of the police or the policy of the city attorney to be examples of indiscriminate coercion, while also interpreting the unequal distribution of ‘Measure Y’ funds for police programs as examples negative channeling. Therefore, the observations in Oakland support the expected outcome of hypothesis 4 where high levels of type D repression provides incentives for gang members to strengthen their strategic frames and increase their collective identity. In turn, Oakland gang members have become increasingly isolated and have not only maintained equal levels of internal

115 Raguso. “Gang Injunction on Oakland’s Horizon.”

116 Ibid.

violence, but they have also expressed their frustration with the broad community by increasing their levels of external violence. As such, the Oakland crime data accurately reflects large increases in external crime since the implementation of 'Measure Y.'

D. NEGATIVE CHANNELING

In addition to coercive repression, 'Measure Y' also contributes to type D repression using negative channeling. Just as with coercion, the existence of negative channeling is not immediately obvious. However, taking a more thorough examination of 'Measure Y' funding clearly demonstrates how funds are channeled primarily to law enforcement programs with only a very small percentage expended to support violence prevention.

As previously stated, the official budgetary split for 'Measure Y' funding directs 60 percent of the total budget to support police services and 40 percent to support violence prevention programs.¹¹⁷ Of a \$19 million budget, \$11.4 million will support law enforcement while \$7.6 million is directed to support programs designed to "break cycles of violence...focus on serving at-risk youth, victims of domestic violence or child abuse, and ex-offenders in need of job skills and placements."¹¹⁸ Although a 40 percent budgetary slice is a significant improvement compared to Salinas' 'Measure V,' the realities of the measure continue to represent negative channeling.

The biggest example of negative channeling in 'Measure Y' funding is the wide array of programs supported by the 40 percent budget slice. To begin with, \$4 million off the top is designated to support fire services and the remainder is divided over more than 20 programs. This means that the \$7.6 million budget actually becomes \$3.6 million divided between multiple programs making the financial impact to each individual organization very small. However, the impact of the 60 percent slice to support police services tips the balance to the opposite

¹¹⁷ FAQ, <http://measurey.org/index.php?page=measure-y-faq>, (accessed March 15, 2010).

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

side. With \$11.4 million supporting police services, the most observable impact of the budget will occur on the side of police services. This means that the people of Oakland will see new police officers and new police equipment on the street much more frequently than they will see any changes to specific social programs.

When such police expansion is coupled with the police department's previously described reputation for coercion, the results demonstrate negative channeling. Therefore, just like Salinas, 'Measure Y' becomes another attempt at forcing residents of Oakland to support the very source of their repression. The subsequent results, also like Salinas, have been higher levels of crime, especially examples of external crime that further contributes to type D repression and more inputs into the gang cycle.

E. CONCLUSION

As indicated by the unfortunate finding of the Oakland BPA report, despite the attempts at positive channeling in Measure Y, the end result illustrates that the 'violence prevention policies' intended for the Oakland population remain "not intensive enough" when compared to the examples of indiscriminate coercion and negative channeling not addressed by the measure.¹¹⁹ As government representatives change, council members are elected to higher positions, and police chiefs come and go, members of the isolated community and gang members are not fooled by fresh faces. Instead, the long history of government distrust remains forever fresh in their minds.

¹¹⁹ Smith et al., "Measure Y Evaluation: Year 2 Outcomes Report on Violence Prevention Programs," 23.

VII. CONCLUSION

A. CONCLUSION

In response to social and political isolation from the broad community, street gangs have served as an effective substitution, especially in urban areas. As time has passed, not only have street gangs evolved into third generation gangs with larger political and criminal agendas, but they have also followed the gang cycle often associated with increasing levels of violence. Adding to the original source of repression that initially developed street gangs, governments at all levels have wrongly continued to rely on the use of repression as a false strategy for combating gang violence. The common belief about repression is that when applied intensely enough, street gang members will eventually bend to the will of the state and broad community and abandon violence as an output of gang life. Unfortunately, as evidenced by the case studies of both Salinas and Oakland, California, the community and governments misunderstanding of repression has only exacerbated the problem.

