

<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved</i> OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.					
<b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)</b>		<b>2. REPORT DATE</b> 14.Feb.06	<b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b> MAJOR REPORT		
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> THE GANG'S ALL HERE: THE GLOBALIZATION OF GANG RESEARCH.			<b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>		
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> MAJ VITTORI JODI M					
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> UNIVERSITY OF DENVER			<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>  CI04-1748		
<b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AFIT/CIA, BLDG 125 2950 P STREET WPAFB OH 45433			<b>10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>		
<b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>					
<b>12a. DISTRIBUTION AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Unlimited distribution In Accordance With AFI 35-205/AFIT Sup 1			<b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>		
			<b>DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A</b> Approved for Public Release Distribution Unlimited		
<b>13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)</b>					
<b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b>			<b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 29		
			<b>16. PRICE CODE</b>		
<b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b>		<b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b>	<b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b>		<b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>

**The Gang's All Here:  
The Globalization of Gang Activity**

by  
**Jodi Vittori**  
**University of Denver**

Paper Submitted to  
The Journal of Gang Research  
January 2006

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the US Air Force, the Department of Defense or that of the US Government or any other of its agencies. Please direct comments to [jvittori@du.edu](mailto:jvittori@du.edu).

**Abstract**

US-style gangs are becoming more common worldwide because of globalization, and such development reveals a tight connection with a number of factors. First is the US policy of deporting immigrants convicted of crimes back to their home countries, including those involved in drug or gang related offenses; the receiving countries rarely have appropriate programs to deal with the gang problems exported to them and this allows for such groups to reconnect, thrive and expand. Second, the transnational aspects of the drug trade make international criminal activity more salient. Third, the media, including Hollywood movies and the internet, glamorize the gang lifestyle. These traits are leading to the emergence of transnational youth and young adult criminal gangs. On rare occasions, such gangs have proved themselves as national security threats and, as their prevalence grows, so too will the level of threat.

Very few forecasts regarding the growth of youth and young adult gang activity exist. Moreover, there have been only a small number of studies on transnational gangs. Thus, the intent of this paper is to reach new ground by forecasting which countries are most likely to have a substantial pool of potential gang recruits in the near future. This project will be accomplished by comparing the well-studied sociological traits associated with gangs with aspects of different countries. Such traits include a large population of young males, high levels of juvenile delinquency, drug use, high numbers of criminals in the population, high poverty rates, and a large number of single parent, mother-led families.

Mexico, El Salvador, Jamaica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua already have substantial transnational youth criminal gangs linked to US gangs, and indeed, based on this study, they are in the critical risk category. Seven other states also fit in this category: Ukraine, Iran, Ghana, Morocco, Haiti, and St. Lucia. Also at very high risk are the Czech Republic,

20060227 360

Hungary, Russia, Israel, Sierra Leone, Costa Rica, Panama, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela.

Forecasts regarding the alleviation of this problem are grim. Most likely, criminal deportations from the US will continue, along with other forms of migration, leading to a growing transnational gang problem. This will be compounded by a likely increase in drug demand in the US in the coming years, amplifying the incentive for such transnational linkages to smuggle drugs, along with other contraband. The wildcard scenario of the affect of the legalization of drugs is ambiguous.

Policies for combating these problems focus on four areas. First, the US should create a guest worker program with incentives of permanent residency and eventual citizenship for law-abiding immigrants as motivation for themselves and their children to avoid such criminal activities. Second, the US must continue its own anti-gang programs. Third, the US should take the lead in creating multilateral programs to assist countries in minimizing their own gang problems. Fourth, the US should work to increase the overall capabilities of at-risk states, most notably, their law enforcement, judiciary and military institutions. While these factors cannot end all transnational youth criminal activity, they can decrease it, along with lessening the likely pool of future gang recruits.

## Introduction

In the March/April 2005 edition of *Foreign Policy Magazine*, author Andrew Papachristos notes that gangs, once considered mostly the denizen of US inner-city street corners, are experiencing their own wave of globalization. Due to migration patterns and the spread of media, especially the internet, today some US gangs have foreign subsidiaries.

While in the past they were considered essentially harmless groups of boys from the same neighborhood, now gangs are often involved in criminal activities, including drug-related crimes, and in a few cases have been reported associated with terrorist groups. Thus, their transnational spread creates significant US national security concerns.

Gangs are hardly new, nor are they confined only to the US. In the 1600s, London was terrorized by a variety of youth street gangs, who even, "dressed with colored ribbons to distinguish the different factions"—an early version of gang colors (Spergel 1995:3). Gang activity also became endemic in the former Soviet Union, as the social safety net fell apart. Europe, particularly Germany, has been rife with youth Skinhead activity (Spergel 1995). What is unique is that distinctively US-style gangs are being exported to other countries, especially Latin America. Not only are these gangs destabilizing to their new host countries, but when the gangs maintain their links with the US, they can constitute illegal smuggling routes for drugs, people and other paraphernalia.

The National Youth Gang Center (NYGC) reports there are 731,500 gang members in 21,500 gangs in the US. Additionally, gangs and violent youth groups have been reported in France, Greece, South Africa, Brazil, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Britain, Jamaica, Mexico, Canada, Japan, China, Australia and throughout Latin America (Papachristos 2005). While some argue that gangs "migrate" to find new recruits and money-making opportunities, Papachristos asserts instead that many gangs relocate or form subsidiaries as individual members change residence to find jobs or move in with relatives. Furthermore, as the US has taken a stronger stand by deporting immigrants convicted of crimes, many members have found themselves back in the countries of their childhood, where they form "franchises," usually very loosely linked to the "home" gang.

However, the internet is opening new options for those groups with the wherewithal and resources to use it. While most do not possess the hardware, software or computer skills to utilize the web, a few have posted websites, including some which are password protected. These websites encompass gang history, cultural icons, internal documents, and sometimes photos. So far, most of these websites probably come from members who have moved to a new geographic location, for example to college, or are populated by gang "wannabes." Still, one cannot discount some savvy group's eventual web activity to foster or coordinate violence or to organize criminal activity (Papachristos 2005).

Gangs have traditionally been considered a local law enforcement problem, but globalization, along with the widespread, transnational criminal activities of a few, makes this into a growing national security threat. In an extensive survey of 4,140 gang members in 85 correctional facilities across the US, two-thirds reported they were engaged in drug activity, and

half believed their gang had links to organized crime (1997). Additionally, there has been a tiny number of “megagangs” with well organized command and control networks and tens of thousands of members who engage in extensive organized crime. Worse, there have been at least three instances when such “megagangs” knowingly planned to engage in terrorist-related activity. The first was in 1986 when the Chicago-based El Rukns gang conspired to commit terrorist attacks on behalf of the Libyan government in exchange for \$2.5 million. In the 1990s, another Chicago-based gang, the Latin Kings, funneled money to a Puerto Rican terrorist group, and recently, the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) may have conspired with an al-Qaeda leader to smuggle their operatives into the US from Mexico (Papachristos 2005). The globalization of such enterprises points to a significant national security threat.

Already, many Latin American countries see a connection between the US deportation of criminals and associated gang activity within their states and consider them a significant threat to internal security. Indeed, in 2003, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and Mexico agreed to work together to combat this menace (Papachristos 2005). An analysis of which states will likely see new or growing gang problems due to high levels of potential recruits can help the US alleviate this concern, thereby making those states, as well as the US, more secure.

### **Definitions and Scope of this Study**

There is not one uniform and widely accepted definition of gangs (Maxson 1998). A traditional, often-cited definition comes from research conducted by Frederic Thrasher in the 1920s, where he defines a gang as:

An interstitial group, originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict, and planning. The result of this collective behavior is the development of tradition, unreflective internal structure, *esprit de corp*, solidarity, morale, group awareness, and attachment to local territory (Negola 1998).

Klein’s definition of a gang is also commonly cited, especially as part of self-report instruments studying gang activity and membership. He defined a gang as,

Any identifiable adolescent group of youngsters who (a) are generally perceived as a distinct grouping by others in their neighborhood; (b) recognize themselves as an identifiable group, possibly with a name; and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of delinquent incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighborhood residents and/or enforcement agencies (Negola 1998).

