

Community Reintegration Trajectories: A Qualitative Comparative Study of Gang-Affiliated and Non-Gang-Affiliated Ex-Offenders

FINAL REPORT

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Greg Scott, Ph.D.¹
Principal Investigator
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
DePaul University

Jodie M. Dewey
Assistant Professor
Concordia University

Andrea Leverentz
Department of Sociology
University of Chicago

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¹ Please direct all correspondence to Greg Scott, Department of Sociology, DePaul University, 990 W. Fullerton Ave., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60614 (gscott@depaul.edu). The principal investigator would like to thank the following people for their significant contributions to data collection, data analysis, and to the report itself: Ian Dinsmor, DePaul University; Susan Agruss, Northwestern University; Kimberly Tydereck, DePaul University; Brendan Dooley, University of Missouri—St. Louis.

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Abstract

This report examines qualitatively the re-entry experiences and trajectories of 39 Chicago-area ex-convicts during the first year of their most recent release from incarceration in a State penal facility. Our analysis of interview data is comparative in several ways: First, we discern changes in individual participants over time by drawing on data collected in six interviews over a one-year period. Second, we scrutinize the similarities and differences between and among participants as we account for variation in the social and economic processes implicated in the processes attendant to community reintegration. Finally, our data permit a comparison and contrast of gang-involved (or formerly gang-involved) and non-gang involved ex-convicts, the goal being to account for the role of past and/or current gang activity in community reintegration. Findings indicate that ex-convicts accommodate their criminal histories and current (limited) prospects for social and economic livelihood by “cocooning” themselves in tight-knit insular networks of family and close friendships. This insularity serves them well in the short-term, affording material and non-material benefits essential to daily life. In the long term, however, this accommodation of social and human capital shortages further reinforces their disenfranchisement vis-à-vis community life and the labor market, two key domains in the “successful” re-entry trajectory. Most ex-convicts—especially those who remain gang-involved—ironically suffer “too much of a good thing” (i.e., close ties within dense networks) and too little of what past research has deemed integral to successful social capital accumulation—loose ties to people and organizations with the capacity to mobilize resources on which the ex-convict can capitalize.

Introduction

Slightly more than two million men and women occupy jails and prisons in the United States (Harrison and Karberg, 2003). Ninety percent of them eventually return home. After having served a median prison term of 15 months, approximately 1,600 inmates disgorge from state and federal prisons every day of the week in the U.S. (Travis, Solomon and Waul, 2001). In the greater Chicago metropolitan area alone roughly 1,500 male ex-convicts² return to their neighborhoods each month. They arrive home “wearing an X” on their backs, possessing skills of limited portability, and enjoying scant resources on which to draw in their efforts to “make good,” or live a life on the straight and narrow path of desistance. Almost invariably they return to the same disaffected, marginalized neighborhoods in which they lived prior to incarceration but now facing even fewer legitimate opportunities than before. The majority will stray from the

² In this paper we use the terms “ex-convict,” “ex-prisoner,” and “ex-offender” interchangeably, although the informants themselves use the term “ex-convict”.

path and wander into a gnarled grove of institutional failure, criminal opportunity, and the uniquely rewarding but ultimately self-defeating whorl of drug dealing and otherwise hustling street gangs.

Soon after leaving prison the majority of the 630,000 ex-convicts released annually in the United States will resume a life behind bars. Roughly two-thirds (422,000) will be rearrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years of being released (Travis et al., 2001). In Illinois, more than 40 percent of the 36,000 annual releasees will return to prison inside of three years, with the majority going back within the first two years of their release (Dighton, 2002). Those involved with drug dealing street organizations known throughout Chicago's byways as posses, crews, families, mobs, or gangs will experience an especially swift return to prison.³ Jeremy Travis et al. (2001: 1) make two important points concerning the "revolving door" cycle of arrest-incarceration-release-rearrest: First, prisoner reentry⁴ has taken on new significance as "more prisoners are returning home, having spent longer terms behind bars, less prepared for life on the outside, with less assistance in their reintegration." Second, the release of ex-convicts "is increasingly concentrated in a relatively small number of communities that already encounter enormous social and economic disadvantages."

In the City of Chicago these social trends—accelerated incarceration, declining public assistance for prisoner services and reentry assistance, and the geographic concentration of ex-convicts—have merged with another well-documented trend: A concentration of poverty in

³ Official data from the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) indicated that roughly 50 percent of the male ex-convicts released into Chicago each month are affiliated with a major street gang. In all likelihood the number is far greater than official records suggest.

⁴ Travis et al. (2001, p. 1) define reentry as "the process of leaving prison and returning to society." They go on to say that "all prisoners experience reentry irrespective of their method of release or form of supervision, if any." As we discuss in detail later, this term connotes nothing more than the prisoner's migration from the penitentiary to a non- or less-carceral setting, such as a private residence or halfway house.

African American neighborhoods (see Massey and Denton, 1993). A disproportionate share of ex-convicts come from and return to Chicago's most disenfranchised, institutionally destabilized, and generally poverty-stricken neighborhoods. The neighborhoods busiest with sending and receiving offenders tend to be the precincts in which macro-level social forces have sequestered a black "urban underclass" (Wilson, 1984, 1987). Chicago's underclass neighborhoods contribute more than their fair share to the prison rolls, receive more than their fair share of ex-convicts, and all the while possess far less than their fair share of the economic and social resources necessary for preventing crime or supporting the efforts of ex-convicts to "make good."

Ex-convicts return to the streets seeking a solution to the local and more global problems of economic, cultural, social, and political disenfranchisement. Their search typically unfolds through interactions with people close to them—members of their tight-knit networks such as family members (usually mothers and siblings). Nearly all of the respondents in this study reported coming from and still enjoying strong, cohesive ties with family members. In short, they have access to—and frequently utilize—strong, close ties. The central problem, however, is that they essentially "cocoon" themselves with close ties, thus precluding or at least hindering progress toward forming the "loose ties" that are integral to one's success in developing and exploiting "social capital" (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 1995).

Social capital comprises the interpersonal connections, norms, and trust that allow those involved to pursue shared objectives. Examples range from families to friendship groups to athletic clubs to churches and even to street gangs, each entity constituting a particular type of social capital. These networks may benefit individuals, groups within the community or the community as a whole (Putnam, 1995). Hagan (1994) claims that social capital is evident in the

quality of relationships within families, neighborhoods, and *interpersonal* networks and is measured by how these relationships achieve individual and group goals. Benefits include access to information, influence and control, and social solidarity (Sandefur & Laumann, 1998). Social capital enhances learning, social mobility, economic growth, political prominence, and community vitality (Wall et al., 1998).

Sampson and Laub's (1990) view of capital accumulation entails the acquiring of various forms of social capital over time, such as strong attachments, quality employment, or pro-social friendship networks, which "entrenches individuals in conforming pathways throughout the remainder of their life course" (Wright 2001). In turn, this entrenchment affects the likelihood that one will be involved in criminal activity. Social capital—as a configuration of relationships to persons and groups—varies in degree and type. Earlier research by Granovetter (1973), for example, argues that social capital inheres not only, and not most importantly, in one's most intimate relationships but rather in the "weak ties" one maintains with extra-intimate groups, for these latter persons are the ones who are most likely to help in the achievement of personal goals, such as securing gainful employment.

In his research on people who recently found a new job, Granovetter (1973) observes that 80 percent found the job either through someone with whom they only occasionally or rarely had contact. He concludes that weak ties comprise an important resource in reaching goals and increasing one's chances for mobility opportunities. Granovetter also extended his research to that of communities; communities with more weak ties that connect them to groups and various networks outside themselves will be more effective in organizing and achieving goals (1973). Moreover, by opening up to more groups and consequently, more information and knowledge, one then increases his/her human capital and becomes more capable while also becoming more

useful to others in which they connect; social capital and human capital are complementary (Coleman 1990).

As described by Granovetter (1973), strong ties are those that one defines as their close contacts while weak ties are those people who one does not have a lot of contact. Weak ties seem to be the most beneficial as they are more likely to connect an individual to many more networks of people. The belief is that having more groups or networks in which to be associated with will create more opportunities for jobs, community organization, etc. as opposed to the quality of only a few close friendship circles.

Our interviews with ex-inmates demonstrate that enjoying close personal relationships is an insufficient crime-reduction, pro-social behavior promotion factor. Instead, by almost all indicators the most successful ex-convict possesses and activates his connections to the weak ties that transcend his small community and connect him to the larger society. Weak ties serve as the vehicle for achieving social capital, which in turn facilitates social bond development, which in turn aids in desistance. The vast majority of men in this study do not lack support; rather, the support they enjoy—emotionally-laden filial ties in most cases—ineffectively serve the end of reintegrating them into broader society. They suffer from “too much of a good thing.”

Methods

The data collection from this study began with a random sample of 725 male ex-offenders released in September and October of 2002. Our sample was proportionally representative in virtually every way, from demographics to incarceration histories, to self-reported (within IDOC) gang affiliation status. To these 725 men we sent a letter of invitation to participate in the study, an informed consent form, and a brief survey soliciting demographic information and data on their gang affiliation (or lack thereof). These introductory packets

explained that we would use the data gained through the brief survey to select 40 participants for inclusion in the study. Upon receiving 215 (30%) completed surveys, we assessed the interested ex-inmates' representatives in relation to the 725 we selected initially in the random sample. We found them to be highly representative. We then trichotomized the participants into "active gang," "former gang" and "non-gang." Our intention was to randomly select 13-14 participants from each category. Once we selected prospective participants from each of the three categories, we contacted them by telephone and/or mail to confirm continued interest in the study. Our confirmation of their interest led us to arrange a baseline (Time 0, or "TO") interview.⁵

The original plan was to select 40 participants for a total of six in-depth interviews (T0-T5), one every other month for an entire calendar year.⁶ Ultimately, 40 participants were "enrolled" in the study. Each member of the 4-person research team was responsible for a "caseload" of 10 interviewees. Our "ethnographic interviews" (Spradley, 1979) of former and active gang members and non-gang members covered a wide range of topics, including living situation, family and friendship relations, employment, education, crime, police contact, gang activity, and personal goals and objectives. Each participant received \$20 per interview (\$120 for the year). The "receiving" neighborhoods in which we worked were disproportionately African American and poverty-stricken.⁷ Per IRB instructions, we conducted all interviews in public places, such as local restaurants. Pseudonyms are used.

⁵ Prior to the study's inception the principal investigator (Scott) worked with a team of consultants—five gang-affiliated and non-gang affiliated ex-convicts—to develop the interview instruments. In addition, Scott consulted with and interviewed these consultants throughout the life of the study. Some of these consultants' contributions appear in this report.

⁶ All interview guides appear as attachments to this report.

⁷ One obvious criticism of this study is that it pays no attention to the rapidly growing phenomenon of white gang activity in suburban and rural areas and/or that it inappropriately (perhaps even prejudicially) reinforces the bias against people of color by focusing on African Americans and Latinos who engage with urban street gangs. While I respect the criticism, this study's principal subject is the gang involvement of ex-convicts, a disproportionate share of which live in urban areas. Hence I have chosen to examine the locales that witness both an overrepresentation of ex-convicts *and* the predominance of street gang activity as a variable in ex-offender reentry strategies.

Every interview garnered both numeric data, elicited by closed-ended questions, and qualitative data, elicited by open-ended questions. In addition, the research team recorded every interview on cassette or mini-disk. Each interviewer transcribed all responses to open-ended questions. Faced with a small mountain of printed transcripts we then engaged in systematic “content analysis”⁸ of the data. These transcripts underwent conventional computer-assisted multi-level coding and indexing using NVivo/NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing), one of the more widely used qualitative data analysis software packages.

Transcripts were subject to a multi-stage coding process. In the first stage we performed “open coding” (Strauss and Corbin 1998), a document review and analysis process that reduces large passages of text to principal concepts and their most salient properties and dimensions. “Axial coding” comprised the second stage. Here we coded text for the purpose of relating concepts to sub-categories and concepts to each other. This kind of coding allows the researcher to observe the emergence of relationships and “causal” (a term we use cautiously) patterns in the data. Other issues emerged in the narrative data that the respondents provided outside the bounds of our interview guides. Both of these approaches to coding make use of specific analytical devices, such as word frequency tabulations and key word in context (KWIC) tables. These techniques enable context-sensitive identification of recurring themes and concepts.

This report concentrates on the numeric and qualitative data acquired in our baseline (T0) and Time 4 (T4) interviews with respondents. We selected these data points (the first and fifth interviews, separated by approximately 10 months) to the exclusion of others because we observed very few differences among T1, T2, and T3, and because the T5 interview consisted

⁸ Weber (1990:9) defines content analysis this way: “a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text.”

primarily of life history questions. Hence, the most comparable data come from T0 and T4. In future analyses we intend to conduct quantitative assessments—using the State’s Criminal History Record Information System (CHRIS)—of the original 725-person sample from which our in-depth interview sample derived.

Limitations of Data

Several limitations affect the data we collected for this project. The first limiting factor derives from regulations imposed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at DePaul University, a body of scholars and community members charged with protecting human subjects. The IRB clearly stated that our interviews could only be conducted in semi-private spaces within public places (e.g., the back booth of a restaurant). In such spaces we had to work diligently and creatively to maximize the respondent’s level of privacy and confidentiality. For instance, we always tried to meet with respondents at times that worked best for them and at non-peak hours at restaurants; we reserved private rooms at public libraries; we purchased and used sensitive clip-on lavalier microphones so that respondents could speak softly enough to curb effective eavesdropping. In these and other ways we strove to create comfortable and secure interview settings.

Another limitation flows from the use of a structured interview guide. As a tool, the interview instrument guided conversation but on first appearance left very little room for deviation. Staff training, however, focused on ways to make the interview more conversational and less interrogatory. Before going into the field, interviewers attended staff training sessions wherein they learned the instrument inside and out by conducting “mock” interviews on each other. Ultimately everyone did a reasonably good job at inspiring free-flowing conversation,

which in turn generated a great deal of useful data especially in relation to the instrument's open-ended questions.

Another crucial limitation is the fact that all data are strictly based on ex-convict self-reports. Our IRB regulations strictly prohibited the observation of criminal and/or non-criminal behavior *in situ*. We cannot know how honest or forthcoming respondents were; we can only be accountable for the steps we took to engender comfort, trust, and confidentiality. The degree of “socially desirable responding” (i.e., respondents telling us what they think we want to hear, or what they think they ought to say) resists exact specification. As a result, respondents may have underreported their involvement in socially unacceptable behavior, such as gang activity, crime, and drug use, and perhaps over-reported the degree to which they engage in socially approved behavior, such as involvement in legitimate civic organization, rebuilding ties with family members, and so forth. Not incidentally, once the study had concluded a few of the respondents told us that they initially were suspicious that the interviewers were working as undercover police officers—the effects of this suspicion ought not be dismissed out of hand (Scott, 2003; Hagdeorn, 1988).

Respondent attrition also limits the value of our data set. By the time of the final interview (T5) we had lost nearly 50% of our interview sample (see Table 1). Some of the respondents were re-arrested and/or re-convicted; others simply moved out of the area or chose to discontinue their involvement in the project. Nevertheless, before their departure from the study these respondents provided plenty of data, and the reasons that each of them was unable to continue the study are in themselves important.⁹

⁹ We are now in the process of obtaining criminal history records on all members of our interview sample. Doing so will enable further analysis of concrete outcomes (i.e., arrest, conviction) associated with their reintegration.

Also, the analysis driving this paper hinges on assumptions and concepts inherent in theory and research on social networks. We did not collect firsthand data, however, on the respondents' networks. Rather, we relied on study participants to inform us of the nature and dynamics of their filial, social, occupational, and educational networks. From these reported data we make imputations regarding the extent to which respondents' networks either promote or retard the reintegration process. A more complete, comprehensive study would gather firsthand observational and/or interview data on members in the networks reported and described to us by our participants.

Finally, the issue of generalizability poses challenges to any qualitative study. Of course, we cannot guarantee that studying ex-convicts who reside exclusively in the Chicago area will contribute to findings or theoretical innovation applicable to ex-convicts in other cities, suburbs, or rural areas. However, we do not make grand claims on generalizability here. To increase the level of generalizability we randomly selected Cook County respondents being released from all Illinois prisons. Our random selection of gang-affiliated and non-gang affiliated—based on our initial random survey of 200 prospective respondents—allows us to make meaningful comparisons between gang and non-gang affiliated members who return to Chicago. In the end, however, our study revolves around the process of analytic induction whereby we aspire to contribute to theory-formation in an area of research suffering from a relative paucity of social science theory. The terms of analytic induction (Znaniecki, 1934) require that those elements or factors not common to all—or at least the great majority of—cases merit no further attention and/or that the guiding theory be revised.

The Participants

Thirty-nine ex-convicts participated as subjects in our study. They ranged in age from 21-52 years old, with an average age of 36. The racial breakdown is as follows: Twenty-nine African American; six Latino; and four Caucasian.

Twenty-six of the respondents report having once been involved with a street gang; one reported active involvement during the time of the study; and 11 had never been involved with a gang. Two respondents were married, and 22 had at least one child at the time of the baseline interview. Only 10 respondents held a high school diploma or G.E.D. at baseline. Respondents served an average of 2.65 prison sentences (range=1-6 times), and the average length of their most recent incarceration was two years. More detailed information on participant demographics can be found in Table 2. Pseudonyms are used in this report.

Findings and Discussion

Getting Out

Jeremy Travis et al. (2001: 18) call attention to the minutiae of ex-convicts' daily lives. They argue persuasively that scholars and policy makers too often dismiss or overlook entirely the little things in life—the everyday, mundane logistical and material hurdles and setbacks that many of us surmount or, if not, spend little time fretting over. Myriad practical difficulties present themselves when the ex-offender steps off the bus after a long, cramped ride from the penitentiary to his 'receiving' community. First, he has to figure out how to locate and pay for food and shelter. He must assemble some clothes and personal effects, such as toiletries. In addition, he must wrestle with issues of transportation and personal identification. Of course, successfully obtaining these items requires that he spend some money.¹⁰ This inevitable accumulation of logistical and physical demands frequently produces 'gate fever,' a condition

¹⁰ Illinois prisons provide released inmates with no more than 50 dollars at the exit gate. Often, the inmate must use a substantial portion of this stipend to buy a bus ticket.

marked by ‘anxiety and irritability at the time of a prisoner’s release’ (Travis et al., 2001, p. 18). Researchers attribute this condition to a concatenation of profound, sudden physical and non-physical dislocations.

Preparing for Release

Recognizing the difficulties that most ex-convicts face upon re-entry to the “free world,” most penal facilities mandate the participation of soon-to-be-released inmates in organized preparatory programming. We find, however, that few ex-convicts in this study actually benefit from these compulsory initiatives, an insight consistent with past research indicating that prison programs generate few, if any, benefits to recently released ex-convicts (Breese, Ra’el, and Grant 2000). Rather, self-reliance is the dominant theme in respondents’ answers to our questions concerning who helped them prepare for release from prison. Seventeen respondents replied “myself” when asked who helped the most with preparation; nine said that a prison staff person helped them (usually a teacher or counselor); six named a family member; and three reported that their cellmates or other inmates helped them. John Snyder, a Caucasian and former member of a drug-dealing street gang in Chicago, put it most bluntly:

Myself. No one really cares about you in there. They [fellow drug-dealing gang members] hope you come back so they can keep working you. Without people like I was, there’s no [drug] business.¹¹

Respondents in this study had to be industrious when seeking help from prison staff. Even then, the prison staff they mentioned are generally not responsible for such matters, and, moreover, assisted them the most by helping respondents negotiate and/or resolve bureaucratic quagmires. Billy Smith and Michael Christie addressed this.