As shown in both Salinas and Oakland, more coercive repression from the state and community only leads to more violence. Ironically, the most ineffective form of repression also tends to be the most popular. As indicated by the effect of combining coercive repression with negative channeling, the gang cycle and high levels of both internal and external gang violence support the validity of the fourth hypothesis. When observing the counter-gang policies in both Salinas and Oakland, the lack of understanding is abundantly clear— more repression leads to more gang violence. In the case of Salinas, the local government demonstrated a sharp progression toward coercive repression with the establishment of the GTF. Likewise, empirical data also demonstrates several examples of negative channeling where money is diverted away from community programs toward the police as the source of the isolated community's repression. Because of this, internal violence between gangs has remained steady while

external violence against the community continues to rise. Sadly, by increasing the level of indiscriminate coercion, the city of Salinas has only made their situation worse.

Similarly, the nearby city of Oakland shares many similarities with Salinas concerning the poor understanding of the effects of repression. By maintaining a police force that is widely known for coercive repression and creating laws that contribute greatly to negative channeling, the levels of violence in Oakland have increased over 150 percent in just six years—not to mention the proposals for gang injunctions that are currently pending will effectively prevent parolees from legally reintegrating back into the community and criminalize many everyday activities.

B. BREAKING THE CYCLE

Many options exist for breaking the gang cycle instead of continuing the current system of community isolation and increased repression. To break this cycle requires changing community policing strategies and redirecting negative channeling programs to allow the isolated community to integrate slowly with the broad community. Likewise, returning prisoners and former gang members require effective local programs to facilitate job opportunities and to provide career placement. With adequate attention to stopping repression and emphasis on economic opportunities, new counter-gang strategies will gradually reduce the high levels of crime associated with gang violence to create safer and better communities.

As easy as it sounds, breaking the gang cycle requires more than placing the counter-gang strategy in the hands of the police. In fact, for more effective counter-gang program, the police department and court system should play a much smaller role than in the previously described failing programs. In fact, understanding how the gang cycle contributes to gang violence is the key to understanding how to counter it.

To begin with, no counter-gang program can succeed without the supporting community first recognizing the existence of repression and isolation. However, changing the deep-rooted feelings between the isolated and broad communities is not easy and has no quick fix. A great first step for many local communities, especially Salinas and Oakland, is to review all policies contributing to negative channeling and create more programs for positive channeling. With negative channeling, isolated people join street gangs to feel involved. However, positive channeling through effective outreach programs will encourage people to join other organizations, and the benefits to gang membership will dwindle over time. In addition to reviewing current policies, Salinas and Oakland should consider adopting examples from organizations specializing in community development.

According to the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), outreach programs utilize specially selected individuals “to serve as good role models, to identify and connect with the appropriate youth, and...help [people in] finding a job or job training, returning to school, controlling their anger, handling court appointments or their probation officers, and engaging with their family.”¹²⁰ Outreach workers provide positive channeling to gang influenced youth by “spend[ing] time with youth on the street, in their home, and on the phone...to connect with the youth and begin to move the youth towards a pro-social path.”¹²¹ Likewise, successful outreach programs provide the opportunity for workers to “focus on long-term relationship building [and] often develop close relationships with youth.”¹²²

Next, police in gang infested communities need to reevaluate who they hire and reshape the criteria for being a successful police officer. To do this requires hiring police officers who understand the heavy responsibilities involved

¹²⁰ “Developing a Successful Outreach Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned,” National Council on Crime and Delinquency, October 20, 2009, 11.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

in policing and who are motivated to make a difference. No effective counter-gang policing strategy should tolerate even the slightest infraction of civil rights abuse or corruption. However, communities and law enforcement organizations must realize that the relationship between the local police as the source of repression, and the isolated community will not become friendly overnight. Rather, extensive and aggressive public relations campaigns will be required to advertise the new role of police. Instead of looking at police as outsiders, efforts must be made to incorporate members of the isolated community into the force so that people feel honest, caring citizens rather than foreign invaders are policing them.