The Department of Justice (henceforth, DoJ) defines gangs as “groups of adolescence and/or young adults who see themselves as a group (as do others) and have been involved in enough crime to be of considerable concern to law enforcement and the community” (Maxson 1998). The DoJ separates youth gangs from drug gangs in that youth gangs may be involved in a variety of activities. Drug gangs can be, but are not necessarily, a subset of youth gangs. This type of definition, the “you know a gang when you see it” sort, is a very common one. While different

studies will define youth criminal gangs in somewhat different ways, for the purposes of this paper, the DoJ definition will be adopted, though keeping in mind that statistics and studies used may focus on other definitions.

Gang proliferation and gang migration have more standard definitions. The DoJ defines gang proliferation as “the increase in communities reporting the existence of gangs and gang problems.” Gang migration is simply the movement of gang members from one city to another. This can include temporary relocations to visit relatives or short trips to sell drugs or develop criminal enterprises. This can also include longer term activity such as relocating to avoid gang crackdowns, permanent changes of residence, court placements, and so forth (Maxson 1998).

Covey, et al. cite four forms of juvenile gang activity. The first type is social, street corner, or turf gangs. These gangs are mostly concerned with “hanging out,” partying and so forth. They may engage in some illegal activity, but that is not their primary focus. These are probably the most common types of gangs. The second type is the retreatist gang. Retreatist gangs also have low levels of illegal behavior, with the exception of heavy alcohol and drug use, which is the focus of these groups. The third are conflict gangs. These are the gangs involved in serious crime, including assaults and homicides. The fourth type indicates criminal gangs. These gangs tend to be much better organized than the prior three types, with strong leadership and tight discipline. They are more likely to be associated with adult gangs and are principally motivated by profit. Fortunately, their prevalence is low (Covey, Menard, and Franzese 1997).

This study will concentrate on the migration of youth and young adult criminal gangs from the United States to other parts of the world. In particular, criminal gangs will be the focus, as these types are most likely to form a national security threat to the US. The focus on youth and young adult gangs allows a distinction from adult criminal gangs, namely organized crime<sup>1</sup> and drug cartels. Also, this study will not focus on prison or hate-oriented gangs (i.e. Skinhead groups).

Gang activity in the US has been extensively studied, most notably via a series of surveys conducted by the National Gang Crime Research Center since 1995. Such surveys, along with other empirical data, point to socio-economic “flags” regarding what population characteristics provide the best pool of potential gang recruits. I have researched the available studies to determine the top socio-political flags of gang activity, and used this data to forecast which countries have the strongest potential pool of recruits. With the most likely countries identified, different scenarios have been analyzed to determine whether such transnational activity is more likely in the next fifteen years.

---

<sup>1</sup> The President’s Commission on Organized Crime defines organized crime as, “Groups that engage in a variety of criminal activities are [classified as] organized crime when they have the capacity to corrupt governments.” Based on this definition, only a very select few youth gangs could ever reach such distinction, at least beyond a neighborhood or city level. One exception, the Jamaican Posse, is noted below. However, gangs certainly have worked with larger organized crime groups in the past.  
Spergel, Irving A. 1995. *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

## Literature Review

### *Gang-Activity Forecasts*

When reviewing the literature on gangs, one quickly recognizes that little has been written forecasting future gang activity. One of the very few reports available was released by the DoJ and titled *The Growth of Youth Gang Problems in the United States: 1970-98*. This study sought to forecast the increase in the number of localities experiencing gang activity in the United States. Using extrapolation, it forecast more aggressive, moderate and conservative scenarios for the diffusion of gangs. It ultimately concluded that the geographic spread of gangs would decrease, if for no other reason than that there just were not many more geographic locations for them to go. However, the study did not specifically attempt to forecast the number of gang members or the number of gangs overall. Perhaps more importantly, the DoJ report offered two sociological outlooks for overall gang activity in the US. The first assumed gang activity would decrease due to better policing and gang prevention programs. The second, on the contrary, assumed gang activity could increase due to the increase of the primary cohort involved in gang activity: adolescent and young adult males. These two perspectives will bear a direct impact on this study (Miller 2001).

### *Transnational Gangs*

Not much has been written about transnational gangs either in way of description or forecasts. Joseph Rogers notes (Rogers 2003) that “one of the significant gaps in the gang literature [...] is the detailed understanding of how transnational gangs have formed and thrived, not only in the Western Hemisphere, but also in Asia, Europe and around the globe.”

There have been two recent publications on transnational gangs. The first is the aforementioned 2005 Papachristos article. In it, the author postulates that gangs are becoming global phenomena not because they are themselves turning into transnational organizations, but because gang members have become more mobile. Rather than gangs moving to find new members, instead gang members migrate for social reason, and bring their gang culture with them. A predominant reason for this is the rise in US deportations of immigrants who have committed crimes back to their home countries, which includes those convicted of drug related offenses. Not only do these individuals take their gang predilections back with them, but they may illegally migrate back and forth between their home country and the US, often bringing smuggled items or people with them (Papachristos 2005).

Another recent study is the 2005 article in *Foreign Affairs* by investigative journalist Ana Arana. Her case study focuses on two predominantly El Salvadoran groups: Mara Salvatrucha (a.k.a. MS-13) and an offshoot of the Los Angeles 18<sup>th</sup> Street Gang, which became known as Mara-18 (M-18) (Arana 2005). She cites how these “ultraviolent youth gangs,” or as the US Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) calls them, “megagangs,” sprang up within the gang culture of the US. These gangs then migrated to El Salvador in part due to US deportations of El Salvadoran criminals back to their homeland, bringing the US gang culture with them. They then morphed into sophisticated international criminal rings engaging in everything from petty crime to drug trafficking, international car theft rings, alien smuggling and even contract killings.

Such gangs soon spread to other neighboring countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, Panama and Nicaragua. Most notably, MS-13 took over much of the Mexican “coyote” smuggling of illegal aliens into the US. In the process, they have re-entered the US, this time settling in such untraditional gang locals as suburban Maryland and Massachusetts. Arana sees the US as a lynchpin of both the cause of these transnational megagangs as well as part of the solution. Only a US-led initiative to create a multilateral approach to such gangs focusing on prevention, suppression and intervention will be successful at stemming the flow.

One of the most comprehensive studies is Joseph Rogers’ discussion of transnational gangs in the Americas (Rogers 2003). Rogers cites globalization and trade as the primary drivers of the spread of US-style gangs to Central and South American states. His focus of globalization is the US policy of deporting illegal immigrants who are convicted felons back to their host countries, even if their formative years were spent in the US. Not only do these individuals bring their criminal backgrounds with them, but also higher rates of homicides, assaults, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. As for trade, Rogers concentrates on the flourishing drug trade as a primary driver of these transnational groups. Moreover, as new networks develop for legitimate trade, the same avenues are also exploited for smuggling of illegal goods, people, money and services.

Rogers examines Organization of American States’ (OAS) attempts to coordinate efforts to curb the migration of such criminal groups. In 2000, nearly half of the OAS’ thirty-four members participated in two conferences. The conferences’ goals were to exchange gang statistics, compile existing anti-gang laws, and exchange information on various anti-gang practices. Participants also sought training on how to combat gangs as well as criminal intelligence. However, no significant proposals were forthcoming from the conferences, nor were there significant studies of patterns of growth of transnational crime published. Indeed, Rogers laments (Rogers 2003), “While the problem of transnational gangs continues to worsen worldwide, programs to combat them are not the highest priority in the Western Hemisphere, in other regions or other international organizations, such as the United Nations.”

Another noteworthy study of gangs outside the US was conducted by Malcolm Klein (Klein 2002). Here he notes that the US has “exported” gangs to countries in Europe, including the Netherlands. Similar to Rogers, he remarks that there is some international literature which comments on the existence of such groups, but there is little actually describing them. Thus, a group of American researchers set out a “Eurogang” project in which they sought to determine whether European gangs were similar to those found in the United States, or if they were a consequence of a unique American societal construct. None of the European gangs studied had their roots in their US counterparts, such as from US gang members migrating to Europe, but they had certainly been influenced by US popular media about gangs, such as Hollywood movies. Also, European groups were less involved in violent crime and drugs and there was a far less tendency for firearms to be involved. However, many European groups shared traits with US ones. Most notably, the European gangs were in predominantly urban areas, and most members were from the second generation of immigrant families, making them marginal in their societies—much as US gang members are often marginal in theirs. Second, the European groups were predominantly male, much more so than in the US. There was also a mixture of gang cohesiveness, depending on the individual group, much as in the US. One area the researchers



were unable to study was whether delinquent individuals tended to migrate to gangs, or whether it was the gangs that created the delinquent individuals. Nevertheless, this studied showed that many sociological “flags” of potential gang activity in a population were indeed transnational rather than a unique construct of the US.