BS: It would have to be the counselor. He helped by signing me up for release. That’s the only time I really talked to him. If I hadn’t approached him, my paperwork would

¹¹ The gang’s exploitation and disregard for the well-being of its members will be discussed later in this report.

have never gotten through. That's how swamped the guy is. He is really, really swamped. They lost one counselor there, and he was taking over the whole load. But it's up to the counselor, the individual counselor to put you in for your release. And they won't approach you and should you be in the library or the shower when he shows up, you don't know when he's coming, and you not around and you don't apply yourself to see this guy, you could be sitting there 2-3 weeks beyond your time, when you should've been released. You learn that through the grapevine. If there wasn't that grapevine, people could get lost in the system, for a period of time at least.

MC: The field services clerk [was the most helpful person]. She helped me to provide benefits for myself, better clothing. She made sure I got the benefits when I was released.

However rare, it appears that for at least a few of our respondents, prison staff reportedly went above and beyond the call of duty in guiding and even inspiring respondents prior to their release. Hector Gonzalez related such a phenomenon:

My counselor [helped me the most]. Gave me strength, hope, faith. Made me very persistent, stronger. Built me into society. Told me what was going on, employment resources, things to benefit me. Guided me like mother did.

Among respondents who reported reliance upon family, females figure prominently. The most frequently referenced "family" are mothers, sisters, and female partners (wives, girlfriends, etc.). Indeed, all but one of the six respondents who sought assistance from their families underscored the importance of their mothers. The centrality of females in the lives of ex-convicts will be discussed in more detail below.

Interestingly, none of the respondents mentioned "Pre-Start," IDOC's official pre-release preparation program, even though 25 of the 37 attended the Pre-Start program prior to their *most recent* release. When pressed to assess the value of Pre-Start, however, we found that more than half (n=13) of the Pre-Start attendees had negative experiences with the program; eight had positive experiences; five gave a mixed review; and 11 had nothing to say at all. Of those who had negative experiences, the common denominator is that the program presents the participants

with paper-based information and outdated “scare movies” but very little actual, interpersonal guidance. Eddie Battle shared his recollection of Pre-Start:

Guys go there and take the data they give them. It’s usually a package of papers that say go to this place or that place for what you need. I went there thinking they could help me, but they weren’t there. It’s frustrating.

The absence of interpersonal guidance is particularly frustrating to many inmates because, as reported by several respondents, the prison system charges the inmates for the program (typically \$50).

Respondents who gave mixed reviews typically said they were happy to receive printed materials, which they found helpful. But like Juan Perez, many felt that something was lacking:

It could have been, but like I said, what happened as soon as I got out was different. It was [helpful], and then it wasn’t. It was because it gave me a feeling like, cool, there’s things I can go to and try to get help, but at the same time when I made some of the phone calls it was like I was just going through the lines because none of them could help me because there was a list of phone numbers to call for different things because I was just trying to get some things to get done. So it was helpful because there is some information—voucher credit checks, the resumes, and stuff like that. It’s good to know all that stuff but at the same time there’s a limit to it. It was so-so.

Respondents with favorable reviews tended to be those who needed help finding free or low-cost shelter, getting a state-sanctioned picture ID, writing a resume, completing an employment application, and/or interviewing for a job. These respondents said that Pre-Start “tell you how to talk,” “get you a license,” etc. Anthony Wurley, though, saw a deeper message embedded in the program’s focus on paperwork:

It was helpful. Yeah, it was a lesson to be learned, and by you learning the lesson you should know how to come about doing whatever you going to do knowing if you in the wrong. Don’t always look for the easy way out, it’s going to be difficult at times

“Out the Gate”: The Good and the Bad

Immediately following their release from confinement, ex-convicts must travel to their receiving communities. Buses and trains are their primary means of transport. The penal facility

often provides the bus ticket, either free of charge or in exchange for a reduction in the money that the inmate has “on the books.” Our baseline interview asked participants to recall their earliest experiences interacting with the free world following their most recent release. Not surprisingly, respondents almost universally reported that “best part about the first month out” was “freedom.” Further questioning revealed that for these men “freedom” boils down to the simple things in life: “Seeing my kids again,” “Eating when I wanted to eat,” “Walking around the block,” “Going to the park and seeing green grass, trees, and wide open spaces,” “Home cooked meals,” “Driving a car,” and “Just being back out in different air.”

These positive, forward-looking statements far exceeded in number the more negative reflections on the suffering from which they were emancipated. A few participants, however, did emphasize their release from oppression rather their attainment of liberties and small pleasures. For instance, Rudy Ortiz said ...

the first thing was that nobody came into my room looking for anything. No shake downs in the morning. They wake you up just to look around make sure that you got everything put up. That was one of the things. The second thing was that man I could get up and go anywhere I wanted—move around, go see the guys, hang out and just party, party with the guys.

Celebrating through intoxication, or “partying,” rarely achieved mention in the “first month out” narratives. In fact, the majority of respondents (unlike Rudy Ortiz, quoted above) said anything at all about celebrating. Again, they stressed the gratification ensuing from doing the small things in life, the mundane things most un-incarcerated people take for granted. Some respondents even recalled receiving satisfaction from avoiding intoxication, such as Frank:

The best thing about my first month out of prison, man ... not indulging, you know. Not, not celebrating like I used to celebrate, Greg. You know, getting stoned man? You know, which really was an illusion, you know. You actually thought that you was getting high. I don't know. I guess when you started out maybe it was some kind of high, but ... eventually, you know what I'm sayin', man, eventually it will tear you all up, you know?

The first month out for an ex-convict is not all sweetness and light. While every respondent conjured many favorable memories, each one also recalled some measure of hardship. We systematically probed into the “worst part of the first month out” with each respondent and found that, by far, impoverishment and the inability to find work ranked at the top of the list. Humiliation and embarrassment often accompanied these conditions. Eighteen of the 39 respondents cited financial difficulty as the worst part of their immediate experiences “out the gate.” Jackson Burnell recalls his trouble finding work and getting back into the educational system:

Frustration in trying to get jobs, and people don't want to hire me. Explaining to them I was in prison and people going “uh-oh”. Every form you read says ... you got a felony on your record? I got a way around it now. Most of them ask have you ever been convicted and you have to explain, and all of a sudden the job is gone. But Jewel and Sears, they have a time limit. It says have you ever been convicted in the last 7 years. Technically, no I haven't. They put a statute of limitations on it, but other companies don't. The worst part or the most humiliating part was the lady here [at the college] ask me to prove I was in prison in order to get financial aid. Come on, what guy would come in here and lie about that, about being in the penitentiary? She said nope, you have to prove to us that you were in prison. I started laughing, you got to be kidding me.

Rudy Ortiz echoed this frustration in his remarks, adding that finding just any job is possible, but finding a well-paying (i.e., livable wage) job presents more of a challenge:

... things wasn't happening like I wanted them to happen sometimes, and man all kind of stuff, but being not able to get a good job ... man, I'm talking about six, seven dollars, know what am I saying, when I should be getting' 16, 17 dollars an hour especially for what I work in. I work in machines, but they don't want to give you that job because you got a penitentiary [record] and you don't have a diploma, and now-a-days the **** ... the **** diplomas, the high school diplomas are like, man, being in 8th grade; they're not worth nothing. You got to go to college or have some kind of skills, college skills, just to get a job [that pays what you need].

Aside from garnering money to cover basic living expenses, many of these men aspire to finding a job from which they can derive a sense of purpose and meaning. For instance, Danny Delroy reported that

[I was] struggling. I mean trying to find a decent job, something I enjoyed doing really, 'cause a lot of people say you find a just a job and you won't really like it. But if you find a job you like doing you can get up in the morning and have no problem saying "Oh, I got to go to this job." If you find a job you really like and enjoy doing, then you are motivated to get up in the morning and be like, "Oh, I cant wait, I'll go make some money and I'll enjoy doing it." I was hoping to land a ... to be a contractor or something. I wanted to work with my hands. I like working with my hands ... a lot.

The ex-convicts who were paroled into halfway houses and/or shelters found themselves in "a trick bag." Many of these facilities enforce a "no work" policy for a certain amount of time (3-6 months), often referred to as an "adjustment period." Such rules are designed to give ex-convicts the latitude and "breathing space" they need to get oriented to life on the outside. The shelter and halfway house residents in this study, however, felt themselves growing more and more restless in their mandatory unemployment. Insights from Eric White and Frank Patterson emblemize the situation that "homeless" ex-convicts frequently experience:

EW: I don't know, I was glad to be out. But what was the worst? I guess not being able to go straight back to work. Being told that I had to wait eight months [due to the shelter's program rules] before I go back to work. I really wanted to ... work. Right. They try to humble you, which is good. They don't want you to just jump back out there.

FP: Not being able to ... lining up to eat, constantly lining up to eat and, not being able to provide, you know what I'm sayin'. I would like to, you know, I would like to pay my own way, you know what I'm sayin', through making a difference with some company or something; not just doing something for the money but, you know what I'm sayin', somewhere where they be like, man we need Frank, he need to be in here, you know. Right.

Exacerbating their difficulties finding gainful, and meaningful employment, many of these men also faced the two-pronged challenge of returning to the exact same locales in which they were previously arrested and trying not to succumb to their substance abuse problems.

Martin Roberts and Juan Perez made comments that exemplify this triple-layered juggernaut:

MR: Man, I can't even think of nothing. The worst part was coming around this same neighborhood again and seeing the same messed up people doing the same things. That's why I just try to take myself away from the guys I used to be around. I've been gone 13 ½ months and you guys still doing the same thing. Something's wrong man.

JP: I messed up again. I failed. I went right back to drugs. The first few days were like hope, hope, hope, but at the same time nothing was getting accomplished and despair and doubt started setting in little by little, and I finally gave in and I went back to my addiction.

Receiving Households: The Importance of Females

Females stabilize the lives of ex-convicts. As these men have repeatedly galloped through the “revolving door” of incarceration and release, they unfailingly fall back on the moral and material support of one or another female in their lives, usually the mother, a grandmother, or a sister. For example, when asked where they slept the first night after their most recent incarceration, 29 participants said “my mother’s house.” The balance either slept at their wife’s or girlfriend’s house, or at the shelter or halfway house to which IDOC paroled them. When asked who has helped them the most in terms of getting back into society, and who has helped them “stay out of trouble,” 25 participants identified a female, usually their mother or a sister. Only seven participants identified an influential male.

1. Material support.

The material support provided by the women in these men’s lives should not be underemphasized. Nearly all of our respondents reported that their primary, if not their only, sources of revenue each month were mothers and sisters. Eric White talked about his close relationship with his sister and how it yields material benefits:

My sister. I talk to her all the time. She gave me a car. She got a new Land Rover and gave me her 1997 Cavalier.

Some of our respondents relied on family for obtaining small-paying jobs. Martin, for instance, worked with his father’s company installing windows while Eric completed monthly maintenance tasks at an apartment building that his sister owned. In exchange for his help,

Eric's sister helped him get an apartment of his own, eventually gave him her old car, and doled out small amounts of money when he needed it. He explains her support:

Yeah. Plus me and her is real close. My sister, I appreciate what, she's been working for me. It's like when I try to do what's right, and she knows me, it's no fooling or lying to her. When she sees I'm trying to do something, she has no problem with helping me 100%. That's the point I'm in right now with my life. That's the good thing about it.

He also remarks about his sister:

(She) keep pounding in my head the things that I need to be doing. Finding, like she did this time, finding means to get me what makes my life better.

Also noteworthy are the enterprising attempts to placate their mothers, wives, and girlfriends whose concern and/or consternation grows with each new incarceration. Many of these men have devised methods for convincing the women in their lives that this time will be different, that they have indeed changed for the better. Rudy Ortiz, for instance, always gets paroled to his mother's home. Knowing the importance of religiosity in his mother's life, Rudy feigns his commitment to Christianity in order to "keep her off my back":

Yeah, my mom, she's real religious. Catholic, you know, the crazy kind. Prays all the *** time. Goes to church every other day. So, you know, so she don't go nuts on me, so she keeps letting me live here, you know, I got to play along. I can do it up real good, praying with her, going to mass once a week, you know, whatever it takes to keep her happy. And it keeps a roof over my head. And it keeps food in my stomach. She's a real good cook, traditional style Puerto Rican. You should taste her food some time, man. ****. It's for real.

Very rarely did respondents report "giving back" to the people who had helped them the most with their reintegration. In fact, only two respondents made any such claim. Jerome performed much needed renovation work to his mother's house and Eric visited his ailing mother several times a week to feed, bathe, and dress her:

I've been seeing her about three times a week since my sister has been gone. I take her clothes get her washed up, tidy up. Bring her little stuff, it's been nice.

2. Moral support. These men relied on the women in their lives for more than just material rewards. All of them pointed out the importance of having moral support, the backing of someone who believes in them and their potential for “going straight.” As evidenced above, however, moral and material support are interlaced in their intimate relations with family and loved ones.

Following a 28-year incarceration for murder, Jackson was released to his sister’s house. He stayed there for about two months before moving in with a girlfriend whom he met shortly after his release. Despite his poor relationship with his sister, he explains his closeness with his new girlfriend and why she is so important.

The marrying thing is something new because she is a good person and she’s on my side. And she is the type of girl that, she knows about my conviction, she knows about my case, she’s helpful in every way she can be. She’s supportive. And she is nonjudgmental about it. She’s not throwing rocks. She’s a no nonsense person, she doesn’t take a lot of excuses. If I cry and get on the self pity thing, she tells me to snap out of it. Get back and focus on the future. She’s real level headed. I need her for stability. I don’t have a wild side in the first place but I need a base. I can do anything if I can get somebody behind me.

Parole Officer

Of the 39 participants in the study, 32 were released into the custody of a parole officer (PO). Of these 32, 13 reported having had negative experiences with their PO, 9 reported positive experiences, and 10 respondents expressed ambivalence regarding how helpful their P.O. has been to vis-à-vis community reintegration. Our analysis reveals that the negative experiences tend to stem from one of three issues: (1) onerous P.O. caseloads, (2) feeling disrespected by the P.O., and (3) the P.O.’s hyper-aggressive surveillance.

Hector Gonzalez addressed the aggressive surveillance that several other subjects also complained about:

My PO is constantly on my case. He wouldn't help me. I tried to get a change of PO, but I ended up having to violate myself. I'm sick and tired of him, and I tried to get away from him. I tried to come to my mother, my sister, my brother's house. I got no help from him. He verbally threatened me and said he was gonna violate me. He said he has no problem taking me back [to prison]. This has been a nightmare. I'm so glad I don't have to see him anymore. This is the first time I've experienced parole, and I don't want to go there again.

Regarding the feeling of disrespect, Jeff Gantry said ...

Some of them (POs) think they're your father. That's the problem I got. I like to be talked to respectfully. And some of them people don't know how to do that. They'll look down on you, you know? Just 'cause he got that gun and badge, that ain't **** to me. You know, I still going to get my respect.

The most commonly reported reason for ambivalence is the perception, usually quite accurate, that the PO's mammoth caseload prevents him/her from providing customized attention. Eric White sympathetically described his relationship with his PO:

The only thing he tells me is he asks how I'm doing. He's nice, but his caseload is so large we really don't get personal time to talk. he just sees how I'm doing and encourages me to finish the program. He don't look for me as long as I'm all right.

Interestingly, many of the positive experiences revolve around the lack of PO attention.

Michael Christie only wished for one thing out of a PO: Inattention.

My PO has been helpful in one thing: Not hassling me and not demanding me to do things against my will. This helps me to do things to benefit me by doing things on my own. So the best part is ... my PO stays out of my way.

Other respondents said that their good relationship with the PO is based on mutual respect and the PO's desire "to be more than a parole man." Juan Perez and Billy Smith said ...

JP: He's been real cool. The one that I got now ... he's been real understanding. He doesn't give me the feeling that he's out to get me. He talks straightforward with me, straight up. He doesn't play games, and he's not too formal or professional. He's down-to-earth, but at the same time he's doing his job, and he's serious about what he's doing.

BS: Well with my PO, like I said, his involvement or some of his suggestions really helped point me in the right direction. It's only really helpful if you're willing to listen to his suggestions he makes. A lot of people, you don't have to do a lot of the things he suggests. I guess if you, after talking with people in general I kind of get a feeling if they

are steering you in the right direction or just running off at the mouth, just to say that we covered this. It seems like he took a personal interest in me or I feel like he took a personal interest in me. The least I could do is follow his suggestions.

Falling through the Cracks of Assistance

Despite their efforts to become connected with opportunities by mobilizing weak social ties (e.g., loose connections to opportunities for employment, education, etc.), ex-convicts often end up in a thicket of bureaucratic stipulations. Although some benefit from a strong relationship with a PO and/or the support of loved ones and friends, their success frequently hinges on whether or not they capably navigate the social welfare systems and labor market labyrinth they encounter. Nowhere is this more evident than in the life of the ex-convict who has nowhere to go following his release from prison. Jackson, for instance, mentioned how the best efforts of his parole officer proved fruitless as he was not accepted into some homeless shelters:

He gave me all kinds of homeless shelters when I told him my girlfriend and I were breaking up. He gave me info for shelters and phone call references to shelters. The only problem is that all the referrals he gave me were run by DOC and you had to have a drug problem. You had to have and a substance abuse problem recorded down. And if I lied to get into one than I would be stuck with that reputation for the rest of my life. Same thing with the SRO (single room occupancy hotel) program. They have special programs for people with drug problems but since I don't have those, you just off in the corner. I am also going to check into section 8 and Chicago public housing. These are Illinois housing—SROs and these people have to allow a certain amount of subsidized housing.

Many men come across situations in which the help is out there but unattainable to them due to various program restrictions. At the beginning of the year, Jackson was unable to receive any type of medical assistance due to his age. He explains how he fell through the cracks:

One, I got the prison thing and another, I'm too old. Also Public Aid denied me a medical card because I'm too young, they said I had to be 55. People at 50 can't get it. They said I'm in too good of health and I'm 50.

Once Jackson was able to secure a full time job, his program privileges swiftly came to an end. Unfortunately, his low-paying job cannot match the material benefits he once derived

from the programs he no longer can access. In addition, he will not receive any type of medical benefits from his job for at least 3 months:

I was getting food stamps and now I no longer get food stamps. I no longer get the Cook County medical card ... they took me off both of those. The job I have with the state will pay for certain medications, emergency care, and certain types of procedures. But I had a regular card for homeless people and people without incomes. Now that I have a job, they get pulled. I was qualified for housing with the SRO-single room occupancy. I don't qualify for that now because of my job. I don't qualify for government housing. When I was without a job, I qualified for government housing, food stamps, medical programs and now I am out of it.