Additionally, police departments and outreach programs must build a cooperative relationship without direct oversight by any law enforcement agency. One benefit of a cooperative relationship between outreach workers and law enforcement is “police have the most immediate information on violence that occurred, such as shootings and killings, and may also have very timely information on impending gang conflicts, the identity of individuals the police suspected and were looking out for, hot spots, and other information on crime and criminals.”¹²³ With this valuable information, outreach workers can better “work on conflict mediation and work to prevent retaliation...It is also helpful for programs that work with victims of crimes, organize vigils, and try to calm the community after such an event.”¹²⁴ Additionally, law enforcement agencies can assist outreach programs with hiring of workers by facilitating background check of potential hires and helping to insure that workers do not become involved in criminal activity. When police agencies assist outreach programs instead of directing them, residents of gang-affected communities can interact with other members of the isolated community instead of police ‘outsiders.’ Also, the strong relationship between police and outreach programs provides a unique

¹²³ “Developing a Successful Outreach Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned,” 23.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

opportunity for outreach worker ‘insiders’ to showcase the benefits and good points of the law enforcement community. Over time, this relationship will help repair and change the perception of police organizations at the street level.

In addition to law enforcement, effective outreach programs must also collaborate with “criminal and juvenile justice agencies, such as probation, parole, and corrections” in order to “reach out to youth and adults that may be reconsidering their street life and be willing to consider a different path once they are released.”¹²⁵ Failure to ensure employment for parolees is a sure way to increase violence and raise recidivism rates further as previously described by the poor performance of the SVSP. Specifically, hard-core gang members and gang leaders require special attention and specific incentives if they are to abandon gang life after incarceration. The natural charisma and leadership skills possessed by many of these individuals must be transferable to similar roles in the legitimate business world. Like federal programs for returning veterans, local governments must develop similar programs to help returning prisoners integrate into mainstream society. It is important to note that these programs must be capable of emplacing former gang members into occupational positions where they feel empowered or risk incentivizing the return to gang membership and a life of crime.

In addition to the CeaseFire Chicago program, other cities have developed successful outreach programs that have been successful in reducing gang violence. One example of a successful program is the Boston Center for Youth and Families’ Streetworker Program (BCYF). Initiated in 1990 and funded by the Boston city government, the BCYF depends on inter-agency coordination with departments such as the Boston Police Department, Department of Public Health, Boston Public Schools, Municipal Courts, and District Courts to “reduce

¹²⁵ “Developing a Successful Outreach Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned,” 25.

gang and youth violence” using a comprehensive approach.¹²⁶ With 25 streetworkers, most of whom have criminal records and previous gang affiliation, the BCYF aims to:

help youth and families gain access to a wide array of health services including education, recreation, enrichment, substance abuse treatment, tutoring, food, clothing, and shelter. The Streetworker Program aims to encourage drop-out youth to return to school and to direct them towards services and programs that help them receive an education—either academic or professional depending on the clients’ capacity and needs.¹²⁷

Another example of a successful outreach program is the California Youth Outreach (CYO) program in San Jose, California founded in 1981 by a former gang member.¹²⁸ Like the BCYF, CYO outreach workers are “individuals who have successfully moved away from the gang lifestyle, bringing first-hand knowledge of gang life to their relationships with the youth they serve.”¹²⁹ CYO outreach workers receive extensive training in “case management, gang intervention, life skills, conducting presentations, and education of the symptoms and effects of drugs and alcohol,” while also learning “how to work with police, probation, and schools.”¹³⁰ Also relying on inter-agency cooperation, the CYO aims to reduce gang violence by “provide[ing] mediation and crisis response services” for at risk youth on the street.¹³¹ Furthermore, the CYO’s founder Pastor Anthony Ortiz was awarded the 2004 California Peace Prize Award, and the CYO received the National Gang Crime Research Center’s 2006 Thrasher Award for exemplary gang prevention and intervention programs.¹³²

126 “Developing a Successful Outreach Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned,” 42.

127 Ibid., 42.

128 Ibid., 44.

129 Ibid., 45.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid., 42.

Although expensive and time consuming, the alternative to an effective counter-gang strategy is dismal and the status quo of continued repression and negative channeling has failed to work. However, to minimize the funding challenges required of successful counter-gang programs, the significant excesses of taxpayer spending directed toward supporting heavy-handed policing strategies can easily be redesignated to better support the counter-gang effort. By breaking the downward cycle of violence instead of reinforcing it, the opportunity for real change and positive results can slowly become a reality.

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