In a twist on transnational gangs, Janice Joseph chronicles how a small youth gang traced to a specific neighborhood in Jamaica has become a transnational criminal syndicate, with an estimated 22,000 members. This group takes part in drug trafficking, especially marijuana and cocaine (including having their own fleet of boats and planes to accomplish the task), illegal immigrant smuggling, firearms trafficking and money laundering. It is even able to bankroll some political parties in Jamaica (Joseph 1999). This particular study notes how criminal activity can begin in failed (or significantly troubled) states, and then move to the United States and blossom from there.

### *Gang Migration*

Two theories exist regarding how gangs migrate. The first is the “mafia” theory, in which street gangs evolve into sophisticated organized crime groups who seek new markets either for drugs or new members. An example of this is the migration of the Los Angeles Bloods and Crips to forty-five other US cities for the purpose of selling crack cocaine. The second is the symbolic association theory, in which an individual gang member moves to a new city and sets up a new gang, which may or may not be linked with the old one. There is data suggesting that both theories can be correct (Skolnick, Bluthenthal, and Correl 1993). However, the evidence demonstrates that the symbolic association theory is a more plausible reason for the transnational migration of gangs in most cases (Papachristos 2005).

One notable research was conducted by Cheryl Maxson (Maxson 1998), who summarized prior studies on the subject. All the sources agreed that gangs rarely conducted “entrepreneurial” migration, meaning to actively migrate to seek new drug markets or gang members. Instead, according to extensive surveys of US local law enforcement agencies, 57% of respondents reported that gang members migrated for social reasons, such as moving with their families. Twenty percent, however, did respond that gangs migrated to their areas to expand drug markets. Moreover, the studies were unanimous that, where gang members had moved and engaged in gang activities in their new locations, those cities almost always had gangs already in existence. Thus, the spread of gangs in the US was not about criminals migrating to new cities and causing problems, but rather, augmenting existing issues. However, Maxson noted that the pervasiveness of gang glorification in media was exacerbating problems in local communities. In the end, law enforcement agencies must look to socio-economic factors as to the reasons why there are gangs in their cities, rather than blaming “outsiders.”

### *Sociological Factors of Gang Activity*

While there have been few studies forecasting the migration of gangs or the transnational nature of a few, there have been a myriad of analyses highlighting the sociological factors which make populations susceptible to recruitment by gangs. An important issue to note is that there is no one independent variable for why an individual joins a gang—most members display in fact

multiple sociological risk factors. Indeed, the more indicators one displays, the more likely that person is to join a gang (Hill, Lui, and Hawkins 2001).

Gang activity in the United States is taken on predominantly by adolescents or young adults (Flowers 2003). Gang members are typically recruited at a young age and, while there has been an increasing focus on female gang members, roughly 80 percent of them are male. Members are generally from low socioeconomic strata and from urban areas (1997; Flowers 2003; Spergel 1995).

Perhaps the most noteworthy independent variable for predicting gang activity is the role of drugs. Youth gang activity is stereotypically tied to the drug trade, and there is indeed some evidence to back up that stereotype. Very little connection was noted between gangs and drugs until the mid-1980s and the advent of crack cocaine. Indeed, a US Congress study in 1989 concluded that, in the late 1980s, 30 percent of the crack cocaine market in the US was controlled by the Bloods and the Crips. However, while gangs may contribute substantially to drug use and street-level distribution, studies note that it is the adult drug gangs, in the forms of cartels and other organized crime, which generally accomplish the actual trafficking (Howell and Decker 1999). Still, the effect of drug use is clear. Negola's research emphasized that those who have family members who are involved in gangs or who engage in drugs and alcohol are more likely to join gangs. Sirpal's work focused exclusively on parents and gang and drug activity, and the findings are that there was in fact a strong correlation between parental involvement in drugs and gangs and their children's subsequent involvement (Sirpal 2002). An assessment of 28 years of gang data confirmed that a primary driver was the growth of the drug trade (Miller 2001). Members of gangs are also more likely to both partake of drugs and sell them (1997). Moreover, those youth gangs involved in drug sales were far more likely to be involved in serious and violent crimes than non-gang adolescents (Howell and Decker 1999)<sup>2</sup>.

Mark Fleischer notes that those who join gangs tend to come from families with similar traits. Within these families are members involved in crime and imprisonment, domestic violence, child neglect, alcohol abuse and a high tendency towards poor jobs and unemployment (Fleischer 2002). Moreover, those who actually join the gangs tend to be considered failures in school, use drugs, have alcohol-related problems and homelessness, and experience teenage parenthood. He also cites the cyclical nature of these traits, for instance in that those with poor schooling are unlikely to have good job skills, and thus remain unemployed.

Others have certainly noted similar characteristics. The National Crime Research Study cites poor schooling (1997; Negola 1998) and single parent, mother-led families as typical for those who enter gangs (1997; Miller 2001). Having a parent who has served time in prison also raises the likelihood that one will join a gang. In truth, the 1996 National Gang Crime Research study noted that the more dysfunctional the family, the more likely that gang member was to use

---

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that, while violence and the drug trade go hand-in-hand, violence is a part of everyday gang life, and thus drugs do not necessarily increase the violence of individual gangs. Thus, reducing drug trafficking will not necessarily impact violent youth gang activity.

Howell, James C. and Scott H. Decker. 1999. "The Youth Gangs, Drugs, and Violence Connection." edited by DoJ: Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs.

violence, be involved in drug crimes, and be more committed to gang life. A child of a highly dysfunctional family apparently makes an ideal gang member (1997).

Another culprit is arguably migration. The Miller study noted that, since the 1800s, gangs have generally formed along ethnic lines—which are still predominantly true of today’s gangs, though the specific ethnic groups most prominent in gang activity have changed.

Hagedorn notes that gang members tend to come from economically depressed areas where unemployment is rife. He posits that drug dealing may actually be a sort of “informal economy” providing employment to fill the gaps left by a lack of low skill but high paying jobs in urban areas (Hagedorn 2002). Howell, et al., as well as Papachristos, observe that gangs tend to be found in urban areas, although in the US they are also numerous in rural regions—and have been over the past few decades (Howell, Moore, and Arlen Egley 2002; Papachristos 2005).

Finally, government policies have favored gang activity. Since the 1960s, law enforcement and public officials have generally been more tolerant of activities likely to lead to gang activity: changes in family arrangements and child-rearing practices as well as housing patterns. Indeed, millions of dollars of Federal funds have been allocated to gangs in the past, hoping they would “go legit” and use their social cohesiveness to improve, rather than degrade, their neighborhoods. These efforts were largely ineffective, and the result was more gang activity, especially with the 1970. In fact, many of the gang members in the 1980s were the children of those who had joined in the 1960s (Miller 2001).

Of particular concern is represented by the so-called “super predator” gang members. While amounting to only six percent of the gang population, they commit a significantly larger proportion of the crime and violence than ordinary members. They tend to join gangs at a very early age and remain a gang member longer. They also tend to engage in more severe violence. Ninety percent have sold crack cocaine and have been involved with organized drug dealing (versus 43 percent for gang members overall). Braga, et al. and other researchers have also postulated that violent criminal activity is actually concentrated among a small number of chronic offenders (1997; Braga, Kennedy, and Tita 2002). These persons carry many of the same sociological flags (such as dysfunctional family, mother-led home, poor education) but the level of violence and amount of recidivism is extremely high, creating a greater challenge for law enforcement (1997).

One sociological conundrum is the gang-member equivalent of the “chicken and egg” question. Do delinquent individuals tend to gravitate towards gangs, or do good individuals join gangs, which then turn them into delinquents? Esbensen, et al. posit that delinquent individuals tend to gravitate towards gangs (Esbensen, Peterson, Freng, and Taylor 2002). Negola also notes that those in gangs tend to engage in criminal activity at a young age (Negola 1998). However, gangs amplify such activity. Conversely, when individuals leave gangs their level of criminal activity tends to drop. Violent groups have dynamic or self-reinforcing positive feedback mechanisms for violence, notably fear, “respect” issues and vendettas (Braga, Kennedy, and Tita 2002). This leads one to assume that populations with high levels of juvenile delinquency may be fertile breeding grounds for future gangs.