Billy also remarked on how his search for assistance with a Department of Human Resources would not be useful due to its strict hours of operation. He was unable to undergo the standard free medical examination because he was unable to take a day off of work:

You know I was looking at the Department of Human Resources. We got to a point that I got all the paperwork done and all I had to do was go in take a physical. But we couldn't get our times arranged where I could go and take the physical and be at work. The guy I work for is a real stickler for being at work and being on time. If you miss a half a day, you throw the whole work week behind. What I had to do was cancel out, back out of that whole deal. There is no Saturday time to take one. No time I could get off.

Evidenced in our interviews is a general lack of awareness of specific programs that could assist them. Although some were informed of community resources by friends, post-prison programs, Pre-Start, or their parole officer, many found that due to various reasons, they were ineligible for most types of assistance. Due to having a felony, not having a drug problem, or perhaps having a job, many were not eligible for much needed assistance. Both Martin and Tony admitted that they wanted to attempt reintegration with only the assistance of family. Overall, those who actively applied for assistance programs found themselves being passed over or unable to benefit from them for reasons mentioned. Billy explains how his effort never enjoyed a response:

Yes, that they did. If you requested it, they gave you a shelter list. Salvation army, I saw a billboard that they were going to be visiting for the Waukegan and St. Louis areas

which if you lived in Salvation Army for a year, they gave you a penny a day. Room and board would be free and if you completed the program they would help you find a job. So that was there. I signed up for that but I never was contacted for it.

Bureaucratic Negotiations

Bureaucratic negotiations signify that ex-inmates had to purposely go outside their close-knit networks in order to achieve specific goals. This theme embodies Granovetter's (1973) ideas. It was not until these ex-inmates made the conscious effort to seek assistance from someone outside their immediate group that they were able to meet their needs. Penetrative forays into foreign networks often resulted from ex-convicts' refusal to "fall through the cracks of assistance," as discussed previously. Some found the wherewithal to forge ahead and seek out someone who could help them unravel the tight knots of bureaucratic intransigence; most others, thought, simply profited from happenstance, from fortuitous encounters with "the right person at the right time."

A couple of interviewees in the study, through sheer frustration, decided to push the bureaucratic process through on their own. One ex-inmate that spent only 61 days in prison had to wait 9 months to receive a transfer to Tennessee to be with his wife and children. Feeling like his parole officer really could not do much more from his end, he had his wife contact a cousin that worked for the Tennessee parole board to ensure that his paperwork was processed quicker. He believes that his connection enabled him to be transferred much quicker than normal:

That's hard to say because the parole officer down there, she is a woman, find out she's a relative to the family. My wife's side. She's a Hicks which is the mother-in-law side. She's a 3rd cousin. She said "well he only has 3 months left". My wife says but he's been waiting 9 months to get down here. So she goes I know the family and that they're church goers and they just screwed up. She brought up a past record, but it was nothing. So she pushed it forward.

He also took the process into his own hands when his wife had surgery and he desired a weekend pass to visit her. After numerous unreturned calls to his parole officer for a travel pass,

he eventually went out to the Maywood parole office and pleaded his situation to his officer's supervisor. He received his travel pass literally minutes before his ride left for Tennessee:

I had to go down to Maywood and they said good luck if you go down to do that. One operator, they don't know what's going on because they just take down messages. High class receptionist. I doubt if anyone is going to be there. One person said "No, don't go. Don't go there." My buddy sitting here waiting since nine in the morning and it's 1:30 in the afternoon and he is itching to go [drive to Tennessee]. He's got a 10-11 hour drive. Actually we made good time, nine hours. He's got to meet his family in Mississippi. Well, we got to do what we got to do, we go to Maywood. So try it see what happens. Fortunately, for me he [his parole officer's supervisor] was there. He said "You're lucky you caught us because usually we are not here, especially for a Friday." That gentleman worked everything out for me, real nice. I went right to the supervisor. I told my agent because he works 3-11 anyway, I explained that I didn't want to jump over your head but I was pressured for time. This guy is waiting, ya know. It was fortunate that it worked out ok. I left like 25 messages [previously for his parole officer, none of which he returned].

Jackson also felt that in order to obtain resources, it would be useful to take the initiative to make things happen. Determined, he describes how he was going to push through the politics of obtaining housing:

I'm going to use politics. This gentleman's name is Danny Davis and the other guys name is Bobby Rush. They are two urban leaguers or whatever. And they are pushing for housing for people who don't have a home. I am going to write them a letter on the computer and say "Look, I am a homeless ex-inmate, and I need help." And I'm going to write them a letter and ask them if they would be kind enough to ask the CHA to consider giving me a house. The CHA usually does not allow criminal convicts. I am going to explain to them that if it wasn't for my girlfriend, I would be on the streets living in a cardboard box.

Living Situation

The vast majority of respondents were released into a private residence, typically one headed by—or at least authoritatively shaped by—their mothers. About 40 percent returned to the same neighborhood in which they lived prior to their incarceration. The remaining 60 percent found themselves in a new neighborhood, either because they now find themselves living with family (whereas they lived on their own prior to their most recent incarceration) or because

they were released into the custody of a halfway house or similar setting. Nearly 50 percent of respondents told us that gang activity strongly influences the tenor of the neighborhood in which they currently reside. In most cases they reported that the gangs on the street were the ones in which they once held membership. Only a few were living in areas occupied by oppositional gangs.

Approximately 30 percent of the households in which these men lived at the time of their release were occupied by at least one person who had been to prison, usually a male sibling or cousin.

Community Attachments and Civic Participation

Involvement in community affairs also affects reintegration trajectories. We asked respondents a series of questions regarding the extent to which they participate in community-based organizations (social clubs, athletic leagues, religious organizations, political activity, etc.) and the degree to which organizations assist them. Roughly 1/3 of respondents reported that they are involved in community organizations, either as contributors or beneficiaries; but the majority of these reports came from men who resided in halfway houses or shelters. Only five respondents living in private residence reported any kind of involvement in local community organization life.

For example, Jerome, Tony, Duane, and Jackson assisted minimally with churches by either donating or volunteering small amounts of time to fix things. Syrus reported spending some time each day trying to casually counsel the “young bucks” (i.e., youth gang members) on the “errors of their ways and what lies ahead for them if they keep doin’ wrong.” Of all the men, only Duane and Billy indicated that at times they assist with political campaigns in their area, although currently they were not doing any volunteering. Those who seemed most involved with

the community were not currently living in the area that they would consider their neighborhood. Eric, Tony, Billy and Jackson, for instance, seemed to be more involved because they had increased access to organizations through the various programs that they were connected and were living in new areas. Overall, it seems that those most involved with the community were not volunteering in the community that they called home and of those who lived in the neighborhood that they called home rarely got involved. This is a critical finding if one would argue that community attachments and involvement is needed to steer individuals away from criminal paths.

We find that those who did get involved with community work outside the neighborhood they call home were much more likely to utilize other valuable resources. Since they were not restricting themselves to their close-knit neighborhood groups, they were able to create a bridge to another network that offered opportunities that they previously did not have. Both Eric and Billy were involved with community groups to which they became connected through their post-prison programs. It was these connections that offered them everything from job leads to cheaper medical benefits. It seems plausible, based on our limited qualitative data, that merely being involved with your community is insufficient in terms of fostering a crime-free lifestyle; rather, it is the involvement with extra- or trans-neighborhood organizations that increases the likelihood of obtaining knowledge, skills, social cohesion, and job connections.

Contact with Criminal Justice System

Each of our bi-monthly interviews concluded with a series of questions addressing the respondents' contact with the criminal justice system in the preceding two months. Although only five of the respondents reported current involvement in criminal activity, nearly 50 percent of respondents had been stopped and questioned by the police, usually for "just walking down

the street, doin' nothin', mindin' my own business" (Syrus Kendall). In the one year following their release, our estimate is that roughly 40 percent of the study's respondents were re-arrested, often for parole violations or low-level offenses, such as public intoxication, retail theft, or simple drug possession. Seventy-five percent, however, were stopped and/or detained for a significant period (but then released). Respondents generally ascribed their repeated detainments by police to their known "master status" as "an ex-convict, an ex-gang banger, a known thug" (Frank Patterson).

Throughout our year of interviews we collected dozens of stories in which law enforcement officers assumed respondents' guilt and acted accordingly. In three separate incidents, three different respondents were pulled over while driving legally. In each case the officer stated that their car came up stolen or that their plates did not match their car. Martin explains his ordeal:

Both times it was for the plates not matching the car. One officer tried to tell me that the plates don't go to my car. I said "man, they is." And when he ran them he looked and they go to the car and let me go. I was spooked on that one because they put the cuffs on me and everything. They behind me right? All along, you know when the police is checking you out because they will be so far behind you but they can still see them plates. So as I'm riding and I come up on 34th and Ashland. So I go on a lower speed and I know once I drop my speed they going to drop down on me, they going to put their lights on me. They put their lights on me and I pull over. I said "what's the problem?" They said " We just running your plates and the plates don't go to the car." Man the plates go to the car. I tell them I'm on parole and they said "Ok, cool." They put the handcuffs on me. They ran the plates and let me out. It scared me. They said the plates didn't match the car but then handcuffed me and then ran the plates. He said he was running while he was riding, but he wasn't.

Although we are not well-versed on the procedures that Chicago's police officers must follow with regard to traffic stops, we do know from firsthand observation (i.e., Scott's previous ethnographic study of CPD officers) that when one runs a license plate through the computer

system, it either comes up stolen or not. Very rarely should there be any confusion or distortion when dealing with these systems.

Billy also felt that he was pulled over for no apparent reason. He stated that he was driving late at night in a predominantly Caucasian neighborhood when an officer pulled him over for a “faulty headlight.” However, when Billy got out of his vehicle he saw that both headlights were functioning properly. He said that the officer treated him cordially and did not arrest him for anything, but Billy sensed that the officer needed to fabricate some pretext to justify the stop and subsequently assess Billy’s potential involvement in wrongdoing.

Eric ran into a couple of situations that reminded him that despite how well he was doing, the State still had him in its far-reaching hands. Eric related a situation in which he was implicated in a robbery because the police showed the victim, who was mugged, a picture of Eric that was taken more than three years prior. According to Eric, at the time the police stopped him he looked nothing like his appearance in the outdated photograph. Nevertheless, the police arrested him and took him into the station for a line-up. Although the victim did not pick him out as the guilty party, he believed that he was held for an unnecessarily long time. He stated that the police attempted to keep him longer by trying to find a reason to keep him. They were able to find an old warrant on him that was no longer valid and even went so far as to tell him that his parole officer gave a piece of information in hopes of keeping him there longer, which turned out not to be the case.

Another disturbing situation involving Eric occurred while he was living in the Pacific Garden Mission (PGM) in downtown Chicago. PGM staff told the residents that “officials in Springfield” wanted to meet with all of the ex-inmates to go over some important information. So early one morning all of the ex-convicts assembled. To the ex-inmates’ surprise, Chicago

police were standing sentry in the lobby and outside CPD paddy wagons lined the street. The officers handcuffed all 60 ex-convicts and took them into the police station for questioning. At no point did anyone provide the men with a rationale for their arrest. In fact, the officers plainly told them that no one was under arrest, yet they did not remove the handcuffs nor did they present any of the them with the option to leave unmolested. In addition to being asked many unrelated questions, the men were drug-tested, finger-printed, and had their picture taken. The police officers involved told the men that although the men were not under arrest, their status as “parolee” meant that they were the property of the state, making this treatment entirely legal. After six hours sitting in handcuffs, Eric finally was released. To this day he cannot understand why the police undertook this action. Here is the tale in Eric’s own words:

They (PGM) had an announcement that they had some that they (parole) had something to talk to guys that uses this address for parole. Some guys don’t stay there (PGM) but that is where we see our parole officer at. So the day came, 5:30 in the morning, and we all met there and a lot of guys were on parole there. There was a room full. At least 50 or 60 guys that were in compliance with their rules. They handcuffed all of us and took us to the police station and arrested us. This was like the 2nd week of November. So we all meet there (at PGM) and they call our names. They didn’t even talk to us, they just handcuffed us and took us to Homan and something police station. They brought paddy wagons and paddy wagons and police trucks and loaded us up. I was handcuffed from like 5:30 in the morning and I didn’t get out of handcuffs until 10 minutes after 10. Behind my back, my shoulders were killing me. I had to take a urine test. I was talked to about ridiculous questions “oh a murder happened do you know anything about it?” “Are you affiliated with a gang?” All this crazy stuff. They asking you about do you know anything about anything. It’s stupidity. It was a raid or something. Even the guys that came up positive for urine, they let them go. They didn’t arrest anyone. Why would you take us? We the guys the guys doing what we supposed to be doing.

Situations as described above play into the constant fear of returning to prison.

Moreover, these types of actions add to the feelings of distrust of the police and various programs that seek to help these ex-inmates; distrust could affect whatever little social capital these men may have with these programs. Ultimately, these conditions of distrust could be the

impetus that keeps ex-inmates from partaking in the endless opportunities available in the larger society.

Making Money, Achieving Status: The Straight Job and “The Lick”

As they embark on the reentry process ex-convicts must dramatically alter not only their physical circumstances but also, and perhaps more importantly, their social and psychological conditions. The ex-convict aspires to ‘normalization,’ or a position of acceptance wherein his fellow community members and significant others recognize him as ‘just another contributing social unit’ (Studt, 1973: 42). In addition, ‘the parolee’s reentry is usually experienced under conditions of low social support and extremely limited resources. He moves into a world of free men where he is often subject to social rejection, and he usually lacks the social connections and economic resources that are necessary for the effective management of crisis’ (Studt, 1973: 45). The newly released ex-convict must learn how to perform an acceptable public identity. He must effectively manage his impression (Goffman, 1963).

Achieving and communicating status of various kinds and degrees is one of the ex-convict’s central concerns, as it is for just about anyone. Conveying self-worth to the outside world and to himself takes many forms, with the conspicuous consumption of material goods being one. All of the ex-convicts in this study have ‘confessed’ to what Schwartz (1994) terms ‘thing addiction,’ or the irrepressible desire to acquire and display material items, usually consumer non-durable goods such as brand names shoes and clothing, but also in some cases automobiles. The pangs of thing addiction tend to be most pronounced in the days and weeks following release from prison. This is when ex-inmates encounter multiple affronts to their identities, and one way to defend their place in the world and to achieve a higher level is to consume products that others can see and which others recognize as valuable. As Schwartz

(1994) maintains, 'status is not served if we spend money on things that no one can see' (p. 165).

Buying and showcasing their wares promotes an image, as they see it, of respectability, and it greases the wheels of their membership in the social world. They want what everyone wants: 'association, affiliation, inclusion, magical purpose' (Twitchell, 1999: 32).

The high profile consumption of material goods—the accoutrements of decency—serves the ex-convict's end of telling the rest of the world that he is like them, that he too is concerned with the goings-on of community life and the economic marketplace.¹² These men see themselves engaging in what de Tocqueville (1965) calls 'decent materialism,' a socially condoned and positively sanctioned technique for participating in the public sphere. Spending and showing allow the ex-convict to tell the world that he is more like them than he is different; his consumption speaks to a common cultural denominator. The men in this study, like most people, imbue physical goods with social properties as a way to 'shore up' their identities, but for them this is a highly precarious manipulation (Anderson, 1999: 74-75).

Richard Bartlett¹³ describes how one tries to resolve status disorientation and identity spoilage through material consumption and how such status manipulations put one at risk of re-arrest:

There's always that urgency when you get out, you know. You feel like you've lost two or three years. And the little guy you used to see out on the street, when you had a Cadillac and he only had bicycle. And now you lost your Caddie, and you done your time in jail and come back out. Now he's got a Park Avenue, and you ain't got nothin'. You done lost three years and all the income and everything you would've had that would've made you much more better now than you were then . . . well, you gotta catch up now. Until you're lookin' for shortcuts, which makes you more vulnerable for gettin' popped off [arrested] again.

¹² Similarly, Frazier's (1962) study of the black middle class and Anderson's (1999) study of affluent African Americans regard conspicuous consumption as a method for countering, or at least challenging, the stigmatization of blacks by whites.

¹³ A consultant to the project whom I interviewed repeatedly before, during, and after the study period.

These men not only consume material goods as a way to communicate status outward, they also find deep personal meaning in the objects they purchase and display. For Marcus Price, a newly bought bracelet became his amulet, a magic charm portending a new, freedom-filled life:

Well, the prison there at Big Muddy loaded us onto a van to take us to East St. Louis—from there we had to catch a Greyhound bus to Chicago. Sitting on the van, I knew I was free. And the more I thought about it, the more excited I got. I was free, and I couldn't wait for the van to get me there. I really like rock and roll music, and the driver—one of the sheriff's officers—had on this really good rock and roll station. So I was happy, listening to rock and roll, watching the free world through a window without bars on it. And I had \$100 in my pocket. We finally get to East St. Louis, and I had some time before I had to catch the bus to Chicago. I went looking to buy something. I ended up finding this guy that was selling jewelry. For 10 bucks I bought a gold bracelet off the guy. All the way to Chicago I was sitting there on the bus, shaking my arm, hearing that bracelet jingle. It was a sign for me, a sign and symbol of my new freedom. I know what you're gonna say, right, a bracelet on my wrist as a sign of freedom—a manacle of freedom? Maybe it doesn't seem right, but it sure felt right to me.

Do you still have that bracelet?

No. That got stolen from me.

Getting a job, whether legitimate or illegitimate, sits high atop the ex-convict's list of things to do upon return to the community. Because they usually return to the same communities that sent them, ex-offenders generally confront the same economic opportunities that existed before they did their prison bit. All respondents indicated the importance and desire of securing a job in order to get back on track. Of the 39 men in the study, only eight (22%) were employed at the time of the baseline interview; and of the 17 men who participated in the final (T5) interview one year after their release, roughly half had acquired a "straight job." Throughout the study only two respondents procured full-time jobs that offered health insurance. Seventy percent of the respondents, however, reported trying to secure legitimate work, both at baseline and at the T4 interview.

Relations with family and friends constituted most respondents' only opportunity for securing some type of employment, however minimal and poor-paying. Martin, unable to obtain regular employment, was given the chance to work some hours with his father. He worked only 8 hours a week installing windows and doors. Although his claim to pulling in \$200-300 a week for these minimal hours was financially helpful, he still did not have the ability to find full time legitimate work before or after incarceration. In this same situation was Duane who also relied on a family member to allow him to assist with laying carpet. With hours varying week to week, he only makes \$150-200 for roughly 30 hours of work. Jerome also relied on a close friend for remodeling side jobs. Jerome was limited in his work because his suspended license made him very dependent on others.

Even higher education does not seem to benefit these ex-inmates as it benefits other citizens in society. Billy has a four-year business degree but yet finds it very difficult to obtain gainful employment. His first job upon release only paid \$5.75 per hour. Currently, he works as a temporary machine operator making about \$7.00 per hour and does not receive benefits. Respondents who were part of a post-prison program had more success with finding employment as these programs are aware of what companies will be more likely to hire ex-inmates. As seen in Billy's situation, weak tie connections proved more beneficial than his own human capital (i.e., his degree). Again, we can see how having connections to weak ties proves helpful. Being involved in the program, one respondent admits this connection alleviates feeling rejected which often leads to frustration and returning to old habits. Those not involved in programs, such as Jayson, found himself asking a very important question:

I don't know. Back to the same thing I've been saying, where's the resource to me finding a job?