Clearly, this field of study is suitable for further investigation. An analysis of sociological factors most likely to influence gang recruitment, along with a forecast of future recruitment pools, is a study long overdue. Moreover, an analysis of what interventions will be most likely to decrease that pool would enable the United States or other interested parties to tailor aid to achieve “the most bang for the buck.”

## Methodology

This forecast is conducted in two parts. First, I analyze which states are most likely to hold large potential recruitment pools. Taking the predominant sociological factors listed above, I have researched which statistical analyses already exist for states which could most closely match indicators of gang activity:

- US Department of Homeland Security criminal deportations: numbers and target countries
- States with a high incident of drug use or who are transit points for drug smuggling
- States with a large population of the primary cohort: adolescent and young adult males
- States with high poverty rates
- States with a high percentage of their population in jail or who have criminal records
- States with high drop-out rates
- States with high levels of mother-led households
- States with large urban areas

As noted above, gang members generally demonstrate multiple factors listed above—one is not more predominant than the others. Thus, countries demonstrating high levels of many of the factors above are more likely locales for gang activity. Therefore, I have created a “stoplight” chart of countries’ risk factors. Green on the chart indicates that the country has a low to level of that particular trait compared to other states; yellow that the state has an average level; and red that it has an extreme level<sup>3</sup>. This is accomplished for each trait and the results displayed in Appendix A. Those countries displaying the highest degree of extreme measurements are considered most at risk. Only those countries missing two or fewer pieces of data will be assessed.

Unfortunately, insufficient data exists to conduct quantitative analysis, such as multiple regression, with accuracy. Instead, a qualitative scenario analysis is conducted based on the two primary drivers of trans-state criminal groups. First, I analyze what is likely to happen regarding transnational linkages between US and foreign youth gangs. Second, I assess the effect of the current level of US drug use and trafficking, and in particular, I assess the possible outcome of the wildcard scenario of a legalization of drugs. These lead to some policy prescriptions.

Specific sources for the traits listed are explained below in order of importance<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> As most data does not have a recognized high, medium, or low level, I have assumed anything above 10% of the average is high, and anything 10% of the average or lower is low.

<sup>4</sup> Data on the number of drug offenses, poverty, total crimes per capita, prisoners per capita and enrollment ratios were originally accessed via <http://www.nationmaster.com>.

*Deportation Data.* The purpose of this study is to determine which states are most likely to develop a US-style criminal gang problem which would pose a direct threat to the US via direct ties between gang members abroad and in the US. As Papachristos notes, the states most likely to develop US-style gangs are those who receive a high number of gang members as deportees from the US (Papachristos 2005). Therefore, this study considers deportation data the most important source of information to assess potential gang recruit population activity which could threaten the US.

According to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Immigration Statistics, in 2003, 27,905 alien criminals were deported from the United States, 39 percent of whom were convicted of crimes involving dangerous drugs, a common offense among gang members. Unfortunately, DHS statistics only note total numbers of criminals deported, and thus, no specifically gang-related statistics were available (2004a).

Given that this study focuses on gangs likely to have ties with the US, the methodology first noted the rate at which countries received criminal alien deportees. This study assumes that the higher the number of deportees, the greater the likelihood that at least some of the deportees will be gang members, some of whom will be willing to reinstate their prior, US-based activities in their original home countries. While in theory, a highly entrepreneurial deportee could establish transnational gang connections between his home state and the US, this is unlikely. Therefore, this study has chosen the arbitrary number of an average of at least ten deportees from the United States per year between 1998 and 2003 for inclusion. This brings the number of countries with likely recruitment pools for transnational criminal groups involving the United States down to 85 from a total of 204 originally assessed by DHS (see Appendix A for a list of countries).

*Drugs.* As the literature notes, criminal gangs are also generally tied to drug use. Moreover, such groups are only a direct threat to the internal security of the US if they are involved in transnational illegal activity. Drugs provide just such an opportunity. While this is not to discount that transnational gangs often engage in smuggling of different commodities, such as people, counterfeit goods, or other contraband, case studies, such as those of the Jamaican Posse or the El Salvadoran MS-13, indicate that such gangs are usually involved in drug smuggling. Thus, countries with substantial drug problems, either due to drug use or to their nature of transshipment points, will be considered as the next most important factor in this study.

Data measuring levels of drug infiltration in the selected countries will come from three sources. The primary one will be the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which has published statistics on amount of drug use for each country (2004b). This will be augmented with data from the Department of Justice National Drug Intelligence Center threat matrix (2004c), which lists source and transshipment countries for five types of drugs. Third, a 2000 UNODC report on number of drug offenses per 100,000 will be used (2000). Of particular note, the 2004 UNODC report lists rates of drug use for each drug only for those states who report, and whose reports are above zero. Thus, the fact that some states display no information is not a sign of not reporting, but rather, most likely signifies either that the state experiences

almost no use of this type of drug, or that the state chose not to measure this aspect of drug use. Therefore, states will be assessed in the extreme if at least one category of drug use is in the extreme. For states who are both sources and transshipment points for drugs, their level will be raised by one (i.e. Mexico's status was raised from yellow to red). While results for each type of drug use are in Appendix B, the overall results can be found in Appendix A.

*Adolescent and Young Adult Male Cohort.* As most gang members are young males, this is the next data set. Data for males between the ages of 15-24 will be assessed from the US Census Bureau International Database data for 2005 (2005b). Much of this data includes forecasts, as states generally do not publish population figures each year.

*Poverty Rates.* Poverty rates for each state are derived from the 2005 World Factbook (2005a). It should be noted that many states, including those in the developed world, do not report their poverty rates.

*Crime Rates.* I have been unable to find comprehensive data on juvenile crime rates worldwide, so instead, overall crime rates are assessed, assuming these crime rates generally indicate levels of juvenile crime as well. This will be measured via 2003 data from the International Centre for Prison Studies (2003). While this data set can be considered suspect because it may be measuring the effectiveness of law enforcement rather than actual crime rates, it should still be adequate for this study's purposes.

*Education Rates.* The enrollment ratio between children actually attending secondary education and those of official secondary school age in a country's population are used to indicate the percentage of high school drop-outs. This data is derived from the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). One should note that the scale is reversed for this set of data: states in the extreme (red) category are those with very low rates of students in secondary school.

*Mother-led Households.* Little survey data exists on the number of mother-led households worldwide. However, divorce rates for many states were compiled by the Heritage Foundation in 2002 (Nugman 2002). Presumably the higher the divorce rate, the higher the number of children being raised by a single-parent and of those, most will likely be raised by the mother. However, it should be noted that this does not include single-parent households due to the death of the spouse. This could skew data, especially in war-torn countries or those with high HIV/AIDS rates.

*Large Urban Areas.* Any US city with a population above 250,000 has a near-certainty of having gang problems (Papachristos 2005). If this is extrapolated to the countries in Appendix A, one can see all of them have at least one large city. Thus, this measure will not be useful for this study.

With such analysis, a word of caution is in order. This study is intended only to provide indications of where future gang activity is most likely. This high-N analysis is based on country-wide data, and yet one must acknowledge that gang activity often springs from individual neighborhoods, regardless of what nation-wide data might indicate. Moreover, this

study does not include many cultural factors, such as an individual society's mores regarding violence, which could alter the likelihood of young adults engaging in gang activity. The author firmly believes that deep analysis of each locale is necessary to provide verification of the potential for gang activity within each state. However, the data encompassed here can hopefully provide a useful indicator of where gang activity may be likely to arise in the future, and what can be done to minimize its spread.

## **Research Results**

Results have been assessed based on the stoplight chart (Appendix A) to determine which countries are most likely to develop transnational criminal gang problems with close ties to US gangs. As described above, seven factors have been considered: criminal deportations from the US, prevalence of drugs, number of men in the 15-24 age cohort, poverty rate, crime rate, school dropout rates and divorce rate. First, those states without an average of at least ten deportees per year have been eliminated from the list. Second, those states for which at least four of the six remaining factors could not be ascertained have been eliminated due to lack of data.

Of those remaining, the countries considered most at risk for such youth criminal groups are based on those with a high prevalence of drug use plus at least two sociological factors in the high category. This led to thirteen states in the critical category, and ten more states in the very high risk category. The states in the most critical category with more than half of the gang indicators in the extreme category are (ranked alphabetically and by geography):

### *Europe:*

Ukraine

### *Asia*

Iran

### *Africa*

Ghana

Morocco

South Africa

### *North America, Central America & the Caribbean*

Mexico

Haiti

Jamaica

St. Lucia

El Salvador

Guatemala

Honduras

Nicaragua

Those at very high risk are:

### *Europe*

Czech Republic

Hungary

Russia  
*Asia*  
Israel  
*Africa*  
Sierra Leone  
*North America, Central America & the Caribbean*  
Costa Rica  
Panama  
Bolivia  
Colombia  
Ecuador  
Venezuela

Particularly noteworthy is that Mexico, Jamaica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua are all on the critical indicators list. As noted above in the literature review, these are states which are recognized as having transnational criminal youth gangs with extensive ties to the United States. The fact that all of these countries are listed as critical indicates this methodology has some veracity.

It is also interesting to note how many states listed above already have substantial adult criminal groups such as mafias. Mafias centralized in Russia and Israel, for example, already pose a substantial transnational threat. In particular, the Russian mafia has been a concern of US law enforcement for some time. Moreover, many of these states have exhibited substantial violent youth gang problems, though these gangs have not yet exhibited specific ties to the US. Sierra Leone has tragically experienced the epitome of violent youth groups in its recent civil wars. South Africa has also experienced substantial youth criminal groups. Thus, many of these states already exhibit at least part of the problem: either youth criminal groups who do not yet have specific links to US-based gangs, or states with adult gangs who have links to US groups, but who do not necessarily have US-linked youth-based groups. It is thus only a matter of time before there is some combination of the two.

One issue which cannot be neglected is the role of geography. Of course, it makes sense that those states first to experience transnational youth criminal gangs with links to the United States are those most geographically close to the US—Mexico, El Salvador and so forth. However, in forecasting the future of gangs with links to the US, one cannot neglect the role of technology in enabling gangs to link to one another, if not physically, then at least virtually. It will certainly be more difficult for a youth gang in the Czech Republic to remain physically connected to one in the US, however, as substantial illegal migration has demonstrated, it is not impossible. This is especially true if the gang in question has substantial resources at hand due to its involvement in drugs or other smuggling.

More importantly is the potential role of growing communications links. Transnational criminal groups may be able to maintain ties to US groups, coordinating activities for example, via mobile phone, email and the like. Indeed, should such coordination become the norm, youth gangs from states with extensive communications infrastructure, for instance, Israel, could become a substantial threat to the US. As Papachristos notes, though only a few gangs have so



far demonstrated the ability or desire to use the internet for their activities, there are plenty examples already of gang communications via internet, and it is only a matter of time before more criminal activities are managed that way (Papachristos 2005).

Another useful case study involves two groups specifically not analyzed in this study—hate and religious extremists groups. Madeleine Gruen has studied how white supremacists and Islamist extremist groups have used the internet to conduct both inter- and intra-state communications, recruitment and fundraising. She notes how the internet has provided these two types of groups with extensive capabilities to organize via the web for five primary purposes—propaganda, recruitment, indoctrination, fundraising and psychological warfare (Gruen 2004). As Gruen (2004:289) states, “White-ethnonationalist information technology strategies have effectively afforded groups that traditionally operated domestically a transnational presence, richer and more varied funding opportunities, and a profitable conduit to their desired recruitment demographic.” If hate groups can manage to use the internet this effectively, it is inevitable that transnational youth criminal gangs figure it out as well. Therefore, as with so many issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, geography may no longer afford the protection for the US that it used to.

### **Future Scenarios**

This study attempts to look fifteen years from now, to the year 2020, in order to determine what course of events the threat of transnational youth criminal gangs might take in regards to links between the host state and the United States. This is broken into two parts. The first assesses the likelihood of a growth of transnational gangs originating in the US. The second focuses on the next most important concern regarding such criminal groups—the effect of drugs. This is not, however, to deny the importance of sociological factors to producing the conditions for gang membership, and indeed, such concerns will be addressed in the policy recommendations portion of this study. In this case, I believe specific prescriptions for alleviating sociological factors are better dealt with on a case-by-case basis, rather than by using a large-N analysis.

#### *The Future Spread of Transnational Youth Gang Activity*

Certainly, deportations of gang members are a primary cause of the transnational links between overseas gangs and the US. Currently, there appears to be no incentive to end such deportations, and as the policy recommendations section below explains, ending such policies may not necessarily be a good idea. Thus, it is safe to forecast that as long as deportations continue, the likelihood of transnational youth gang grows.

However, even if deportations ended today, transnational gang links would almost certainly continue, albeit at a slower rate. The reason is that it is not just the deportations to spread such gangs, but migration in general. Gang members travel back to their home countries for many reasons. In the case of El Salvador, many Salvadorans went home when the civil war ended, and took their children with them. This becomes a source of future gang membership. Gang associates may be sent to their home countries by their families in the hopes of getting

them away from the gang climate, only to have them reinitiate gang activity once back home anyway. Thus, the growth of such transnational gangs seems almost certain.

Moreover, as cited above, geography is no longer the barrier it once was. While it is certainly easier for gang members in Latin America to maintain ties to US groups, given the internet and other communications means, there are plenty of opportunities for youth gang members throughout the world to maintain ties with which to coordinate criminal activity. Mafias do it all the time, so there is no reason why youth cannot as well. Therefore, one should expect transnational criminal gangs to spread over the next fifteen years to countries outside Latin America, perhaps even as far away as Asia.

Thus, the growth of transnational youth gangs with links to the US is almost certain to grow. If deportations were to end immediately, the diffusion of such gang activity would likely slow down, but given the myriad of other factors encouraging gang members to migrate, such activity would still likely continue. Of course, if deportations continue, or increase, one can certainly expect gang activity to grow at a higher rate. However, neither scenario depicts an end to such gang problems.

### *The Future of Drug Use and Smuggling*

As indicated above, drugs form a primary resource to transnational criminal gangs, along with being a primary socio-economic flag of potential gang membership. In particular, smuggling drugs into the US can be a particularly profitable means to acquire resources, while providing a primary justification for such gangs to move from domestic to transnational with explicit links to the US. As such, the future of drug activity can be expected to yield a primary indicator of transnational youth gang activity.

In the coming years, it appears drug use in the United States will likely increase, according to the *National Drug Threat Assessment* for 2005. In particular, marijuana use will continue to rise. As the US National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) considers marijuana to be a gateway drug towards other, more substantial drug use, they expect overall drug use in the US to increase. While rates of cocaine use have been falling and are expected to continue the trend, the US will remain the largest and most stable cocaine market in the world. So too, methamphetamine and heroin are expected to rise (2005c). Thus, as the likelihood of a sudden downturn in drug demand in the United States seems very low, it is doubtful that drug use will cease to be a major impetus behind gang activity.

One area which could see changes is source and transshipment routes for drugs. Currently, most drugs, even heroin, come from Latin America and are transshipped through Mexico into the southwest United States (2005c). Hence, it is not surprising that transnational youth criminal gangs are most common in Mexico and Latin America. However, should supply routes change, perhaps due to a lack of sufficient goods in Latin America, greater interdiction along US border states, or a change in US drug users' preferences, those supply routes could be altered, thereby affecting likely locations for future transnational gang activity. For example, most heroin destined for the US comes through Mexico, and very little comes from the well-publicized fields of Asia (2005c), most notably Afghanistan. However, should Afghani heroin

begin to substantially find its way to US markets, likely gang linkages could increase between US and Asian gangs. For instance, the US could see linkages with youth gangs in Iran and Russia, as these are common transshipment points for heroin which is moving on to Europe or Asia.

One must also question what the result of gang activity would be if drugs were suddenly legalized in the US. While an entire study could be conducted on just this topic alone, research recently concluded by the author indicates that results of such a dramatic policy switch would be ambiguous. In particular, two historical moments have been studied as analogies—prohibition in the United States and the era of massive opium consumption in China in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Miron and Zwiebel, both economists, have conducted studies to demonstrate their contention that prohibiting drugs in the US actually does more harm than good (Miron and Zwiebel 1995; Miron and Zwiebel 1991). They claim that in the early years of Prohibition, alcohol consumption dropped to approximately 30 percent of the pre-Prohibition level. Consumption then climbed to 60-70 percent of its pre-Prohibition level, where it stayed after Prohibition was repealed, until it again climbed to its pre-Prohibition levels during the subsequent decade (Miron and Zwiebel 1991). They continue by arguing that, while the current supply curve of drugs has shifted upward due to enforcement and the fear of punishment, the demand curve is relatively inelastic, while levels of violence under drug prohibition are increased. They consider the negative health effects, along with lost worker productivity and other externalities, to be minimal, and thus believe drug prohibition in the US to be counterproductive (Miron and Zwiebel 1995).