Rejection was quite common for most ex-inmates returning to the work force. Even attempting to work for such companies as McDonalds or gas stations for minimum wage was difficult. All ex-inmates made reference that the biggest obstacle was getting around the felony question commonly seen on job applications. Most felt that if they could get into an initial interview and explain their situation they would have a better chance of getting hired. Billy believed that his minor offense of driving on a suspended license would not cause him a problem:

I expected because of the seriousness of my case, or lack there of, I felt that driving on a suspended license would be overlooked. But it's not. The fact is, I did that time. 61 days is the least that anyone can do in the penitentiary. Well, fact is people weigh that heavily. When I filled out an application and people ask that question I got to be honest because it's going to come up anyway. So, if you don't make it to the interview that's why. If I can make it to the interview, I can explain it, usually explain it away. However, just getting to that final interview where, the person you really need to talk to. But with that felony conviction, your application is put off to the side at a lot of places.

Unfortunately, regardless of the charge, many found themselves in the same predicament; their applications pushed off to the side. Most were never even called for a first interview. However, some job application forms were worded in such a way that interviewees could answer "no" to this question. Some have a statute of limitations in which it asks if you have been convicted of a crime in the last seven years. Jackson explains his never-ending confrontation with this question:

Frustration in trying to get jobs and people don't want to hire me. Explaining to them I was in prison and people going "uh-oh". Every form you read says ... I got a way around it now. Most of them ask have you ever been convicted and you have to explain and all of a sudden the job is gone. But Jewel and Sears they have a time limit. It says have you ever been convicted in the last 7 years. Technically, no I haven't. They put a statute of limitations on it, other companies don't. The worst part or the most humiliating part was the lady here [financial aid counselor at the college] prove I was in prison in order to get financial aid. Come on, what guy would come in here and lie about that, about being in the penitentiary? She said nope, you have to prove to us that you were in prison. I started laughing, you got to be kidding me.

However, once in the interview, Jackson finds it hard to explain that his last job was in the 1970s. At some point, ex-inmates get caught, their records found out, and they get passed up for the job or fired from the job they currently owe to a lie. Many echo that same phrase "...if only they would give me a chance." Most ex-inmates are rejected before they even have the chance to explain their crime, their skills, their education, and their dedication to change.

Although most respondents indicated that having a legitimate job would make things much easier for them, for one ex-inmate it created more problems. If respondents could find a steady job that paid well, then they would be fine. However, most of these jobs pay very little making it difficult to pay for such things as an apartment, medical expenses, groceries, etc. Even once some ex-inmates found jobs, they still either had to rely on family for additional support, found other untraditional ways to make money (selling blood and research involvement) or lost their enrollment in health and food stamp programs. Besides considering helping with this study as one sort of money-making opportunity, Jackson made reference to the non-traditional jobs that he calls his "hustle":

I told you I go to the blood bank and I still do. That is \$42 a week. I go twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays and they pay \$18 the first time and \$24 the second time.

"The system" does not benefit those who find full-time legitimate jobs but rather leaves them in a situation to decide if they would rather work for menial money and lose all assistance programs or remain jobless and be able to benefit from the plethora of services available.

Referring to this saddening cycle, Jackson's febrile pleas are warranted:

They are needs not wants or desires. I need a better paying job to survive. When I can get that I can get better housing. I cannot get anything right now because I do not have an actual place to stay.

The following two quotes elaborate on the notion that these men desire legitimate jobs to achieve socially acceptable goals:

I still want to become more independent, be able to purchase my own home or apartment. Still working on getting my driver's license. Job issue is kind of, I think I'm kind of satisfied with that right now. But I just want to get some time under my belt. Good quality time in at the job.

I am not criminally orientated. I don't plan on selling drugs or do anything to get back into prison. My thing is that I want to make up for the years I've done in prison for myself and my family, my mother and my aunts or whatever. And I can't do that by being a failure. Like the man in the book says, failure cannot be an option when you're trying to win or accomplish a goal. I'm self motivated to the point of obsession with trying to get ahead. I want a house, I want a piece of the rock, I want a family, I want a goal and right now the goal is to be solid, secure and stable.

Despite the diversity of these ex-inmates situations, the need and want for a better job and to be a player in mainstream society rung through loud and clear.

Challenge of Being a "Double Minority"

Bearing the double "stigma" (Goffman, 1963) of "ex-convict" and "Black" compels the majority of respondents in this study to seek refuge—solace and money—in their small social networks of family and close friends. The challenges of reintegration increase substantially as a result of being what one respondent termed a "double minority." Despite the daily setbacks of trying to secure a job, recently released inmates spoke about the constant possibility of returning to prison and always feeling like they are under surveillance, not only by police but also by their own family members. In this way their lives exemplify the decentralization of state control that Foucault (1979) so adeptly documents. Onerous treatment within society generally and by the legal system specifically is an omnipresent feature in the ex-convict's daily life. Jackson talked about how his "ex-convict" status triggers an inversion of the taken-for-granted "presumption of innocence" embodied in our socio-legal system:

Right now I feel like my feet are in quicksand, like I said, the parole board, at any time I could go back to prison. If a cop pulls me over on the street and says you look like somebody that has committed a crime, I got to go into a bunch of arguments. I can get arrested for anything. If somebody just thinks it, if I step across the street and somebody says that they think then I have to go through the grill. Because of my situation, see in the law there is the presumption of innocence and because I am on parole, I have guilt

automatically. Then I am playing the 2nd minority of being a minority. Sometimes being a minority has its advantages. Some people are not as bad as people make them out to be, depending on what you're trying to do. But the majority of people, 88% of them, because I have a conviction tend to put a stigma on me.

By design, parole never constitutes full freedom. Hence, the fear of being sent back to a carceral setting consistently looms over the ex-convict. Respondents shared with us their fear of “slipping up” and watching over their shoulder whenever they hear sirens or see a police officer. Many of them experienced the same trepidation in relations with their family members. These feelings emanate not solely or even mostly from doing something illegal, but rather from their new “master status” of Black ex-con. To their way of thinking, this status telegraphs guilt to the rest of the world, which in turn forces a foreclosure of opportunity to reintegrate successfully.

Again, the most common response among these men is to “cocoon” themselves inside of relatively insular networks. However rational this may be in the short run, ultimately they end up suffering the detriments of isolation from networks of resources essential for reintegration. The closed nature of their natures shuts them in and keeps them from making contact with the “loose ties” and extra-group networks that could lead to better employment, opportunities to advance their education, and so forth. It is apparent that this is a self-reinforcing cycle. In addition, these men’s tendency to shut themselves into dense networks of affiliations produces a situation in which they can either (1) obtain meager paying legitimate jobs, (2) engage in street hustles (“licks”), or (3) engage in both legitimate and illegitimate work simultaneously.

Fifteen of our respondents at baseline said that they supplement their income from legal work, family contributions, and/or government assistance with “street hustles.” Their hustles range in type from selling single cigarettes or bootlegged packs of cigarettes to selling pirated DVDs and CDs to selling stolen merchandise to selling drugs. A few respondents earned extra cash shooting dice and gambling; a few others engaged in modern-day “pimping,” which really

just involves “watching the hookers’ backs” while they ply their trade, and then extorting or petitioning them for money later. All of the men in this study were at one time involved in drug selling at some level. Many were involved at the time of our initial interview, and others resumed their involvement as the study unfolded. For most men who sold drugs during the course of the study, the reason was simple: convenience and quick cash.

Still out there on the corner—or at worst a few blocks down or two alleys over—is the drug dealing street gang in whose commerce the ex-convict used to ‘rip and run.’ Drug markets in Chicago are quite small, incredibly fluid, and they operate independently of one another. From one block to the next, one encounters different dealers associated with different street organizations, all selling the same products at roughly the same prices. This organization, constant across locations, presents a familiar money-making venture to the newly released, increasingly desperate and anxious ex-convict.

Frank Patterson: A Case Study in “The Lick” – Hustling the Street for “Small Change”

Frank Patterson lives in a men’s shelter. Every day he tries to land a decent-paying job that will allow him to use his multiple skills: clerical, landscaping, machine operator, carpentry, and sundry other abilities. On the day of our sixth and final interview (T5), Frank asked me if I wanted to hang out with him for the day. He said that we could do the interview “on the fly, while I do the things I been tellin’ you about, or at least alludin’ to, all these other times we done met.” I happily agreed, eager to get a sense of how at least one of the respondents approaches his daily hustle absent a straight job or strong gang ties.

Frank used to be a Gangster Disciple on Chicago’s south side. He held some rank in the gang, working as a runner, an enforcer, and an occasional “tip” (drug spot) manager. Today he no longer “gang-bangs” or maintains a close association. He uses his knowledge of gang life and

gang turf on the west side to run his various hustles: selling stolen merchandise (DVDs, CDs, clothing, cigarettes) and pimping. The following excerpt from my fieldnotes gives some flesh to the sanitized data I had previously collected in my structured interviews with Frank.

Frank Patterson and I are standing on one of the main "strips" of Chicago's west side, killing time, making small talk and issuing casual observations about passing traffic and pedestrians. We stand in a vacant lot amidst eight parked cars—some broken down, some running fine, all heavily worn. Inside or on top of every car sit at least a few men, with total of 20 or so assuming a fit of repose. Nearly everyone has an alcoholic drink in hand, with malt liquor being the beverage of choice. I ask Frank what this vacant lot and its temporary denizens bring to his mind, and he replies,

It's the first of the month, right. That's their dining room, to your left, to your right. They're boozers. In the nighttime they might even look dead, 'cause they all be drunk, they eyes be blank, you know. They're actually escapin' they're *** lives. I shouldn't say that, you know, 'cause maybe some people enjoy that man. It's what we talk about in N.A. to get away from. Seems like to recover we got to put ourselves above somebody else, man. But then, it kinda make me concerned about my security.

Frank's 41 years of life—which include a 12-year membership in the Gangster Disciples, one of the nation's most notorious street gangs and at least 10 years of addiction to crack cocaine—seem to have conferred on him at least a century's worth of wisdom. He generally speaks in maxims, aphorisms, and metaphors. Today is no exception.

Across the street stands one of Chicago's soon-to-be destroyed mid-rise public housing projects. Next to the project sits a boarded up medical clinic. I remark on the gloomy, forlorn look of the abandoned clinic, and Frank responds, "That look like a crack house to me. Check out the mail slot on the door, and there ain't no windows. That don't look like no clinic to me." I ask Frank what the sight of the project brings to his mind. He ponders a moment before answering: "It don't put me too much of a mind of Cabrini, where I come up. It look like a jail, some type of jail. It's a form of ... it's a project. I think they was buildin' it with somethin' in mind." I ask, "Like what?" He says, "I don't know, no offense, man, but I think they racial, man. I think it's comin' to light now."

The sun shines brightly on this brisk autumn day. "It's all right bein' out here," Frank says, "just you and me, sunbathin' on the ho' stro'." "Ho' stro" is street code for "whore stroll," or a stretch of urban landscape where prostitutes, a.k.a. sex workers, ply their trade. Frank is out here "on a hustle," trying to prevail upon some of the prostitutes to give him some money in exchange for his protective services. In an era that has witnessed the decline of traditional, old-school pimping, Frank has found a way to make money as a quasi-pimp, offering protection and occasional dope money ("so they can get they sick off"—stave off withdrawal) to women he meets on the ho' stro', including and especially his girlfriend Mary.

*Our day passes amidst a fluctuating crowd of between 20 and 35 people congregating in the breezeway and on the front lawn of the housing project. On the other side of the breezeway, behind the building, stands a young man, probably 15 years of age, shouting “rocks and blows, nickel¹⁴ blows, sawbuck¹⁵ blows, dubs¹⁶.” A slightly older young man approaches, staring unflinchingly at Frank: “What you be about, man. You here to shop?” Without hesitation Frank responds, “Yo, man, I’m straight. I ain’t about nothin’. I didn’t come here to shop. I here to see Mary, that’s it.” The young man fires back, “Who that?” referring to me. “He a friend of mine, he cool.” Frank and I exit the breezeway and station ourselves on the unseasonably dead brown grass that constitutes the housing project’s lawn. “That dude got a gun, man. Right there in his front pocket. He don’t *** around, now. We got to be cool ‘round here.” Indeed, I had eyeballed the man’s gun, its heft making an obvious outline in the man’s pants.*

Released from prison almost a year ago, Frank has struggled mightily to get back on his feet after a series of six incarcerations, strung nearly back to back, for theft and burglary charges. Five years ago Frank signed his papers of renunciation wherein he promised the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) that he would no longer maintain an affiliation with the Gangster Disciples. In return, IDOC gave him credit toward “good time.”

Frank has cut his gang ties for the most part. But he is connected enough still to hawk Mary’s wares to a contingent of Black Disciples—a gang that “rides with” the GDs in the same Nation—who live in the neighborhood surrounding Rockwell Gardens. But he shows no trepidation in marketing Mary to young men who ride with the Vice Lords, the People gang and archrival of the Gangster Disciples. Frank views the gang situation instrumentally. Because of his lengthy former involvement he knows the lexicon, the cultural and economic ways and means of gang life. He consciously applies his knowledge to the exploitation of gang members to his economic advantage.

Today Frank lives a drug-, alcohol-, and gang-free life in a shelter-like setting run by a religious organization. Six hundred other men stay in the same shelter, and more than 60 share Frank’s floor alone. When asked what he likes least about his current living situation, Frank shows me his right arm, where I see at least 10 welts: “Bed bugs. The whole place is infested, man. They bombed the place, but that did no good. You see these bugs, man, and they all big and brown and full of blood. I hate it, man.”

Earlier this day Frank attended a Narcotics Anonymous meeting and an employment readiness training session in the shelter where he stays. Most of the meetings and workshops he attends are mandatory; his life at the shelter is conditional on his participation in educational and religious activities.

On the way to lunch Frank tells me that he found a girlfriend. “But I think she’s promiscuous, man. Naw, I know she’s promiscuous.” Frank tells me that he is supposed to meet up with her later in the afternoon and that he is excited that I will get a chance to meet her.

¹⁴ A “nickel” is a \$5 bag of drugs, either heroin, crack cocaine, or marijuana.

¹⁵ A “sawbuck” is a \$10 bag of drugs.

¹⁶ A “dub” is a \$20 bag of drugs.

Frank enthuses, “Maybe you can ask her some questions about me, man. I’d love to hear what kind of *** she be sayin’!”

Now we are sitting in Zorba’s, an affordably priced Greek cafeteria in the west Loop where Frank dines frequently and where two of his clothing customers work; one is a waitress, the other a short order cook. Over a double cheeseburger Frank tells me that he has grown weary of his fellow shelter residents and their increasing self-righteousness.

FP: I see some guys seem like they’re totin’ the program. It kind of like turns me off from 12 to 12, where you know, their whole life revolves around therapeutic conversations. And they use it to attack certain characteristics. They attack what you say, what you do. They want to tell you what the program suggests. To me, they become therapeutic bums, man. It just kinda turns me off.

Since we first met some 10 months ago Frank has continually touted the benefits of meditation, his principal source of therapy and main instrument of spirituality. Swiftly he pulls a book out of his backpack. It is a popularization of Taoism written by two psychologists who hold doctorates in philosophy.

FP: I don’t know, but I give it a lot of thought. But I do think it’s good to be in harmony with nature, right. And things just work for you without effort, you know, without strugglin’ and strivin’. Yet ... sometimes that can kinda scare you. What I’m sayin’ is that it can scare you when everything’s fallin’ in place.

GS: Oh, yeah. It’s like, When’s the other shoe gonna drop? So when things are goin’ pretty good, what are you thinkin’? What’s scary about that for you? What are your thoughts?

FP: Stop, stop, you know. Okay, it’s cool if things would stop gradually, you could see things comin’ to an end. But if something interrupts it that’s way out of the ordinary I don’t know ... maybe, hospitality before execution. Sometime I be like, Man, this here’s so smooth, when’s the end gonna come? I had a grammar school teacher used to tell me ... which I have experienced and have known to be true ... that there’s like a silver lining in every cloud. I guess that works both ways. There’s a cloud in every silver lining, too.

Today we skip the day labor agency, which is where Frank originally said we were headed. Frank tells me that the woman there will eventually place you in a job if you keep showing up every day, thereby showing her that you are serious. I ask how many times in the past two weeks he has gone to the agency, and he tells me “two or three times.” Earlier today I went with him while he put his name in for a landscaping job through the shelter. Frank says that he wants a legitimate job, full-time, and that the job is a stepping stone toward his goals of owning his own home, perhaps even a multi-unit dwelling in the city. But he refuses to apply for just any job. “I know guys, man, that get caught up with filling out application after application, and they end up with a telemarketing job. That ain’t me.” Frank reports spending only an hour or two each week looking for work. Today is no different. We finish eating, skip the day labor

agency, and head out on the bus. We are going to the 'ho' stro'. Frank now discloses that he pimps his girlfriend on the strip.

On the way to the strip I ask Frank how he met Mary, his girlfriend.

FP: Trickin' off.

GS: Yeah?

FP: You know what I mean?

GS: Yeah, she was workin', right?

FP: I was lookin' for a date. It was about three months ago. I was up on the bus, right? I'm like man, oh girl, you hot. She was under the viaduct, with one hand out here and the other out there, just shakin' that ***. ****. So I dated her. But then I dated her some more, and then I got to likin' her, maybe too much, you know, outside of business.

GS: So you didn't turn her out [i.e., steer her into prostitution]?

FP: No, man, I wouldn't turn no girl out, not if she wasn't already doin' it. And this girl, she was ... well-seasoned. [laughs] But now, man, I run a little hustle with her. A light touch, nothin' big. But it's a revenue source, man.

Frank spends many of his afternoons riding either the bus or the elevated train, just killing time. Or else he does what we are doing today, standing around, making small time hustles with prostitutes and johns on the 'ho' stro'. Today Frank hits the 'stro in order to work Mary, the prostitute he frequents who has become his girlfriend.

For the next four hours Frank and I alternately sit and stand on the sidewalk, in a vacant lot, and out in front of the housing project. The whole area teems with street gang members—Vice Lords, Renegade Vice Lords, Four Corner Hustlers, and others. Being surrounded by Vice Lords and their associated factions makes Frank nervous: "I'm a BD [Black Disciple] in the middle of a Vice Lord neighborhood. I got to be chill out." Occasionally Frank collars a passing prostitute and cadges money from her. I ask Frank to describe his function, his job, in terms of getting money from Mary and other sex workers on the 'stro.

FP: Just be on top of them dates she turns.

GS: Yeah? So you kinda supervise and make sure *** don't go bad?

FP: I don't supervise or do nothin'. This here's her hustle. She know more about this **** than I do. I just let the men know I'm here. Do some steerin', some checkin' out.

Several potential customers approach over the next few hours. In response Frank steers the "johns" to a nearby pocket of grass concealed from street view by trees and shrubs. There

the john finds one of Franks' 'ho's. After one of his 'ho's has been with a john for ten minutes, Frank cruises by the spot or the car and says, "Yo, Mary, you been in there 10 minutes. You got to go." I am thinking that today this must be a peculiar site: Frank and I steering johns to sex workers, and then cruising by and subtly issuing a warning to the john that "the 'ho' has got some security." Presently a white male, approximately 35-years-old pulls up and asks Frank where Mary is. Frank replies, "She busy. You lookin' for a date?" The man says that he is. Frank says, "You pull down there [motions to a parking space along the curb]. She be right along." The man pulls down. He is a regular customer, purchasing Mary's services at least once a week, usually for a few hours at a time.

FP: But I think he be likin' Mary for more than a hooker. And that 'ho' be likin' him for more than just a customer. I think he do construction or somethin'. Two weeks ago he took Mary and her little girlfriend back there to where he's workin'. They stayed gone for four hours. I think he gonna fall in love with her, or she gonna fall in love with him. When they date, they just stay gone way too long. It ain't just business, man.

The construction worker-john waits patiently at the curb. Fifteen minutes later Mary reappears, and as she walks down the sidewalk Frank indicates with a nod of his head that Steve is waiting for her in his truck. Mary notices Steve, and says, "Hey, baby, you ready to party?" I cannot make out Steve's response, but Mary crawls into his truck and away they go.

In exchange for his quasi-pimping services, Frank receives a cut of Mary's daily pay. In fact, this hustle has become his primary source of revenue, supplanting the entrepreneurial clothes-selling business he once toiled at daily. Frank says, "One night, man, we was in that vacant lot over there, and I had steered one guy after the next. That night I made \$180 dollars, man. That was a good, good night."

*Sex workers on today's 'ho stro' usually get along without official pimp services. They prefer to work alone, solo, renegade. Frank explains, 'One girl told me that a pimp was a straight turnoff.' Female sex workers on the strip work independently, but many of them, Mary tells me, take advantage of people like Frank, men who need some extra income, who exist on the margins of society, and who do not want to make a big hustle, or "do really wrong out here, 'cause they don't want they *** locked up." Mary enjoys the benefits of having a pimp without incurring the costs, such as financial dependence and physical and emotional abuse. Having Frank around allows Mary to give johns the impression that she has a pimp, when in fact she works alone.*

FP: Man, she told me that she's been tellin' these guys that her pimp shot here, and all this here. No, I ain't doin' that. That's my thing, you know. What she do, that ain't cool. So I got to pull up for a few days, get on out of here. I just won't come around her funky ***. But no, I ain't no real pimp. I ain't fittin' to jump on her or nothin'. That's really her body, so that's her money. But I ain't gonna turn it down.

And then, some of the other benefits [of having me around], she feel like I ain't got no habits, I ain't gettin' high. When she sick or it's a slow day, she might not catch no dates. So I can give her 10 dollars to get her sick off.

*The deception affords a measure of security, both physical and cognitive. Frank, in turn, enjoys a pecuniary benefit without having to risk arrest for pimping. “It’s a light touch, man, one that don’t put me at no great risk of gettin’ popped off.” Another hooker, Dinah, a 45-year-old veteran with a raging heroin habit, walks up and asks Frank, “What the hell you doin’ with that Mary? You know she a crazy *** ***. She ain’t got nothin’ but violence in her past. She been cuttin’ people up for a long time.” Frank responds, “Yo, Dinah, look at your *** hands. You a dope fiend, live to die, with your hands all marked up and swollen. Why you in my business for?” Dinah mumbles something and scuttles off. Mary reappears, ready for more business.*

*After several hours of standing and sitting, directing johns and importuning cash from prostitutes, Frank says, “Man, this can be some tedious *** out here.” These are my thoughts exactly. The question running through my mind is, How can pimping, with all of its cultural glory, be so incredibly dull and exasperating? Just then Mary comes running out from behind the building where had just “serviced” two Latino males in their mid-twenties. As she runs up to us, she says, “We got to go. Go on, get the*** goin’!” Frank and I take off running with her. A few blocks later we duck into a closed up, non-functioning water pumping station enclosed by a seriously compromised barbed wire fence. Mary tells us that she just “jacked” the two guys—she stole their money while their pants were down around their ankles, and she did not provide the services they purchased, in advance. We sit behind the water pumping station for a few minutes. Mary keeps peering around the corner of the building to see if their car was still sitting there. Finally she says that the coast is clear. The three of us head back to the housing project, where Frank and I continue standing and directing business to Mary.*

FP: This **** take up the whole day. It’s slow money, but it’s sho’ money. Man, pimpin’ ain’t easy. Especially with some of these girls, like Mary, she get crazy with me. If I talk to anybody else, she say, “What you doin’ with my man? That’s my man, what you doin’ in my man’s face?” Look around, baby, I ain’t doin’ nothin’ to disrespect you.

At long last Frank decides that it is time to call it a day. We part ways with Mary, say goodbye to the friends we made during the day, and head for the bus stop. On the bus Frank confesses his immoderate attachment to Mary. He has allowed his fondness of her to expand beyond the parameters he originally set. In a word, she has “hooked” him.

FP: Sometime I got to constantly tell myself this is a ‘ho’. You know what I mean ... whore. I mean, I don’t have no guilt or nothin’. I didn’t turn her out. If I wasn’t seein’ her, she’d still be doin’ it anyway. But I just got to remember how I met her, what she was doin’ when I met her. Listen, you know, I watch her, and I listen to some of the things she’s telling me. I know she’s deceiving me, man. But I don’t want her just to straight do me, man.

Near the end of our day together Frank offers his view on the redemptive, Taoist features of his small hustle:

FP: I don’t know man, I guess I’ll keep doin’ this ‘til somethin’ better come along. This sound crazy, but this here kinda keep me balanced. Livin’ in that place [the shelter] is

killin' my spirit, man. But man, them guys at the house, some of them have hidden agendas. They're power freaks. They been there a little while, and they get a certain culture goin'. It's a balance. At the same time, I deal with the real world, 'cause it's still goin' on. You know, the lifestyle goes on. But I ain't got no hang-ups on it. As soon as I get my feet on some better ground, where I can work and create me some bills to pay, then I can get off this. This ***** here is minute. You know, just hang it up. It's sad to think that some people right here in this little society, never get a chance to taste what life has to offer.

Our day ends at a Starbuck's coffee shop, not far from the shelter where Frank stays. While packing up to leave, I ask Frank some questions to clarify my understanding of the day's events. Frank then divulges that he is returning to the 'ho' stro' to 'hook up' with Mary. I get on the train, and Frank boards the bus.

Darnell Davis: A Case Study in Using Loose Ties to Gain Employment and Societal Attachment

Not all respondents in this study failed to reintegrate into the labor market. And not all of them failed to establish, nurture, and capitalize on the "loose ties" that Granovetter (1973) argues are so vital. Darnell Davis is an exception to the general rule evidenced by the partial narratives supplied above. The following account originates in the field notes I took during my second (T1) interview with Darnell. On this day, I accepted Darnell's offer to spend the day with him, stretching our interview out over a long period of time. This allowed me not only to collect the usual data but also to probe deeper into his life with unscripted open-ended questions and also to observe him in action.

Darnell Davis is standing outside of a cell phone shop on one of the most heavily trafficked and thickly congested thoroughfares of Chicago's south side. He grins widely when he sees me pull up to the curb and parallel park my car. Today is a day like most others, at least for him. He sells cell phones, beginning each day at 8 a.m. At precisely noon he takes a one hour lunch in the shop, usually a Quarter Pounder, fries, and Sprite, a combination he gets for \$2.22. Watching his money is critical to his financial well-being, considering the fact that his 50-hour weeks generate between \$350-400 before taxes. Every day at 6 p.m., sometimes a bit later depending on his workload, he leaves the office. Customers and prospects file into and out of the place all day long, a steady stream of interactions filling Darnell's life, occupying the place where fellow Gangster Disciples and unreconstructed 'hypes' (drug addicts) used to be.

After a warm greeting—the characteristic handshake that eases into a partial hug, forearm to forearm—Darnell invites me inside the shop. Today he and I will spend 9 hours in the store, an hour getting back to his house by bus, an hour or so eating dinner with his mother,

stepfather, and brothers, a couple of hours shooting baskets at the local park, and finally an hour or so just ‘chillin’ with some of his associates on the corner.

Darnell ushers me through the door of the cell phone store. The store itself occupies a long, narrow space in the building—no more than seven feet wide and 15 feet deep from the street. Cell phone accessories hang neatly from pegs on one of the side walls, while the opposing wall displays several posters of various cell phone plans offered by competing telecommunications companies. Exposed brick, electrical supply lines, and heating ducts give the place a raw, temporary feel. One wall, however, has obviously been painted recently. Later Darnell tells me that he invests a lot of time in trying to improve the physical appearance of the store, even though his boss, Tony, does not demand the investment.

The corridor-like sales area—unsettling for a claustrophobe like me—gives way to a single, wood-grain veneer covered desk attended by a 1970s office chair that collapses if the sitter leans too far back. Over the course of the day the chair nearly dumps Darnell once and me twice. Four-foot long fluorescent tube lights run the length of the shop, humming and flickering characteristically. This shop is the last in a line of three storefront businesses that comprise the building. To the east is a flower shop, and to the east of that is a candy shop. To the west lies a vacant lot, where a few elderly African American men have already planted themselves in vinyl or plastic lawn chairs. They sit, watch traffic, drink sodas, and talk among themselves all day long, pretty much every day of the week. Occasionally I join them, as when Darnell is busy writing up a contract. They ask me about the university, about my studies of gangs, and about my family. I ask them about their lives in Chicago, their childhoods in Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky, and about how they have seen this neighborhood change. Every now and then we make wisecracks about passersby.

“I am an authorized dealer of AT&T,” Darnell intones with obvious pride. To prop up his claim he hands me a brochure, on the back of which I see a gold sticker that reads: “Authorized dealer of AT&T cellular communication devices.” “Hey, that’s cool,” I remark. I notice that the office, although tiny, is virtually spotless. Not only has Darnell painted the west wall, he clearly keeps up with the dusting and glass cleaning. “Immaculate ... never seen a store so clean,” I say, genuinely impressed. “Yeah, you know, I hate a mess. Can’t stand it when things gets out of place. Always been that way. Plus when you do time in the penitentiary, it’s good to stay clean and organized. Keep you out of trouble.”

“So how’s business?” I ask. “Good, real good. But yesterday was a bad day, man. A real bad day. Today is gonna be much better. If my UPS guy get here, that is.” Darnell is hoping for a shipment of 10 cellular phones, one of which will go to a customer who was supposed to get it several days ago but did not because of a shipping error. “If they don’t got her phone on that truck today ... ooh, boy ... I can’t even say what gonna happen. I can’t be tellin’ her again that I ain’t got her phone. She not gonna be hearin’ that, man. So you and I just gonna hope that my guy brings that phone.”

It occurs to me that Darnell—in a span of three months at this job—has made it his own, has invested himself in the job and allowed the job to become invested in him. Throughout the day he uses phrases like “my UPS guy,” “my customer,” “my store,” always introducing the object with a possessive modifier. He has taken ownership of this situation, and he seems to revel in it.

Darnell and I sit down at the desk, he in the “trick chair” and I in the “customer chair.” I immediately ask, “So how are things goin’ for you?” Today is the first I have seen of Darnell in at least three weeks.

DD: Oh ... they been ... you know. I started me something new that ... during my ... when I used to get high all the time ... I never really started one ... I started me a bank account, a checking account. It made me feel good to put my money in the bank. You know, save somethin' ... for a rainy day. I started it September 3.

GS: Man, that's exciting. Very cool.

DD: Yeah, it is, man, when you can put your money in the bank, and you can write a check. And watch it grow. Yeah, man, that made me feel good about myself. 'Cause I always didn't trust banks and stuff like that, you know. Making me feel a lot better about myself. I used to take all my money and get high. This is somethin' I should've been doin' a long time ago.

And this here, the sto', it's been a lot of work. It's sometimes stressful, sometimes not. But I look at it like this: It's somethin' positive. It's not negative. It ain't like I'm sellin' nobody drugs; I'm sellin' telephones. And that's the key thing right there.

For Darnell, the most stressful part of the job is when someone comes into the store with a service or hardware problem.

DD: But the thing is, I always tell people, we sell wires. They control the wires. That's why these guys have customer service numbers. That's the key right there. You can use those people just as well as us. A lot of people look at it like, You sold me the phone. So you should tell me somethin'. Me and my partner, we try to help 'em. And talkin' to customer service is like ... they try to make you discouraged, man. We get the same treatment as the customer.

The day's events substantiate Darnell's observations. Two people come in to complain about their service being either shut off or compromised somehow. Both times Darnell gets on the phone with the provider's customer service department, and each time tries to pass himself off as the customer. In the first case, it works because the customer is male. The second complainant, however, is female, and Darnell plays an unconvincing woman. The customer service person tells Darnell that she can only talk with the customer, so he hands back the phone, to which the female customer responds with a dramatic look of dissatisfaction.

GS: So that's the stressful part of the job. What's the good part?

DD: The good part is ... having that power to turn somebody's phone on. Havin' that power to do things, you know what I'm sayin', that's benefitin' you as well as It makes you feel good, since you doin' somethin' positive. And when people say, "Thanks." That's a warm feelin'. "Thanks, man, you got my phone on," or "You got my phone here?" "Yeah." And you see a smile on the person's face. When a person's phone not here, the face drops.

Darnell's reports having had the same feeling of power and gratification through service once in the past, when he sold automobile tires for a local entrepreneur as part of a work release program. He spent six hours working at the tire store and the next 18 hours locked up in an 8' x 6' prison cell.

GS: So how does this compare with, like, more of the illegal stuff you've done in the past, like sellin' [drugs]. How is it different?

DD: It's like ... you doin' somethin' that's legal. I don't have to worry about the police. The police come by, they wave at me. You know what I'm sayin'? They wavin' at me. They acknowledgin' me. You know how they have guys lined up [being searched]? It's a good feelin' bein' able to walk past that and they don't grab you. They don't see that drugged look on your face. Around my mom's house, I see the police stoppin' people, and I don't get stopped. Not like I used to. When you not doin' right, God knows. He ain't gonna let you get into nothin', unless you want to. He gonna help you, he gonna try to guide you, if you on his side. That's why, today, man, I'm glad I don't smoke, or drink, or do nothin' like that.

These days Darnell prides himself on obeying the law. He often reminisces about his childhood, especially his teenage years, when he dreamt of becoming a police officer. In fact, one of his most dearly held theories is that people stop developing cognitively and emotionally when they first begin using drugs and/or alcohol.

DD: Somebody told me that when you start usin' drugs, that's the age that you stop developing at. That's when you stop your livelihood. Then you gonna have that young mentality when you older, because you missed out on life. You know? I figure like I missed out on a lot of years. I look back and I say, *****, where did all the years go?

Lately he has been doing things that either he has never before done or that he used to do when he was an adolescent, before he got into the gang banging. In a way, he says, he is starting his life over again, from the point where he started "deviatin'" and "goin' wrong." He continues, "See man, I'm just now getting' back to bein' 15-years-old. I'm back to where I'm in the old ways, back to those old values." Darnell has returned to his adolescence in order to live the way he should have been living. His free time now fills up with innocent, childlike expeditions:

DD: I even been up to the John Hancock building. I went back up in there. I been doing some of the things I used to do. I want to get up in the Shedd Aquarium and really see stuff. You know, I said to myself, as long as I don't do drugs When I got out in November, I made the mistake of hanging around this girl ... and I caught a case after bein' out a week. Man, that was scandalous. I prayed on it, and said, "God, if you let me beat this case, I won't use again." I beat the case, but I figured like this: If I ever get high, I'm not gonna be saved by jail, I think it's gonna kill me. So I keep that instilled in me—that drugs are gonna kill me. So I'm not gonna use 'em.

*The UPS truck arrives. “Yo, that’s my guy. He here now with them phones.” Darnell gets up, walks out of the shop, and greets the UPS delivery person on the sidewalk. They talk, Darnell signs the delivery slip, and the driver hands over the boxed cell phones. Darnell reenters the store: “Man, ain’t that a ****. They ain’t got that lady’s phone again today. She gonna kill me, just as sure as you’re here lookin’ at me.” Darnell picks up the phone and calls the woman who is sure to be irate. When she answers the phone, he simply says, “Hey, how you doin’?” I gather that her first question is something like, “Who is this?”*

DD: This here’s Darnell, from the phone place. I know you gonna be mad at me. The truck came today with some phones, but they didn’t send your phone again. But I called the guy, and he gonna make sure to deliver it tomorrow. He promised me it would be here. Then I talked to my boss, and I’m gonna give you a carryin’ case for it.

I note that Darnell’s language of ownership has shifted. In this conversation he minimizes his role in the cell phone operation.

Darnell saves his money because he wants to move out of his mother’s house and buy a multi-unit dwelling where he can live in one unit and rent the others out. His closest friend is Todd, a long-time acquaintance (never a friend) and intermittent employer with whom Darnell has become more and more intimate since his most recent release from prison. He has known Todd for six or seven years—he used to work for him, doing light carpentry and handyman work, and now he works for him at the cell phone store. Todd owns the store, the building that houses it, and several residential rental properties around the south side. Darnell feels closer to Todd than anyone else in his life, including his brothers and sisters.

Unlike days immediately following his decision to stop using drugs, Darnell spends less time thinking about how to avoid certain behaviors, such as smoking crack cocaine, and more of his time thinking about and doing things he enjoys doing that are not related to his past “negative behaviors.” These days he spends his time working at the cell phone store and in his leisure time playing basketball and making forays into the city’s cultural sphere. He says, “I don’t think about not using, because I don’t think about using. I see every let-down as a source of strength. As long as my thinking is positive, my actions will be positive.” Throughout our time together, both in interviews and immersion, Darnell frequently cites the Bible, especially Romans 7:

DD: We do not do what we do; it’s the evil that lives within you. When I got out before, in the past, I would be around the people, places, and things I shouldn’t have been around. They was bad, but it was the evil within me. It wasn’t really me. I say its not me, it’s the evil. I try to do what is right, but I end up doing what is wrong because that’s the sin that lives within us. I looked at it like that. I say, a lot of times when I got high, I say “man I shouldn’t have blew all my money,” but its that evil of the drugs. Drugs evil.

Todd walks in, we greet each other. He tells me that he has been looking forward to meeting me, that an air of mystery has surrounded the presence of “the professor” in “my boy here’s life.” Darnell and Todd chat about business. Darnell tells Todd, “Man, yesterday was a bad day for me.” Todd shoots back, “At least it was better than havin’ no day. Ain’t you heard

the story of the lady that brought her burdens to town? Once she got to town and found out there were others with burdens worse than hers, she took her burdens back home.” After Todd leaves, Darnell tells me that this is just the sort of wisdom that keeps Darnell thinking straight and acting right. “I know there’s people with worser problems than mine. Mine is pretty mediocre.”