In contrast, Kleber, a former Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy and Rosenthal, President of Phoenix House, argue that the economic and social costs to drug use are indeed steep, and that a more concerted effort to fight both supply and demand would greatly diminish illicit drugs in the US. They cite in particular the “heroin maintenance” policy in the UK, in which, for decades, doctors have been free to prescribe heroin to addicts. They argue that British physicians have found no evidence that such programs are useful, and they have all but abandoned them (Kleber and Rosenthal 1998). Similarly, the National Drug Threat Estimate cites substantial economic costs caused to the US due to illicit drugs. They estimate the costs to society for drug trafficking and abuse at \$60-108 billion per year (2005c). Moreover, it should be noted that the study by Miron and Zwiebel failed to assess numerous social issues surrounding drug use, for instance, the likelihood of childhood abuse and neglect by drug addicts. Also, it is unclear if the prevalence of gang members from families with a history of drug use would disappear if drug use were legalized. The use of drugs, both by parents and youth, increases the likelihood that individuals will join gangs in the first place, and it is unclear if their legalization would change this.

Meanwhile, the evidence surrounding the effects of opium use in China in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century is just as ambiguous. Newman (1995:101-2) argues that the view of the Chinese opium user as “a pathetic and degenerate creature with ‘lank and shriveled limbs, tottering gait, sallow visage, feeble voice and death-boding glance of eye’” resulted when “missionary and philanthropic organizations tried to mobilized public opinion against opium and

exert political leverage against the trade." Instead, he argues that most drug use was recreational, though there were some hard core addicts (Newman 1995). In contrast, Reins cites the significant tax revenues from domestic opium production, as well as importation, which were lost when China chose to completely phase out the use of opium over a ten-year period in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. For decades, opium had been a mainstay of tax revenues, and indeed, such revenues were earmarked specifically for the modernization of China. However, the perceived social and economic costs of opium addiction in China plus rising nationalism meant China was willing to forgo these substantial revenues in returned for the perceived gains of decreasing opium addiction (Reins 1991).

Thus, should the wildcard scenario of drug legalization actually occur, historical analysis appears to provide little to forecast from. There is no convergence at this time whether drug addiction in China contributed to its social and economic malaise, nor is there any agreement whether Prohibition in the US really decreased drinking by much. In addition, it is unclear whether legalizing drugs would be more likely a social plus or minus. Indeed, nobody is able to anticipate today how legalization would affect the cost and demand for drugs within the US and, therefore, what repercussions this might have on drug smuggling operations, along with the various socio-economic factors influencing drug consumption and addiction and gang recruitment.

Based on the above scenarios, there is little likelihood that drug activity will substantially drop and, thus, it is unlikely this specific driver for gangs will decrease either. Given the forecast by the National Drug Intelligence Center of an increase in drug use in the US, one must expect a rise in transnational youth gang activity as well. Even in the wildcard scenario of the legalization of drugs, the results are at best ambiguous. There are no clear historical precedents to indicate whether revenues from drug smuggling and use would substantially decrease, thereby wiping out a primary resource used by gangs. Nor is there any indication on what such youth gangs would do after legalization. Such gangs could morph into legitimate businesses or rapidly turn to smuggling other high value items.

Of course, the most hopeful scenario would be that gangs would disappear altogether, but that seems highly unlikely. Legalization of drugs will not significantly decrease the pool of youth likely to be attracted to gangs. With drugs legal, the overall number of crimes, and the number of youth with parents in jail would likely decrease, which could decrease one factor of gang recruitment. However, children of addicts would still suffer neglect, abuse and poverty. Moreover, young people doing drugs are still likely to do poorly in school, regardless of if drugs are legal or not. Hence, most of the socio-economic factors that surround drug recruitment would remain. The question becomes what would gangs morph into should drugs become legal. It appears some transnational gangs would "go out of business" or turn back into local neighborhood groups of young men "hanging out." However, some would continue to seek the profit motive and move to other sorts of contraband. It is unlikely the problem would disappear altogether.

Thus, no scenario in the study forecasts an end to transnational gang problems. Ending deportations would slow the growth of the problem, but not solve it, while legalizing drugs

would be achieve controversial results leaving society to face yet new issues. The question then becomes, how fast will such gang problems grow, and what can the US do about it?

### **Policy Recommendations**

Arana, Papachristos and Rogers all note that only a multilateral approach can aid in curtailing such a transnational problem, and only the influence of the US can make such an approach successful (Arana 2005; Papachristos 2005; Rogers 2003). Many of these gangs were born in the US, and it was US deportation policy which helped make them into the transnational entities they are today. Moreover, as one of the primary markets for drugs, the US becomes a centerpiece in one of the primary sources of resources for such gangs.

Therefore, the area of primary focus for decreasing transnational gangs should be found in updating the overall US immigration policy. At first glance, the easy answer appears to be “just stop the deportations” but, domestically, such policy is likely to produce negative repercussions, up to and including socio-political instability. There is, in fact, a fairness issue that the vast and diverse minorities included in today’s US population would be the first to raise. Many immigrants wait years in order to finally enter the United States in accordance with its laws and obtain legal status. Many more, although illegal “crossers,” come to the US as hard working individuals who manage to remain for decades without legal troubles. It seems terribly unjust to allow those who commit crimes to jump to the head of the line and achieve permanent resident status in the US before such groups. In particular, naturalized US citizens are likely to protest criminals who are illegal immigrants to begin with, obtaining such status. Second, allowing alien felons to stay in the country could create a dangerous precedent—that one sure-fire way to remain in the US is to commit some gang-related crime, so that US authorities will not deport you back for fear you may spread the similar problems. This would hardly be an effective way to run an immigration policy.

Thus, in order for the US to completely overhaul its immigration policies, it should make it tougher for illegal immigrants to enter the US in the first place. By the same token, a guest worker system should be implemented to allow honest workers to legally cross into the United States and remain there whenever they have a documented ability to access the job market. This would probably favor Mexicans and Central American immigrants, who have easier access to the US, often with family members already working in this country. However, given the high percentages of Central American illegals, this discrepancy hardly seems to constitute a real obstacle. In this system, there should be a means for long-time workers to achieve permanent residence status, and eventually, full citizenship. Bona-fide and long-term employment, continued school enrollment for immigrants’ children and acquired ability to read and speak English should be recognized as indicators of good will and commitment to the society these aliens have long-strived to be a part of. Such policies might also provide additional incentives to immigrants to “keep their noses clean” as a criminal record by a member of their family would make it far more difficult to achieve that coveted “green card” or eventual citizenship. Also in the case of those only interested in temporary employment, the opportunity of accessing the job market openly and legally would import the ability on their part to obtain higher salaries and better working conditions.

Second, the US must continue anti-gang programs within its own country. Studies are unanimous that keeping kids out of gangs is extraordinarily difficult, and no one tool can solve the problem. Instead, as Arana points out, this takes coordinated policies for gang prevention, suppression and intervention. Moreover, these programs need much more than just law enforcement, but involve rather the mobilization of the entire community, including schools, parents and clergy (Arana 2005). Perhaps the most salient is the advice offered by Ronald Huff (Huff 2002), who advocates "primary prevention," meaning that intervention should focus on entire groups who may be most susceptible. In particular, he promotes focusing on male youth between the ages of 10-12. He also recommends enhancing economic opportunities and developing human capital in those areas most susceptible to gang recruitment. With fewer gang problems in the US, there would be fewer gang problems to export.

Third, the US must take the lead in assisting other countries in minimizing their own gang problems, including helping with their own prevention, suppression and intervention programs. In the realm of "forewarned is forearmed," the US plan of informing receiving countries of the criminal backgrounds of those it is deporting is a good start. However, more should be done to encourage both parties to share intelligence on gangs and their members, along with all those practices considered effective in dealing with them.

However, gang activity exists in states due to more than just the deportation of gang members—it also exists because these countries provide ideal breeding grounds for such groups. They contain large numbers of unemployed young men with few prospects, poor law enforcement, poor social services and shaky governmental legitimacy. Foreign aid and trade agreements which can help alleviate the social ills contributing to gang recruitment are a good start. In this way, the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) is admirable. Finally, the US should continue and expand its programs which seek to improve the capabilities of law enforcement, military and judicial authorities within developing countries.

It is important to note that this aid should not only be focused on those states in Central America and the Caribbean which already demonstrate substantial transnational youth gang problems, but should be extended to those states which have the highest possible gang recruitment pools, listed above. It is noteworthy that providing such aid not only alleviates the possibility of such gangs, but will likely reduce the incidence of a host of other social ills, including overall lawlessness, mafia activity, money laundering, terrorism and so forth. Such programs appear expensive, but they are indeed cheaper in the long run than dealing with such youth megagangs in the future.

## Appendix A: Stoplight Chart

<i>Region and country</i>	<i>Avg. Deportations/Yr</i>	<i>Drugs</i>	<i>15-24 Yr</i>	<i>Poverty</i>	<i>Crime Rate</i>	<i>%Secondary</i>	<i>Divorce</i>
<i>of nationality</i>	<i>for Criminal Activity'98-'03</i>		<i>old Males</i>	<i>Rate</i>	<i>per 100,000</i>	<i>School<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>Rate per</i>
					<i>people</i>		<i>1000</i>
<b>All countries</b>							
<b>Europe</b>							
Albania	11.3		19.5%	30.0%	105		
Bulgaria	11.7		14.5%	12.6%	127		1.30
Czech Republic <sup>2</sup>	22.3		13.7%			87.1%	
France	36.7		13.3%	6.4%	95	92.4%	
Germany	68.5		12.1%		96	87.7%	
Greece	21.5		12.3%		83	87.4%	0.90
Hungary	14.2		13.7%	8.6%	105	87.2%	
Ireland	16.2		15.4%	10.0%		86.5%	
Italy	65.5		10.6%		100	90.5%	0.60
Netherlands	40.3		12.4%		112	89.9%	
Poland	66.2		16.8%	18.4%		90.9%	1.10
Portugal	85.5		13.8%		130	85.2%	1.90
Romania	25.5		15.7%	44.5%		79.6%	1.40
Russia	37.5		18.2%	25.0%			
Serbia and Montenegro <sup>3</sup>	20.3		15.2%	30.0%			0.90
Spain	28.7		10.1%		144	93.7%	0.90
Ukraine	13.3		17.4%	29.0%	419		1.40
United Kingdom	219.2		13.5%	17.0%		93.7%	
<b>Asia</b>							
Afghanistan	12.4		19.4%				
Bangladesh	13.7		24.1%	35.0%	50		
China, People's Republic	111.2		17.4%	10.0%	119		0.79
Hong Kong	10.5		13.1%				
India	79.3		19.5%	25.0%	29		
Indonesia	12.2		18.5%	27.0%	38		
Iran	25.8		25.1%	40.0%	226		0.69
Israel <sup>1</sup>	41.8		16.9%	18.0%	174	88.4%	
Japan	32.7		11.6%		54	100.0%	
Jordan	57.5		19.7%	30.0%	106	79.5%	1.22
Korea	98.5		14.9%	4.0%			
Lebanon	32.0		19.0%	28.0%	146	70.2%	
Malaysia	14.0		19.3%	8.0%	150	70.2%	
Philippines	291.7		21.1%	40.0%	94	52.5%	
Syria	10.5		22.5%	20.0%	93	53.1%	0.73
Taiwan	17.8		15.5%	1.0%	250		
Thailand	29.0		16.4%	12.5%	340		0.90
Turkey	19.7		19.1%		92	52.5%	0.50
<b>Africa</b>							
Cape Verde	34.0		22.8%				
Cote d'Ivoire	10.5						
Ethiopia	15.7		14.4%		32	12.7%	

Gambia, The	15.2		19.3%				
Ghana	50.8				52		
Guinea	11.8		19.5%		37		
Kenya	22.2				111		
Liberia	27.8						
Morocco	27.3			19.0%			
Niger	16.2		19.2%	53.0%			
Nigeria	273.2		20.0%	50.0%	33		
Senegal	14.5		21.0%	54.0%	54		
Sierra Leone	14.2		19.2%	58.0%			
South Africa	18.2		23.0%	50.0%	50	57.2%	0.81
<b>Oceania</b>							
Australia	14.8		14.0%	25.5%	116	89.7%	
Fiji	17.0		20.5%		117		
New Zealand	11.2		14.5%		50	91.6%	
Tonga	31.7		35.0%		106	70.5%	
<b>North America</b>							
Canada	53.5		13.7%		116	97.9%	
Mexico	61.3		19.4%	40.0%	155	59.7%	0.48
<b>Caribbean</b>							
Antigua-Barbuda	30.2		15.2%		27		
Bahamas, The	92.7		18.5%		40	71.6%	1.37
Barbados	48.3		15.9%		15	85.0%	1.21
Cuba	56.7		14.5%			82.2%	
Dominica	15.5		16.8%	30.0%	42		
Dominican Republic	210.5		19.1%	30.0%	157	40.2%	1.17
Grenada	17.8		24.0%	32.0%	35	45.5%	
Haiti	360.5		22.0%	50.0%	53		
Jamaica	79.5		20.6%	31.0%	76	74.4%	0.55
St. Lucia	18.2		28.4%		243	79.9%	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	47.0		20.4%		27		
Trinidad and Tobago	201.8		23.0%	21.0%	101	70.7%	1.00
<b>Central America</b>							
Belize	118.7		21.1%		49	63.3%	0.58
Costa Rica	58.0		19.8%	20.6%	22	49.2%	1.04
El Salvador	112.2		20.6%	43.0%	156	38.3%	0.49
Guatemala	170.2		20.8%	15.0%	68	26.2%	0.13
Honduras	114.2		24.0%	53.0%	172		
Nicaragua	257.0		22.2%	50.0%	143	35.5%	
Panama	110.5		18.2%	37.0%	35	62.2%	0.65
<b>South America</b>							
Argentina	57.7		17.4%	37.0%	107	79.1%	
Bolivia	25.5		21.8%	14.0%	102	68.1%	
Brazil	98.5		19.2%	22.0%	163	71.3%	0.80
Chile	55.3		17.4%	21.0%	204	74.5%	0.42
Colombia	149.0		18.1%	55.0%	126	56.5%	
Ecuador	169.2		18.3%	30.0%	59	38.0%	0.73
Guyana	138.2		20.2%		73	65.7%	



Peru	194.8		18.7%	65%	104	61.5%	
Uruguay	15.0		15.9%	6.0%	209	69.6%	1.20
Venezuela	124.7		19.4%	47.0%	76	50.4%	0.79
<b>Average for all countries</b>	<b>348.6</b>		<b>18.2%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>139.0</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>1.58</b>
<b>Medium Level</b>	100-348		16.4-20%	23-28.1%	125-159	56.4-69%	1.42-1.74
<b>Low Level</b>	<100		<16.4%	23.0%	<125	>69	<1.42

- 1 Most sources do not indicate whether or not this includes the occupied territories
- 2 Sources which cite Czechoslovakia rather than the 2 states are listed here
- 3 A.k.a. Yugoslavia
- 4 Rates indicate those in school, versus drop-out rates

## Appendix B: Levels of Drug Use and Drug Offenses

<i>Region and country of nationality</i> <sup>1</sup>	Cannabis	Amphetamines	Ecstasy	Cocaine	Opiates	Trafficking or Source	Drug Offenses cases per 100,000 pop.
<b>All countries</b>							
<b>Europe</b>							
Albania	2.6%				0.5%		
Bulgaria	1.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%		
Czechoslovakia <sup>3</sup>		0.3%	0.5%	0.1%	0.5%		43.3
France		0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%		55.1
Germany		0.6%	0.1%		0.3%		40.5
Greece		0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%		33.3
Hungary	2.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%		34.6
Ireland		0.3%			0.5%		10.5
Italy		0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%		60.3
Netherlands		0.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%		47.0
Poland	2.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%		50.8
Portugal	3.3%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%	0.7%		59.6
Romania					0.3%		
Russia	3.9%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	2.1%		
Serbia and Montenegro <sup>4</sup>							
Spain				2.6%	0.5%		27.9
Ukraine	3.6%	0.2%	0.1%		0.8%		
United Kingdom		0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%		
<b>Asia</b>							
Afghanistan					0.6%		
Bangladesh	3.3%				0.3%		
China, People's Republic	0.3%				0.1%		3.9
Hong Kong	0.6%				0.2%		34.0
India	3.2%				0.4%		
Indonesia	0.5%	0.8%			0.2%		3.4
Iran					0.5%		
Israel	0.7%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	1.3%		
Japan	0.1%	0.3%			0.1%		22.2
Jordan <sup>5</sup>	2.1%	0.4%			0.2%		
Korea	0.1%	0.2%			0.1%		9.9
Lebanon		0.3%					
Malaysia	0.5%				0.2%		48.6
Philippines	3.5%						
Syria	2.0%						
Taiwan	0.5%	0.2%			0.3%		
Thailand	1.5%	0.3%	0.1%		0.5%		
Turkey	1.8%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%			3.9
<b>Africa</b>							
Cape Verde							
Cote d'Ivoire							
Ethiopia	2.6%						
Gambia, The							