Like so many other men in this study, Darnell attributes his newfound success in life first to God first and second to Todd. I have never heard him credit himself for staying clean, going straight, holding a job, or repairing relationships in his personal life. Someone or some entity other than himself always stands ready to receive the accolades.

DD: When you put yourself in God’s hands, you take yourself away from the stuff that happens to you. God got me out of a mess, and God’s doing this for me. And Todd, there, he keeps me straight. If it weren’t for Todd, I don’t know where I’d be. I might be locked up.

As the workday draws to a close Darnell and I prepare to retire to his house. As he packs up his things I ask what he likes most about living where he lives: “I get to see my mom every day.” Then I ask what he likes least: “My brothers getting’ high all the time.” Two of Darnell’s brothers live in the house with him and his mom. One of them drinks and the other drinks and smokes crack cocaine. The former, Allen, is there when we arrive at Darnell’s mother’s house. Allen and I greet each other. He is wearing his work clothes, a blue Dickie’s uniform bearing his name on the left breast pocket. On his way home from work Allen stopped and bought “some of that cheap wine,” as Darnell describes it. I then talk for a few minutes with Darnell’s mother, a 76-year-old woman in good health who smokes two packs of filterless Pall Mall cigarettes a day. She offers Darnell and me a snack; we decline and retreat to the living room to watch the evening news.

At 6:30 or so, Darnell’s mother calls us into the formal dining room where sit down to a home cooked repast of baked chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, and biscuits. We eat the sumptuous food and offer to clean up. His mother declines. Darnell says, “Let’s go,” and we embark on a hoop-shooting adventure. Briskly we walk to the park where we encounter 20-30 mostly young men in the middle of two on two and three on three ball games. Darnell and I cycle into a game. He performs excellently; I not so well. After an hour he asks if I’m ready to head out to the corner. Gleefully I agree, deeply desiring a break from the physical exertion (and embarrassment). We get to the corner and talk for 15 minutes with some of Darnell’s associates, fellow gang members from way back and a few “renegades,” or “young bloods.”

DD: See, if you ain’t got nobody to talk to about your relationships, then you goin’ to be talkin’ to that pipe. This is the stuff that I talk about with Todd. This makes me feel better.

Our day ends back at Darnell’s house. When we walk in, we hear music wafting up from the basement, where Allen stays. Darnell escorts me to the top of the basement stairs where we encounter a closed door. “Check this out. Stand here and tell me what you smell.” I stand where instructed and inhale deeply through my nose, trying to pick up on some odor. But I can’t smell anything out of the ordinary. “Nothin’,” I say, figuring that Darnell wants me to be able

to use my olfactory senses to detect his brother's crack-smoking. "You can't smell that? He down there right now, talkin' to that crack pipe. He gone and figured he got no one else to talk to. Don't matter whether that's true or not. He think it true."

Darnell walks me to the front door. We shake hands and part ways. When I hit the sidewalk I turn around for one last wave and see that Darnell has walked to the front edge of the yard so that he can more closely monitor my trip to the train. He is watching out for me. I wave, he waves, and I move on.

Gang Involvement and Criminal Activity

Ex-convicts return to the streets seeking a solution to the local and more global problems of economic, cultural, social, and political disenfranchisement. Now more than ever the drug-dealing street gang offers solutions that seem reasonable in the short term. On Chicago's 'mean streets' the industrious gang represents for many the most readily accessible and exploitable resource for stabilizing the economic and social lives of ex-convicts recently released from prison. Prospectively, ex-convicts fashion the gang into a cushion that softens the blow of their virtually certain incarceration. The street gang is an adaptive social form, a bastard institution (Hughes, 1971) in the context of radically destabilizing structural forces such as deindustrialization, a burgeoning drug economy, the escalating severity of American penal policy, and widespread federal and state disinvestment in inmate rehabilitation. The analysis herein demonstrates how in the subjective estimation of many ex-convicts the street gang—a product *and producer* of inner-city marginalization—offers a seemingly reasonable set of short-term social and economic solutions to the problems associated with poverty and institutionalized racism but how in the long-term it exacerbates the oppression of its members.

Since the rapid increase in street gang membership and crime in the 1980s, social science research on gangs has proliferated. The bulk of this research either describes the characteristics of gangs and gang members and the extent of gang involvement in crime (e.g., Curry, Ball, and

Fox, 1994; Howell and Decker, 1999), or else it examines factors accounting for individual involvement in gangs (e.g., Esbensen and Huizinga 1993). In another line of research, Klein and his colleagues (e.g., Klein 1995; Klein, Maxson, and Cunningham 1991) utilize police data to examine street gang structure, activities, and offending. This sort of quantitative inquiry on the ‘causes and correlates’ of gang membership and gang crime has prevailed in the literature.

Quantitative researchers of gangs appear to agree on a few points: Gang members commit a disproportionately high share of delinquent and criminal offenses, they commit more serious offenses than do non-gang delinquents and adult offenders, and they are over-represented in penal facilities. Unfortunately, though, no one has systematically examined either (1) how exactly street gangs elevate the offending levels of individual members, or (2) how gang-affiliated ex-offenders reenter the community vis-à-vis their respective gangs. While the gang seems to be an important mediating variable that accounts at least partially for elevated offending and successful or unsuccessful reentry outcomes, the design and logic of quantitative research renders the inquiry incapable of explaining how.

As with gang scholarship, quantitative research also dominates studies of ex-prisoner reentry. Here most criminologists focus on recidivism, or repeat offending, as measurable by re-arrest and/or re-conviction/incarceration. For them, reintegration is a binary outcome—the ex-convict either succeeds or fails to stay out of prison (with actual offending and non-offending behavior going unmeasured). These studies conceive of reintegration and repeat offending as polar opposites when in fact they may well, and usually do, converge in real life: Most of the ex-gang affiliates in this study, for instance, continue offending even while repairing relationships, procuring legitimate employment, and abstaining from drug use. Also, reentry scholars have almost completely ignored the participation of ex-prisoners in mid-range community

organizations such as street gangs and drug crews. Finally, scholars in this arena generally agree that employment operates as a protective factor—it often keeps re-arrest from occurring.

Employment, too, is inappropriately conceived in binary terms: One is either working or not, in either a legitimate or illegitimate position. This report offers a partial corrective to these chronic errors and elisions.

Ex-convicts and ‘squares’ share a concern for earning money, or ‘stacking paper’. Most ex-convicts get their money from working a job, whether legitimate, illegitimate or both. Being incarcerated negatively affects legitimate earnings upon release (Freeman, 1992), and the vocational setbacks tend to compound over time (Fagan, 1999). Unemployment occurs frequently among repeat offenders because incarceration erodes their employability.¹⁷

Therefore, dealing with gainful employment—seeking it, keeping it, or replacing it with some other source of revenue—is an issue with which every ex-convict contends at some point. In this study we demonstrate how involvement with drug-dealing street gangs furnishes short-term solutions to the problems of poverty, but how in the long-term these solutions produce ‘iatrogenic’ (backfire) effects that make the problems worse. This phenomenon scarcely reaches print in the extant literature on gangs, reentry, and the drug trade.

Two starkly different views of the gang-drug trade connection compete for prevalence in the research literature. One view holds that the street gang acts as a highly organized body that funnels illicit drugs to the streets through a hierarchical arrangement of rank-ordered members whose roles intertwine with each other and who obey gang “law” for fear of negative sanctions (see Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991; Taylor, 1990; Skolnick, 1990; Padilla, 1992).

¹⁷ A 1985 study by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA, 1985), for example, found that about one half of repeat offenders in their sample reported being unemployed at the time of their admission to prison and that more than two-thirds had not finished high school.

The second view rejects the first. Instead, scholars in this mode (Hagedorn, 1994, 1998; Decker and Van Winkle, 1996; Fagan, 1989; Fleisher, 2000; Jacobs, 1999) maintain that drug sales rarely achieve a high degree of formal organization. This line of thinking regards gangs as ‘loosely confederated groups generally lacking in persistent forms of cohesion or organization’ with the drug-gang connection being ‘much more casual’ (Decker and Curry, 1999: 18). The traditional street gang, assert Decker and Curry (1999), is poorly suited for ‘drug distribution or any other business-like activity’ because it is ‘weakly organized, prone to unnecessary and unproductive violence, and full of brash, conspicuous, untrustworthy individuals who draw unwanted police attention’ (18).

While we disagree with the caustic, judgmental spirit of their description and with their *a priori* decision that ‘the gang’ exists empirically in a generalizable fashion, we agree with the underlying point: We must not assume that the gang is a body well-organized for anything, including drug sales; instead, we ought to problematize its degree of organization in all respects. Indeed, we would argue that as social scientists we must problematize the very notion of ‘gang’ rather than predetermining the criteria of ‘gangishness’ and then finding groups that meet the criteria (e.g., see Padilla, 1992).

With only a few exceptions (see Fleisher, 2001; Venkatesh, 2000; Moore, 1992) the past three decades’ worth of ethnographic gang studies have failed miserably in establishing a sound emic, or ‘inside-out’, view of gang life. Most studies (ethnographic, qualitative, and quantitative alike) begin with a preconception of the gang as a more or less unified whole, with relatively impermeable boundaries, a clearly defined membership, and a discernible level of esprit-de-corps. Our study shows this to be a false-ringing conception when held up against gang members’ own views and behaviors. What scholars have failed to do is problematize the very

notion of 'gang', which tends to be value-laden, assumption-filled construct articulated in campus offices and then substantiated when the researcher finds in the field an assemblage that resembles the pre-formulated definition. Field researchers would be better off entering the field with a commitment to investigating street life and all manner of street organizations from the points of view belonging to the people who occupy the street. Moore (1992), for instance, limns the *organized*, communal street gang as a socially constructed enterprise permeated by competing agendas and power inequities whose leaders and followers instrumentally use the gang to their own material advantage. This approach illustrates the internally variegated, conflicted character of the gang and does not fall prey to the endemic pitfall of defining the gang as a cohesive, internally undifferentiated entity even before hitting the streets.

The ex-convict spends his time trying to secure material and non-material (i.e., emotional, spiritual, psychological, and social) well-being. Never are these 'commodities' more unstable or more coveted than in the first month following release from prison. What happens in the first month out, both materially and non-materially, markedly influences what happens in the months and years to come. Michael Harmon, a 53-year-old Vice Lord, remarks on what ex-convicts want out of daily life:

[The people who run the prison system] figure that we're illiterate, we don't know no better. All we want is to get high, to get involved with other people's women and stuff, fornication and stuff. You know, when a man go home after a hard day's work all he want to do is eat, be with his family, and be at peace.

The drug dealing street gang establishes and maintains a somewhat reliable, relatively predictable, and most certainly proximate method for adapting to community life after a long period of incarceration. Ex-convicts frequently attempt to harness the street gang in an attempt to minimize the severity and duration of the physical and non-physical disorientation they experience when returning to the neighborhood. Chicago's street gangs play an active and

integral role in facilitating the adaptation of ex-offenders to changes in the material and social conditions of community life.

The interviewees in this study, however, experience(d) the street gang as a double edged sword. At the outset all of these men found themselves seduced by what turned out to be the ‘fool’s gold’ of the gang. They initially viewed gang association as a viable response, if not remediation, of the problems of poverty, institutionalized racism, and underdeveloped and undervalued human capital plaguing them. Each of them, however, soon realized that he had joined a group every bit as exploitative as the mainstream institutions of the host community. They realized, in short, that they had joined up with a ‘sucker’s outfit,’ as Frank Patterson calls it. The universal response to this ‘awakening’ was the invention of an entrepreneurial, aggressively individualist posture within the gang, an adaptation that exacerbated the very problems it was designed to solve.

In the following sections we lay out the principal benefits and costs associated with the use of street gang as an adaptive social form. In both cases—benefits and costs—we examine the issue from the short- and long-term perspectives.

The Upside

Undoubtedly one’s affiliation with the street gang makes sense on many levels, for the gang is a bastard institution that organizes legitimate and illegitimate resources in impoverished neighborhoods. Informants and interviewees agree that all of the following benefits can be gained through involvement with the gang: (1) Emotional stimulation and excitement, and (2) material gain.

1. Sensuality of Street Life: The ‘Call of the Wild’: Emotional attachment to the street accounts for much of these men’s engrossment in the drug distribution work of street gangs.

Every participant in this study gets visibly energized when talking about their current or former experiences ‘pitching rocks’, ‘jabbing blow’, and ‘kicking it’ with peers on the corner. The street seduced them with its ‘emotional logic’ and ‘transcendent fascinations’ (Katz, 1988: 148). It can be a morally, aesthetically, and practically exciting, gloriously dreadful, and deeply rewarding place *to be*—in terms of both location and embodiment—for them (and for the researcher). Eugene Kovada¹⁸, founder of the Rolling Boys, sums it up nicely as he responded to the question, ‘Do you think you’ll ever leave the neighborhood?’

Naw, I got to be honest with you. I mean, you know this is gonna sound crazy and ***, but I got the corner in my heart. It’s in my heart, and it’s always gonna be there. I know that sound crazy to you, but that’s how it is. There’s somethin’ in me that just keeps me here. I think I could go other places, I could move somewhere else, ‘cause I can adapt to different situations. But this is it for me. I got the corner, and I got my house, my family, my kids. My whole life is right here. In almost 36 years I haven’t been out of this place, man. For some reason I can’t leave it alone. Even if I have a job, I go to that corner. It’s attached to me for life. It’s a part of me forever.

For these men the local street gang offers (or once offered) a vehicle for interpreting and experiencing the larger world. In the early days of gang association they generally find themselves undergoing a transformation, a kind of secular conversion experience. Whereas they may have felt meek, afraid, or timid before, gang involvement emboldened them. ‘I finally felt like somebody,’ Richard Bartlett says, eyes glinty with the recollection. And Jose Salido¹⁹, a former member of the Orchestra Albany (north side gang) recalls: ‘The gang made me feel like I was in control, like I could stand up for what I wanted.’ The gang association also relieves boredom, the invariably reported ennui of everyday life in economically impoverished inner-city areas. Syrus Kendall puts it this way:

¹⁸ A consultant to the project—and a participant in a related but separate ethnographic inquiry into street gangs—whom I interviewed repeatedly before, during, and after the study period.

¹⁹ Another consultant to the project whom I interviewed repeatedly.

. . . when I joined the gang I wasn't lonely or despaired, I joined because I was bored. That's the reason I joined and stayed with the organization 27 years. I had to have the excitement. Look for the thrill, the violent thrill, made the thrill, enjoyed the thrill.

Richard Bartlett agrees and describes what another informant calls 'process addiction':

In one way or another, everybody's addicted to this thing. Whether it be selling the drugs or in doing the drugs. It's still addictive.

And the thing about it is, I'm not one of those guys who had what you could call a dysfunctional family, you know. My mother, she was always there, and my father was there. They were separated, but he was still there. I can't blame it on the family thing. I just had a call for the wild. You know, my idols were gangsters and pimps. Those were my role models.

The ubiquitous and unrelenting threat of violence adds an almost palpable charge to the daily lives of the street gang-involved ex-convict. Outward appearances would suggest that they have figured out how to co-opt the omnipresent potential for violence and convert it into material for amusement and even the tactile enjoyment of street life. Here is an excerpt from the field notes I took while walking with Rudy Ortiz from the crack house where he asked me to meet him to the restaurant he chose as the location for our interview:

*Rudy exits the crack house with his fingers wrapped around four baggies of crack cocaine. Rudy says that he wants us to go buy 'forties,' or 40-ounce malt liquor drinks, from the liquor store down the street. But as we look toward the liquor store one block down, we notice a Chicago Police Department paddy wagon parked at the curb in front of the store. The attending officers have lined up five or six young black males against the fence as they search their pockets for weapons and contraband. 'We ain't buyin' **** there,' Rudy flatly remarks. We cross the street and again Rudy pronouncedly flips his middle finger at the newly installed Chicago Police Department surveillance camera that disinterestedly and silently tracks our movement across the intersection from atop the light pole where it is mounted.*

A woman hanging out of a dilapidated building's first floor window asks 'Rocks, you want rocks?' I decline. Two blocks later a man tells me, 'They got free sawbuck [\$10] blows around the corner.' 'Thanks, man,' I say. I notice a sign at the end of the residential street—it telegraphs the existence of a block club whose rules include no drugs, loitering, loud music, or ball playing. The incongruity of this sign's admonition and the goings-on in the environment give me pause.

*Rounding the next corner deposits us on side street. Immediately we hear gunshots, five or six of them, from the other end of the block. The car carrying the shooters speeds around the corner, out of our view. Seconds later residents ease out of their front doors and look toward the end of the block. I ask a man who had been unloading groceries from his mini-van, 'What's going on?' He says, 'Shots fired, right there!' I am stunned and frightened beyond belief. Later, Rudy and Sandy make fun of me for asking, 'What's going on.' Sandy lectures, 'When **** do down like that, sweetie, you just close your *** mouth, put your head down, and move the **** on.' Rudy chimes in, 'Yeah, don't be asking 'What's going on?'' They laugh. Apparently I violated the code by asking in earnest (and out of fear) what was going on.*

*I tell Rudy that I think we should get the *** off the block because any minute the area will be crawling with cops. I am worried about getting stopped when Rudy is carrying crack cocaine. Rudy laughs: 'Yeah, you ain't from around here, is you? Them cops, if they ever do come, won't be here any time soon. It'll take 'em an hour to get here, at least. This is the**** ghetto, and dudes got guns and bullets is flyin', ain't no *** cop in the city that wants to be here when it's hot.' 'But you love this ****, don't you?' I say. 'Hell yes, man, this is World War Three around here,' he answers. [Field Notes]*

2. Material Gain: Because they return to the same communities that sent them, ex-offenders generally confront the same economic opportunities that existed before they did their prison bit. Still out there on the corner—or at worst a few blocks down or two alleys over—is the drug dealing street gang in whose commerce the ex-convict used to 'rip and run.' Drug markets in Chicago are quite small, incredibly fluid, and they operate independently of one another. From one block to the next, one encounters different dealers associated with different street organizations, all selling the same products at roughly the same prices. This organization, constant across locations, presents a familiar money-making venture to the newly released, increasingly desperate and anxious ex-convict.

Many of the respondents in this study have at one time ended up working security, holding down lookout positions, or in some cases running (transporting) or jabbing (selling), usually landing one of these jobs within 30 days of their return home. They do these jobs for a variety of reasons, the main one being the need to purchase basic goods, such as food, clothing,

and shelter. Phillip Dubois²⁰, for example, talks about how the mob took care of his practical need for clothing:

You get out the pen[itentiary], you get \$10 gate money. That's it. McDonalds and a pack of cigarettes, you all over with. So what [the prison system] basically doing, they just set us up for downfall again. After your ticket, you got 10 bucks. Then you buy you a sandwich, that money gone. What are you supposed to do about personal hygiene? You know what I mean? Where you supposed to sleep at? What you supposed to do for shoes? For clothes? And that's why the guys don't have no place to live.