Ghana							
Guinea							
Kenya	4.0%	0.6%		0.1%	0.1%		
Liberia							
Morocco		0.3%			0.2%		
Niger							
Nigeria							
Senegal							
Sierra Leone							
South Africa		0.6%	0.3%				
<b>Oceania</b>							
Australia					0.6%		
Fiji	0.2%						
New Zealand		0.3%			0.1%		
Tonga							
<b>North America</b>							
Canada		0.1%			0.4%	Source: IMF	
Mexico	0.6%	0.1%		0.4%	0.4%	Source: IMF	24.7
<b>Caribbean</b>							
Antigua-Barbuda				0.1%			
Bahamas, The			0.2%				
Barbados			0.3%	0.1%			
Cuba							
Dominica	0.1%						
Dominican Republic	2.1%	0.4%			0.1%		
Grenada							
Haiti				0.3%			
Jamaica							
St. Lucia							
St. Vincent and the Grenadines							
Trinidad and Tobago							
<b>Central America</b>							
Belize	0.8%						
Costa Rica	1.3%	1.1%		0.4%	0.1%		
El Salvador	2.0%		0.1%	0.3%	0.1%		
Guatemala	3.8%			1.0%			
Honduras	1.6%	2.5%		1.0%	0.1%		
Nicaragua	2.6%		0.2%	1.0%			
Panama	2.5%				0.1%		
<b>South America</b>							
Argentina	3.7%	0.7%		0.2%	0.1%		
Bolivia	2.5%	0.5%					
Brazil	1.0%	0.3%		0.4%			
Chile		0.6%	0.1%		0.3%		
Colombia	0.5%	0.7%	0.3%	1.6%	0.2%	Source: IMF	
Ecuador	3.0%	0.2%			0.1%		
Guyana	2.6%						
Peru	1.8%						

Uruguay	1.5%	0.1%		0.3%		
Venezuela	3.0%	0.8%	0.1%		0.3%	
<b>Average for all countries</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>106.5</b>
<b>White = No info</b>						
<b>Medium Level</b>	<b>3.3-4.1%</b>	<b>0.6-0.8%</b>	<b>0.1-0.3%</b>	<b>0.2-0.4%</b>	<b>0.3-0.5%</b>	<b>96-117</b>
<b>Low Level (10% lower than world avg)</b>	<b>&lt;3.3%</b>	<b>&lt;0.6%</b>	<b>&lt;0.1%</b>	<b>&lt;0.2%</b>	<b>&lt;0.3%</b>	<b>&lt;96</b>

## References

1997. "The Facts About Gang Life in America Today: A National Study of Over 4000 Gang Members." National Crime Research Center.
2000. "Drug Offence Cases per 100,000 Population." edited by UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
2003. "World Prison Brief." International Centre for Prison Studies.
- 2004a. "2003 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics." Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics.
- 2004b. "2004 World Drug Report." vol. 2, edited by U. Nations: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- 2004c. "National Drug Threat Assessment 2004: Threat Matrix." edited by D. o. Justice: Department of Justice National Drug Intelligence Center.
- 2005a. "CIA World Factbook." edited by CIA: Central Intelligence Agency.
- 2005b. "Midyear Population, by Age and Sex." U.S. Census Bureau International Database.
- 2005c. "National Drug Threat Assessment 2005." National Drug Intelligence Center.
- Arana, Ana. 2005. "How the Street Gangs Took Central America." *Foreign Affairs* 84:98-110.
- Braga, Anthony A., David M. Kennedy, and George E. Tita. 2002. "New Approaches to the Strategic Prevention of Gange and Group-Involved Violence." Pp. 271-86 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Covey, Herbert C., Scott Menard, and Robert J. Franzese. 1997. *Juvenile Gangs*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas Publisher, Ltd.
- Esbensen, Finn-Aage, Dana Peterson, Adrienne Freng, and Terrance J. Taylor. 2002. "Initiation of Drug Use, Drug Sales, and Violent Offending Among a Sample of Gang and Nongang Youth." Pp. 37-50 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Fleischer, Mark S. 2002. "Doing Field Research on Diverse Gangs: Intepreting Youth Gangs as Social Networks." Pp. 199-218 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Flowers, R. Barri. 2003. *Male Crime and Deviance: Exploring its Causes, Dynamics, and Nature*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas Publisher, Ltd.
- Gruen, Madeleine. 2004. "White Ethnonationalist and Political Islamist Methods for Fundraising and Propaganda on the Internet." Pp. 289-302 in *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment*, edited by R. D. Howard and R. L. Sawyer. Guilford, CN: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.
- Hagedorn, John M. 2002. "Gangs and the Informal Economy." Pp. 101-20 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Hill, Karl G., Christina Lui, and J. David Hawkins. 2001. "Early Precursors of Gang Membership: A Study of Seattle Youth." edited by DoJ: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs.
- Howell, James C. and Scott H. Decker. 1999. "The Youth Gangs, Drugs, and Violence Connection." edited by DoJ: Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs.
- Howell, James C., John P. Moore, and Jr. Arlen Egley. 2002. "The Changing Boundaries of Youth Gangs." Pp. 3-18 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Huff, C. Ronald. 2002. "Gangs and Public Policy: Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression." Pp. 287-94 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Joseph, Janice. 1999. "Jamaican Posses and Transnational Crimes." *Journal of Gang Research* 6:41-7.
- Kleber, Herbert D. and Mitchell S. Rosenthal. 1998. "Drug Myths from Abroad: Leniency is Dangerous, Not Compassionate." *Foreign Affairs*.
- Klein, Malcolm W. 2002. "Street Gangs: A Cross-National Perspective." Pp. 237-56 in *Gangs in America III*, edited by C. R. Huff. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Maxson, Cheryl L. 1998. "Gang Members on the Move." Pp. 11, edited by DoJ: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Miller, Walter B. 2001. "The Growth of Youth Gang Problems in the United States: 1970-98." Pp. 81, edited by DoJ: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Miron, Jeffrey A. and Jeffrey Zwiebel. 1995. "The Economic Case Against Drug Prohibition." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9:175-92.
- Miron, Jeffrey A. and Jeffrey Zwiebel. 1991. "Alcohol Consumption During Prohibition." *American Economic Review* 81:242-7.
- Negola, Todd D. 1998. "Development of an Instrument for Predicting At-Risk Potential for Adolescent Street Gang Membership." *Journal of Gang Research* 5:1-14.
- Newman, R.K. 1995. "Opium Smoking in Later Imperial China: A Reconsideration." *Modern Asian Studies* 29:765-94.
- Nugman, Gulnar. 2002. "World Divorce Rates." Heritage Foundation.
- Papachristos, Andrew V. 2005. "Gang World." *Foreign Policy*:49-55.
- Reins, Thomas D. 1991. "Reform, Nationalism and Internationalism: The Opium Suppression Movement in China and the Anglo-American Influence, 1900-1908." *Modern Asian Studies* 25:101-42.
- Rogers, Joseph. 2003. "Confronting Transnational Gangs in the Americas." *Journal of Gang Research* 10:33-44.
- Sirpal, Suman Kakar. 2002. "Familial Criminality, Familial Drug Use, and Gang Membership: Youth Criminality, Drug Use, and Gang Membership--What are the Connections?" *Journal of Gang Research* 9:11-21.
- Skolnick, Jerome H., Ricky Bluthenthal, and Theodore Correl. 1993. "Gang Organization and Migration." Pp. 193-218 in *Gangs: The Origins and Impact of Contemporary Youth Gangs in the United States*, edited by S. Cummings and D. J. Monti. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Spergel, Irving A. 1995. *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.