Furthermore, the formerly gang-involved ex-convicts in this study cultivate their own brand of 'social capital.' They strategically fashioned for themselves a network of street contacts, for they know that life on 'the tip' will eventually deposit them in prison. For these ex-convicts the gang represents a cushion—it is a means for softening the blow of repeated imprisonment and release. In this way, one's gang involvement often *follows* one's participation in crime, a reversal of the order assumed in most gang studies (cf. Thornberry et al. 1993). These men exhibit a crassly financial and instrumental orientation to the street gang. The widely mythologized loyalty of the super-gang makes no appearance in their views on street life. Today's gangs are primarily about business, but they are *also* about family, at least to the extent that the ideology of family relations can be molded into a yoke that facilitates exploitation (cf. Venkatesh and Levitt, 2000).

Even though drug money comes in fast, it rarely amounts to much more than could be earned working a low-end service job, say at the local McDonald's. The drug-running ex-convict gang members in this study bring home no more than \$70 or \$80 for eight to 10 hours of work.

For our sixth and final interview, Rudy Ortiz asked me to meet him at a west side laundromat from which we would walk to a nearby strip mall restaurant. When I arrived, Rudy

²⁰ A consultant to the project whom I interviewed repeatedly before, during, and after the study period.

was in the middle of a drug deal. He had no apparent qualms about my observing the transaction and quite readily explained his commerce to me:

Rudy's drug distribution network orbits around the laundromat, where Manuel works. Manuel is a 23-year-old Latin Panther; he takes the repackaged drugs from Rudy and hands them off to a younger man, the runner, who takes them across the street to an apartment (stash house). Periodically the runner takes a supply of drugs to the guy on the corner (jabber) who sells packets to customers who walk and drive up. The runner also takes the cash from the jabber and stores it in a separate stash house, just down the block. After transferring the newly re-packaged crack cocaine to Manuel, Rudy and I head to the restaurant:

GS: How much you gonna make on this?

RO: Well ... as you know, I paid \$40 for it, but I'm going to sell it in five double dime backs, so I'll get \$100. That's what ... about \$60 [in profit]. I'll give Manuel 10 bucks on this, the runner will get five or six, the jabber five or six. So that's what? Like 20 bucks total I got to pay out. That means I keep 40 or so. That ain't bad, man.

For seven hours of walking and unrelenting anxiety over encroaching rival gangs, ubiquitous police surveillance, gunfire, and the potentially traitorous ways of his own gang brethren, Rudy made roughly \$5.50 per hour. This, he tells me, is a very typical day, except that he usually makes a little more money. Not much, but a little. [Scott's field notes]

The Downside

The street gang is self-defeating. For all of the short-term benefits the gang engenders as a bastard institution (Hughes, 1971), membership in it ultimately will be injurious. As elucidated in the previous section, ex-convicts affiliated with gangs derive short-term, transitory benefits from tapping into the drug dealing gang for support in the reentry process. Somewhere along the line the men in this study came to realize that the 'working gang' thrives on the creation and perpetuation of inequality within its ranks. Beginning with exploitation, gang membership carries many costs, including an increased probability of arrest, violent victimization, employment handicaps, spoiled family ties, and isolation from friends.

1. Exploitation within the Gang: Few scholars of the street gang have delved deeply enough into the vermicular ways of gang life to discover that the street gang is both a product

and producer of exploitation. It is both a result and a cause of inequality in inner city areas. The gang forms as a response to oppression but then ultimately acts to further oppress its members directly, and its host community indirectly. Felix Padilla (1992), writes about the Diamonds, a Puerto Rican gang in Chicago whose leaders run the operation as a drug dealing enterprise. In the Diamonds a few control the many by their invocation of the ideology of collectivism. They strategically and very deliberately cultivate loyalty and obeisance among the younger members, all the while appropriating the inordinate surplus value generated by the younger member's drug transactions, conducted on behalf of the gang. The leaders perpetuate the false promises of upward mobility, family-like solidarity, and material success in an effort to exert social control over the members.

Rudy Ortiz's Latin Panthers embody this description. One of the ways he keeps the 'young bloods' straight is by instilling in them respect for the gang's code of loyalty while simultaneously exploiting the young bloods' labor to his own advantage. This excerpt from my field notes effectively captures Rudy's sentimental, almost mythical characterization of gang loyalty. But his unapologetic and unabashed manipulation of the gang to his own financial and political ends belies his words.

Rudy and I set out for our interview. As we walk through Rudy's neighborhood, he explains to me that today might get a little dicey, a little 'touch and go' because his gang, the Latin Lovers, are currently at war with two other 'mobs,' the Spanish Lords and the Maniac Latin Disciples (MLDs).²¹

²¹ Every interviewee and informant in this study employs the language of organized crime when referring to their organizations. While outsiders may use the term 'gang' to denote Rudy's and others' operations, Rudy himself uses the term 'mob' or 'organization.' This may be explainable in part by Katz's (1988) argument that the more prosaic terms like gang are not sufficiently terrifying to capture what the informant believes to be the organization's essence or *raison d'etre*.

*RO: And these other mobs, man, they're *** up, the way they do things and ***t. When their guys go to make a hit, they don't even tell the guys on the street, the foot soldiers, the young bloods. They make the hit, and you know there's gonna be some retaliation. There's always retaliation, in force, man. That's just the rule. So these guys be standin' on the street not knowing **** about **** goin' down, and then there's the strike, the retaliation, the blood for blood. And they're just like fish in a ****ing barrel, like sitting ducks.*

*Sympathetically I reply, '****, that seems all *** wrong, twisted and ****, like the small guys are just disposable or something.'*

*RO: Yeah, it's twisted. That's right. They are disposable in those mobs. But not in my mob. We don't do that ****. Never have, never will. Everybody knows when ****'s goin' down. That's just the way it is. We take care of our own. We're unified, down for each other. Them mobs don't give a **** about nobody but theyselves. That's the guys at the top I'm talking about. It's all about what they can get, and it don't matter who they hurt to get it. [Scott's field notes]*

Just about every gang member who stays in the gang for at least a few years will come to realize that indeed Frank Patterson is right—the gang is a ‘sucker’s outfit.’ The exploitation of labor driving the common drug dealing street gang differs minimally from that found in baron-controlled corporations aggressively dividing up the capitalistic marketplace of conventional society. Street gangs live and die by the insufficiently compensated labor of ‘foot soldiers,’ who toil in the ideological and material realms of gang life, day in and day out. No one knows this better than gang’s leaders, of whom Willie Lloyd²² reigns supreme:

When I first joined up with the Vice Lords, I thought they were an honorable institution. But the well got poisoned. I thought it was the way to go, and there really wasn't anything else to go to anyway. They were the only fraternity that would let me in. But I would never join a gang today. These guys today, they get these new guys, and they exploit them, and play them like chess pieces. They just use them and live high on the hog from them. What caused the change? Greed. Plain and simple. Money came into

²² Willie Lloyd is the founder of the Traveling Vice Lords, a subset of the Vice Lord Nation. He eventually rose to the position of Supreme High Ruler of the Vice Lord Nation. In this position he commanded the following of all Vice Lord factions in Chicago. It should be noted that Mr. Lloyd was not a subject in this study; rather, he episodically met with me to discuss matters pertaining to street gangs in general.

the picture, from drugs. And then the guns came along. And with the guns came the violence. But it all comes back to the greed. For the top dogs, it's greed. They're caught up in the paper chase. For all the guys at the bottom, it's survival. The moral fiber of the gangs has decayed today. In the 50s and 60s, there was an ethical way in the gangs. But not anymore.

As Willie points out, betrayal and treachery saturate gang life in a Shakespearean manner. Gang leaders expect much from members in the way of dues-paying, both literal and figurative, and they extract (often abusively) surplus value from the drug work of poorly compensated quasi-manual laborers. And many members, at some point, usually around the time of their first incarceration, have the sickening realization that the gang will not return the favor. Like a globalizing factory leaving behind disaffected, penniless workers, the gang has no loyalty to its constituent members.

Syrus Kendall's conscientization occurred when he realized (1) the extent of the surplus value that leaders were extracting from the 'young bloods' doing the work, the hustle on the street, and (2) the replaceability of the guys doing the selling:

SK: My thing is, you a young person, you don't have no criminal background, go to school, go to a job. You standing out here on this corner for this man 10-12 hours, you selling—you make him \$1,000 and of that \$1,000 you only made \$100. Come on, man. Then if you got an addiction you ain't made a dime because you spent that money to stay high to keep from being sick. Now, your baby needs diapers and milk and clothing, now what you going to do? That go for the men and the women cause they not getting but \$10 off a bundle. As a jabber as they call it. Now you out here 10-12 hours selling 40-50 bags and you ain't getting to \$10. You know, do the arithmetic. Every \$100 you make him you getting \$5. Come on, where is the logic in that? And then if you short on your package yesterday you won't get a dime 'cause you working off what you owe.

GS: It's like a company store.

SK: Yep. And low and behold you go to jail. You're stuck. Just like you were standing there, they got somebody else to stand in your spot. I be trying to get them to think. I don't condone what you do but if you got to do it get your own. At least if you go to jail you won't feel bad, you ain't trying to call nobody to get you out of jail or wondering if this guy you working for going to get you a lawyer. If you have to do it do it for yourself. From my experiences, when you go to jail, you in jail. It's on you. It's how the game goes. Those are the disasters of the game.

To a man, the principal strategy for adapting to the exploitative practices of the gang was to close ranks, turn inward, become renegade in his entrepreneurialism, as Rudy Ortiz has done. In some respects the street gang—as an aggregate comprised of ‘defiant individualists’ (Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991)—contains the ‘seeds of its own demise’ in Marxian terms. The individualists who make up the gang eventually realize that the gang is a hierarchical entity hell-bent on exploiting its members in any way possible. This leads them to the assimilationist strategy of either going along with things or the very dangerous instrumentalist strategy of turning the tables on the gang and exploiting it to the individual’s advantage. Frank Patterson did what Rudy Ortiz now does: He hustled his own,’ pulled con-games on his fellow gang members, set them up, robbed them. Frank explains:

I adapted by getting a little more craftier. Learning the law and plottin’ how to use it to my advantage. How to cheat and connive. How to laugh in the heads’ faces. I just really got schemin’. It started me to clickin’. For my own, man. But they get you in the end, man. This here’s a risky business.

2. Increased Probability of Arrest and Negative Attention: The gang concentrates and crystallizes ‘criminal’ offending in the public way (streets, alleyways, etc.) in a way similar to that described in Gowan’s (2002) study of the reciprocal influences of homelessness and incarceration. To social control agents in the community—and to gang members for that matter—the gang operates as a collective identity marker, or more negatively, an index of stigma. When a person begins hanging around gang members (‘bad company’ as Gowan (2002) puts it), community actors tend to confer on the person the status of ‘gang member.’ This conferral, in turn, assists social control agents by clarifying their jobs, making the big world of offending more intelligible, less confusing, less murky. Just as the gang simplifies the cultural setting for the gang member, it simplifies the environment of control targets for the police

officer. Gang members and social control agents alike utilize the gang as an organizing symbol, an actionable referent in the daily business of offending and enforcing.

Gang associations tend to accelerate the rate of offending and make more serious the nature of offenses (Thornberry et al., 1993). Getting involved with gangs tends to make one's deviance more, not less, conspicuous and therefore increases one's likelihood of detection and arrest. Randell Simmons²³ answers straightforwardly when I ask why he stopped hanging around Gangster Disciples: 'Going back and forth to prison. Seemed like these cats kept me in trouble.' Criminal offending in a gang context makes one more vulnerable to detection arrest than does offending outside of a gang context.

Eugene Kovada lives this logic every time he gets released from the penitentiary. Even for a founder and chief such as him, the more he tries to twist away from the gang the tighter its grip becomes:

It's crucial, that first two or three weeks out of the penitentiary, very, very crucial. If they don't find a job, what are you gonna say? Oh, man, I can't find a job. I don't know what to do. You know what, let me try to go back to my old way. Maybe I could sell a couple of bags, man, and then I'll just quit, man. Just to make me enough money to buy me some clothes, maybe. Before you know it, he sees a couple dollars in his pocket. Oh man, let me do it again, and again. Then BAM, he's popped off [arrested] and laid back in the same situation.

3. Violent Victimization: Mass media accounts notwithstanding, the men in this study claim universally that the person most likely to hurt you is not a rival gang member but rather a 'brother,' one of your own, a fellow gang member. None of the men in this study truly believes the ideology of loyalty and brotherhood that many gang members espouse publicly. The myth of communal habitus is a ruse, a conceit held only by new recruits if anyone, and most gang members end up finding this out the hard way (cf. Conquergood, 1994).

²³ A consultant to the project whom I interviewed repeatedly before, during, and after the study period.

Intra-gang violence appears to be a dynamic traceable to radical change in the gang's relationship with its host community (see Chin, 1990 and Asbury, 1928). In Chicago, street organizations have suffered tremendous destabilization resulting from gentrification, public housing 'renewal,' industrial restructuring, aggressive prosecution, stiffening criminal penalties, and fluctuations in the drug market. Since the late 1980s, informants tell me, one is more likely to be shot and/or beaten up by one's brethren in the gang, not by an enemy. A single-minded pursuit of pecuniary enrichment has eclipsed the old and frail ethos of communalism.

Richard Bartlett explains:

. . . money buys clout, money buys position, and everything else. If you got that kind of weight, that kind of money, you buy muscle and everything else. You can buy your own muscle, you can stay within your gang and buy the muscle.

Guys [from different gangs] are not really warring that much anymore, as far as having a rivalry with, like the GDs and Vice Lords fighting each other. We're not really doin' that no more. Like Willie [Lloyd] said, the fightin' is within. You more at a threat with somebody of your own comin' to get you, as opposed to them. I'm tryin' to knock you off your little power base, you know, the closest guy to you.

Eugene Kovada concurs, and he adds a piece to the puzzle: Much of the violence has little or nothing to do with turf disputes, narcotics, or money. Rather, the violence within gangs often can be traced to trifling disputes over perceived derogations, romantic liaisons, or plain misunderstandings.

I can't count on my friends for nothin', man. And that's sad, real sad. We fight over I don't know what. Some girl, probably. It's always that kind of ****. Some guy gets caught with some girl he shouldn't be with, and then dude kicks the **** out of him. Then this guy go and get five or six boys to go and beat the **** out of the dude that kicked his ass. And these here is guys in the same ***' set, man. These here is brothers. And that's how it goes, on and on and on and on. But you know, that *** ain't worth it, man. We're about to kill one of our own, and there go that ****, she's out with some other ****.

4. Challenges to Getting a Straight Job: 'Going straight' and 'making good' require more than tinkering with one's past approach to employment, personal relationships, household

management, and so forth. These men report the need to completely overhaul themselves, their lives, their kinship ties, their views on the world. In one way or another all of them—whether ‘reformed’ or not, actively gang-banging or not—believe they need to live more honestly, a task either spoken than accomplished. Syrus Kendall sums it best perhaps when he says to me,

When you’ve lived a lie for 30 years of your life, man, nothing happens overnight. It’s a practiced behavior, so the practice of telling the truth is going to be a practiced behavior also. I lied for so long and for so often that telling the truth ... it feels good.

Similarly, they talk about their gang-banging as though it exists separate and apart from their true, genuine lives. Darnell Davis, for instance, had this response when I asked him, ‘What do you think gang-banging does to you in the long run?’: ‘You miss your life. You miss life. You really and truly miss life. All them nerdy types, all them nerds you made fun of, they the real people.’

More concretely, every former or active gang affiliate in this study has attempted on multiple occasions to land a straight job, either full- or part-time, or both. But they find themselves being told that they are deficient—they lack the technical skills, the interpersonal skills, the social and human capital to secure the kind of work they desire. As discussed above, their gang involvement hastened their entry into the criminal justice system and then accelerated their rate of return to it. Hence they now carry multiple X’s on their backs. They are three-, four-, five-, even six-time losers in the eyes of prospective employers. Plus most of them bear the stigmata of gang life: conspicuous tattoos announcing what then seemed like lifelong loyalties to a Nation. Their felony records and past or current gang affiliations mark them as easy targets for ‘invisible punishment’ of all sorts, including the repeated denial of opportunity to work.

Frank Patterson recognizes the irony of living in a society that ostensibly prides itself on a Judeo-Christian ethic yet refuses to hold out forgiveness for ex-convicts:

I know that in reality, I'm still locked up, with me trying to get employment. A lot of people will look and see my background and feel like my debt to society hasn't been paid. And they got it set up where a person that's been down is going to be oppressed continuously.

In addition to having a felony record that would likely be shorter absent the street gang involvement, when these men make forays into the labor market they do so without a codified, marketable existence. They cannot point to a bureaucratic instantiation of themselves on paper. For all intents and purposes, they are invisible. Richard Bartlett explains:

So many guys fill out an application, and they can't put down any jobs. None! A lot of guys can't put down one **** job. They're 40-years-old and they can't put down one job. He got a car, a nice car, but he can't put down one **** job. So as far as society is concerned, you know, this guy's a nobody. He's a non-person. He don't exist.

5. Spoiled Family Ties: Similar to the homelessness-incarceration nexus described by Gowan (2002), gang-banging exacts a heavy toll on the family life. Again, despite the abundance of media images to the contrary, most gang members I have encountered in Chicago hail from relatively stable, structurally intact households. Their chronic offending often results from an interplay of factors, including the desire to relieve boredom, the desire to obey local cultural conventions, an aversion to conflict with gang members outside the neighborhood, and their need for a subsistence income. Over the long haul, though, gang-banging and the repeat incarceration accompanying it, tax the family system. Willie Lloyd's description captures the cycle beautifully:

When you involved with the gang life, the street life, you gonna go to prison, more times and much more quicker than those around you that isn't in the gang life. And when you do, you gonna suffer a moribundity of your relationships. Your ties and connections to family and friends are gonna wither away, and most of them are just gonna die. That's the price you pay—and it's an emotional price, but it's also a financial price. With that moribundity comes loss—now who you gonna turn to, where you gonna stay?'

Willie's assertion that the loss of family relationships has both emotional and financial dimensions has become clear to the men in this study. In fact, one of the reasons many of them say they initially turned to religion was to purchase some latitude in their parents' home where monotheistic worship is of paramount importance. Along the way, however, most of them feel they truly experienced salvation. So what was initially a pragmatic concern ended up being a spiritual revelation.

6. Isolation from Friends – Self-Imposed Exile: Street gang members who disaffiliate from the gang through retirement or through a more terminal break and who want to live a law-abiding life generally discover that they can no longer be around the 'people, places, and things' of their previous days. The men in this study who got out of the gang and stayed out of the gang ended up moving away from the neighborhoods they called 'home.' Staying in the neighborhoods proved too difficult for them as their compatriots continually beseeched their return to hustling. Darnell Davis made the mental break with his old friends while riding Greyhound bus home from his last stint in prison:

My first day out this time was different because I had it instilled in my mind that I wasn't . . . wasn't going to be the same person I was. It was like I wasn't going to try to come back into my neighborhood. I said I was going to do better than I ever did and I wasn't going to get myself close to nobody doing no drugs. On the bus ride it came to me 'cause friends of mine was drinking on the bus. They asked me you want to drink and I was like no, man. I sat back by myself from there on. I thought about it and I said this is where it's at man, these people is still on this junk man. It let me know my buddy wasn't fittin' to change. He asked me where I staying and I told him that I can't give you my address or my phone number. He was like I don't understand. I say 'cause man I can't do what you doing—you using drugs and drinking, I can't do that no more.

Still later in the same interview Darnell acknowledges that having no friends, or at least no friends from the old days of gang-banging and drug-using, now is a mixed blessing.

I don't have that bonding with friends, but I also don't got somebody coming over here everyday talking about what you doing and stuff like that.

While the street gang may in fact be a resource to ex-convicts wishing to remediate their material and non-material privations, it ultimately sets up the ex-convict for additional and perhaps more severe failure. Departing now from the finer details of this analysis, the present study lays claim to at least two broader implications for ethnography. The first concerns the study of gangs, crime, and urban life; the second relates to the critical examination of penal policy.

Contrary to popular belief and to most studies, the ‘gang’ may be as much an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983) as a material one. Just because gang members exalt the allegedly sacrosanct communal ethos of their mobs does not mean that the communal ethos manifests in their behavior. For too long scholars of all methodological stripes have assumed that brotherhood spoken equals brotherhood lived. The field data we have gathered for the past two years in Chicago could not be more contradictory to this widely held and espoused academic doctrine concerning gang life. ‘The gang’ may be as much a figment of researchers’ vivid imaginations as it is a beloved fantasy of new, not yet jaded recruits. In over 70 years of gang research, no one—not even longitudinal researchers such as Thornberry (1993)—has established empirically the existence of a *collective property* beyond the individual efforts and activities of individuals ostensibly affiliated with the gang. It is time for the field to suspend its blindly dogmatic belief in the street gang as mythic fighting group and hit the streets armed with fewer distorted and distorting preconceptions. Qualitative research enjoys an advantage in this regard.

More broadly, this section of the report suggests that ‘the gang’ reproduces societal oppression within its own ranks and thereby exacerbates the host neighborhood’s oppression by the larger political, social, and economic sphere hosting it. In her introduction to Hagedorn’s (1988) *People and Folks*, Joan Moore contends that ‘the gang becomes an institutionalized

feature of some poverty communities, and plays a role in the perpetuation of the underclass' (8). The hypothesis here is that the gang results from and reinforces the contradictions and pressures inherent to the development of the underclass

As implied in this report, the street gang now serves as one of the principal mechanisms to facilitate the reintegration of ex-offenders. As a bastard institution whose genesis lies in the failure of mainstream institutions the street gang has become a 'tertiary' social service organization (Venkatesh, 1997a) catering to the very real and legitimate needs of ex-prisoners. The gang's importance in this respect follows from the increasingly draconian and discriminatory policies of American law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections and the rapidly declining level of federal support for post-incarceration support for ex-convicts and their families. The American correctional system has gotten much tougher in the past 25 years. The 'get tough' movement in corrections has increased state and federal prison and municipal and county jail populations in America, eroded the rehabilitative capacity of the correctional system, and transformed post-carceral monitoring (e.g., parole) into a suppressive arm of the State (e.g., see Lynch, 1998). For as long as street gangs perform reintegrative functions for ex-prisoners, the cycling and re-cycling of ex-prisoners will accelerate. In this way the street gang unwittingly helps advance the correctional industry's racist, classist orientation by organizing and contributing a steady supply of inmates.

In the United States more and more people (especially people of color) get sent to prison for longer sentences on the basis of less severe infractions. When they do return home, their communities suffer a death of resources for supporting them. But the gang is there, ready to 'help' them assimilate and then help them along in their return to prison. Qualitative scientific inquiry is well-positioned to illuminate the penal system's skillful exploitation of the street gang

as a vehicle for furthering the oppression of the communities most likely to host gangs. As Willie Lloyd says, “There is nothing better for white racism or the U.S prison system than the street gang. The gang keeps the prisons running and Black communities under attack, from the inside and the outside.”

Conclusion

Our analysis assesses the multidimensionality of ex-convicts’ re-entry trajectories. From the point of initial release (“getting out”), to relations with their parole officers, to working straight jobs or hustles, to dealing with double stigma, to resuming or repudiating street gang involvement, we have traced various aspects of the reintegration experience. Common to most of these ex-convicts’ first year out of prison is their attempt to accommodate their criminal histories and current prospects for social and economic livelihood by enveloping themselves in tight-knit insular networks of family and close friendships. This insularity serves them well in the short-term, affording material and non-material benefits essential to life. In the long term, however, this accommodation of social and human capital shortages further reinforces their disenfranchisement vis-à-vis community life and the labor market, two key domains in the “successful” re-entry trajectory. Most ex-convicts ironically suffer “too much of a good thing” (i.e., close ties within dense networks) and too little of what past research has deemed integral to successful social capital accumulation—loose ties to people and organizations with the capacity to mobilize resources on which the ex-convict can capitalize.

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***Community Reintegration: A
Comparative Study of Gang-Affiliated
and Non-Gang-Affiliated Ex-
Offenders***

2nd Post-Release Interview (T1)

***DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois***

A. Clarifications, Corrections

I'd like to get started by asking you some questions that I didn't get to ask you or forgot to ask you in our last interview.

[Refer to "Cheat Sheet."]

B. Personal Background

Now I have some general questions about your life in the past couple of months.

1. So how have the past two months been going for you? **[Probe for experiences with family, friends, work, education, reintegration in general, well-being, etc.]**

2. Where are you living now? _____

3. Is this the same place you were living when I interviewed you last?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

3a. How long have you lived at your current address? _____ weeks

3b. Why did you move to where you're living now?

3c. How many different places have you lived since our last interview? _____

4. How much longer do you plan to live at your current address?

5. Have you gotten married or seriously involved with someone since our last interview?

___ married

___ seriously involved

___ neither

IF MARRIED OR SERIOUSLY INVOLVED SINCE LAST INTERVIEW:

5a. How did that come about?

6. Have you gotten divorced or had a romantic relationship end since our last interview?

a. No

b. Yes

IF YES:

6a. What happened?

7. Were any children born to you since our last interview?

a. No

b. Yes

IF YES:

7a. How many? _____

7b. When did this happen?

7c. Have you been supporting them or their mother financially?

- a. No
- b. Yes

7d. Do you live with these children?

- ~~a.~~ a. No
- ~~b.~~ b. Yes

7e. How do you feel about this new situation?

C. Release and Supervision Details (Most Recent)

8. Are you still on parole?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

8a. On what date did it end? _____ / _____ / _____

8b. Why did it end?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 12

Now I have some questions about how your parole has been going.

9. Do you have the same parole officer you had at the time of our last interview, two months ago?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

9a. How many different parole officers have you had in the past two months? _____

9b. Since you got out of prison this last time, how many parole officers have you had in total? _____

9c. Why have they changed parole officers on you?

10. Have you had any contact with your parole officer since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

10a. What kind of contact have you had? **[Check all that apply.]**

___ in-person visits, unannounced (number: _____)

___ in-person visits, announced (number: _____)

___ telephone calls from parole officer (number: _____)

___ telephone calls to parole officer (number: _____)

___ other (Explain: _____)

11. Overall, how helpful has your parole officer been in helping you get back into the community? **[If subject has had multiple P.O.s in past two months, probe for his assessment of each one.]**

D. Post-Release Expectations versus Reality

Now for some questions about your goals, successes, and challenges in the past couple of months.

12. What are some of your personal goals at this point in time?

13. Which of these goals did you have two months ago, when we did our last interview?

14. Which of these goals are new? Which have you set since we met two months ago?

15. How did these new goals become goals? **[Probe for influence of personal relationships on subject's development of personal goals.]**

16. The last time we met, you also said that _____ **[List goals subject articulated in previous interview but not articulated now]** were goals of yours. Would you say that these are still goals?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF NO:

16a. How did these end up not being goals anymore?

17. What will it take for you to be able to reach the goals you now have? **[Probe for external resources such as relationships, education, and social service, and also internal resources such as willpower, persistence, etc.]**
18. In terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of your successes or victories in the past two months?
19. Again, in terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of the biggest challenges or obstacles you have faced in the past two months?

E. Living Situation

Now I have a few detailed questions about your current living situation.

20. Who lives with you now? **[Document exact number of people and exact relationship to subject.]**

20a. Has anything about your living situation changed in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

20a.1. What has changed? **[Probe for reasons behind change.]**

21. What do you like best about living where you're living right now?

22. What do you like the least about living where you're living right now?

23. Has anyone you're living with ever been in prison or jail?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

23a. Who?

24. Are any of the people you live with involved with a street gang or street organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

24a. Who?

24b. Which gangs?

F. Community Attachments and Civic Participation

[In this section probe for subject's participation in religious institutions, recreational clubs, sports teams, music/artistic groups, governmental groups, block clubs, mutual aid societies, fraternal groups, political clubs, labor unions, nationality groups, etc.]

25. Do you belong to or associate with or volunteer for any organizations or groups in the community, such as churches or block clubs, or sports leagues?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

25a. What are you involved with?

26. Are there any people or groups in your community **that help you** in any way?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

26a. Which groups give you help?

26b. What do they give you? **[Probe for material help, such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as non-material help, such as moral support.]**

27. Are there any individual people or groups in your community **that you help** in some way?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

27a. Which people do you help?

27b. How do you help them?

28. In the past two months have you worked with others in this community to try to solve a community problem?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

28a. What was the problem?

28b. What exactly did you personally do to help out?

28c. What happened to the problem? Has it gone away?

28d. When was this exactly?

G. Work and Income

Now I'd like to talk about how you've been able to get money to meet your needs in the past two months. Here I'm talking about jobs, help from friends or family, and even illegal activity.

29. In the past two months how have you been making money to meet your needs and expenses? Please tell me a little bit about all the things you've been doing to make money, whether these things are legal or not legal. Then I'll ask you a few questions about each one.

Brief Description	Location	Distance	Hrs/wk	Income/wk	Like Best	Like Least

30. Are you currently looking for a legal (straight) job (or a different legal (straight) job)?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30a. How are you going about finding a job?

30b. How long have you been looking for a job? Since when?

30c. About how many hours a week do you spend looking for work? _____

30d. Have you gone on any interviews since you started looking?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30.d.1. How many interviews have you gone on? _____

30.d.2. How many of these interviews were first time interviews? _____

30.d.3. How have you dealt with the fact that you have a felony record?

IF NO:

30e. What are some of the reasons that you haven't looked for a job?

31. How much money do you get each week from the following sources?

- a. Legal employment \$ _____ (Take home pay)
- b. Mate/spouse/partner \$ _____
- c. Family \$ _____
- e.d. Friends \$ _____
- d.e. Food stamps \$ _____
- e.f. Unemployment \$ _____
- f.g. Social Services \$ _____
- g.h. TANF \$ _____
- h.i. Worker's Comp \$ _____
- i.j. Social Security \$ _____
- j.k. Medicaid \$ _____
- k.l. VA Disability \$ _____
- l.m. Public Housing \$ _____
- m.n. SSI \$ _____
- n.o. Pan handling \$ _____
- o.p. Street vending \$ _____
- p.q. Theft/robbery \$ _____
- q.r. Selling stolen goods (fencing) \$ _____
- r.s. Selling drugs \$ _____
- s.t. Prostitution (of self) \$ _____
- t.u. Pimping \$ _____
- v. Gambling/shooting dice \$ _____
- u.w. Other (Specify:) _____ \$ _____

H. Education and Skills Programs

Now I'm going to list a some programs. As I do, please tell me whether or not you have done it, whether or not you think it has been helpful, and how you found out about it.

	PROGRAM	Done it? (Y/N)	Helpful? (Y/N) (Why/Why not?)	How found out about it?
32.	Adult basic education			
33.	GED			
34.	College			
35.	English as a Second Language			
36.	Life skills			
37.	Employment readiness – such as classes on writing a resume, filling out job applications, going on job interviews			
38.	Trade or job training			
39.	Parenting skills			
40.	Mental health treatment – such as help			

	with stress, depression, psychological issues			
41.	Alcoholics Anonymous / Narcotics Anonymous			
42.	Other substance abuse treatment(not AA or NA)			
43.	Marriage or relationship counseling			
44.	Anger management			
45.	Other (Specify:			

I. Relationships with Family and Friends

Now I have some questions about your relationships with close family and close friends.

Socio-list

I'd like you to think about the close friends and close family members you currently have. When I say "close" I am talking about people who will look out for you, who would do you a favor even when you don't ask them to, and who will listen to you and offer you advice when you need it. They're the kind of people who've got your back, and you've got theirs.

46. Please tell me which family members you feel closest to right now.

[Record family members in table by role: mother, father, etc.]

47. Please tell me the first names of the friends you feel closest to right now.

[Record friends' first names and last initial in table along with age.]

48. Can you tell me one thing that each of these people has done in the past two months to help you get back into the community.

[Record description in table. Probe for support of all kinds, including material/economic, emotional, psychological/cognitive, and spiritual.]

49. Which of the people on this list are gang-involved? Which gang?

[Record each person's gang involvement in the table with a check mark and name of gang.]

50. Which of the people on this list have ever been in the penitentiary?

[Record in the table with a check mark.]

	FAMILY MEMBERS	Sex	How Person Has Helped in Reintegration	Gang	Prison
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
	FRIENDS				
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

51. Which of the people on this list of family and friends has helped you the most in terms of staying out of trouble?

52. Which of the close friends in this list did you know before you went to prison?

[Record by line number]

53. Did you used to have close friends, before you went to prison, that aren't close friends anymore?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

53a. When did they stop being close friends?

53b. What happened? Why aren't they close friends of yours anymore?

54. Have you gotten any new close friends in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

54a. Who are they?

54b. How did they become close friends of yours?

55. Has your family changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

55a. How has it changed? **[Probe for changes in structure and in terms of relationship dynamics.]**

Now I'm going list some things that your friends and family members might have. When I list each thing, just tell me how many of your close friends have it, how many of your family members have it. You can answer with None of Them, Some of the Them, Most of Them, or All of Them.

		None	Some	Most	All
56.	A legitimate, legal full-time or part-time job				
57.	A high school diploma or GED				
58.	A 2- or 4-year college degree				
59.	A vehicle that runs most of the time				
60.	A house, condominium, or apartment in their own name				
61.	A solid marriage or domestic partnership				
62.	Active membership in a church/mosque/temple/synagogue/etc.				
63.	Active membership in a community organization				
64.	Connections to political or community leaders, like aldermen				

J. Substance Use

Now I'm going to list the names of legal and illegal substances. I'd like you to tell me how often you have used each of them in the past two months. Possible answers include: Daily or almost daily, at least once a week, at least once a month, less than once a month, and never.

[Give response card to subject.]

For each substance that you use daily or almost daily, I'll ask you to tell me how much you use in a typical day.

		Daily, or almost daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	None	How much in a typical day?
65.	Beer						_____ ounces
66.	Hard liquor						_____ ounces
67.	Wine						_____ ounces
68.	Cigarettes, cigars, or pipes						_____ packs
69.	Marijuana/cannabis						\$
70.	Marijuana (Hydro)						\$
71.	Heroin (inject)						\$
72.	Heroin (snort)						\$
73.	Methadone						
74.	Pain killers						
75.	Sedatives/tranquilizers						
76.	Powder cocaine						\$
77.	Rock/crack cocaine						\$
78.	PCP						
79.	LSD/hallucinogens						
80.	Crystal Meth						
81.	Other amphetamines						
82.	Inhalants						
83.	Other						

84. Has drinking or using drugs been the cause of any problems for you in the past month?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

84a. What kinds of problems?

[Probe cues: Loss of a job; Getting arrested; Separation / Divorce; Arguments with family / friends; Traffic accidents; Becoming violent; Loss of money; Medical treatment]

K. Gang Affiliation

Now I have some questions about street gangs and street organizations in your neighborhood and about how you are or are not involved with them.

85. Has there been any street gang activity in your neighborhood in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

85a. What kind of activity? [**Probes: Which gangs, where, what do they do, how do they operate, etc.**]

85b. Is this gang activity any different from the way it was before our last interview? In other words, is there anything new about the gang activity of the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

85b.1. What's new about it?

86. What would you say is your current gang status? **[Check ONLY ONE.]**

Retired

Inactive, but still affiliated (e.g., as “advisor”)

Active

Ex-member, no longer affiliated (i.e., has cut all ties)

Newly affiliated (in past two months)

Never been affiliated

Other (Explain: _____)

IF “NEVER BEEN AFFILIATED” SKIP TO QUESTION 110

IF “EX-MEMBER” SKIP TO QUESTION 109

IF “NEWLY AFFILIATED,” SKIP TO QUESTION 95

IF “RETIRED,” “INACTIVE BUT STILL AFFILIATED,” OR “ACTIVE,” CONTINUE WITH 87

87. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

87a. How come you haven't been hanging out with them?

IF YES:

87a. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

87b. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?

_____ hrs.

88. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

89. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

89a. How many violations have you received? _____

89b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

90. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

90a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

91. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

91a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

92. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

92a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

93. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

93a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

94. Has your rank or function changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

94a. How has it changed?

94b. Why did it change?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 109

95. Which gang are you involved with?

Name: _____

Location: _____ **[Intersection held by branch or set]**

Nation: _____

Allies: _____

Rivals: _____

Size: _____ members in the branch or set

[Interviewer: For each rival and ally gang, indicate whether it was/is in the subject's neighborhood by circling its name; also, indicate with a "P" or "F" whether each rival and ally is a People or Folks Nation gang.]

96. When did you become involved with this gang?

97. What were your reasons for getting involved with the gang?

98. Do you consider yourself to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

98a. How did you become a member?

98b. How are you different from, say, a guy who hangs out with the gang but isn't a member?

IF NO:

98c. Why not?

99. Do your fellow gang members consider you to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

99a. Why not?

100. Does your gang have a chain of command, a structure?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

100a. What is the chain? What are the different "offices" in the chain, the different levels?

101. Do you hold a function, or rank, in the organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

101a. What functions do you hold?

102. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

102a. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

102b. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?
_____ hrs.

103. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

104. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

104a. How many violations have you received? _____

104b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

105. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

105a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

106. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

106a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

107. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

107a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

108. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

108a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

109. Has your [past or current] gang affiliation affected your ability to get back into the community?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

109a. How has it affected your ability to get back into the community?

[Prompt subject to discuss how gang membership poses qualitatively different or quantitatively greater or more severe problems than ex-offenders status alone.]

[PROBE for subject's relationship with prospective employers, police, community organizations, etc.]

L. Criminal Activity

[Interviewer: Remind interviewee of the terms of the privacy certificate, of confidentiality, and of safeguards in place to protect against release of information he provides.]

Now I have some questions about laws you may have broken in the past two months. In other words, I'm interested in hearing about how you may have broken the law in ways that could have gotten you arrested if you had been caught.

110. I'm going to read a list of offenses. Please tell me which, if any, you have been involved in over the past two months. This doesn't mean that you were necessarily the one who did the crime or was in charge of pulling it, just that you participated in it somehow.

[Check all that apply; PROBE for circumstances surrounding each offense.]

- Burglary—residence
- Burglary—business
- Theft from a vehicle
- Theft of a motor vehicle
- Robbery—business
- Robbery—person
- Assault
- Battery
- Theft/larceny
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Drug dealing
- Drug possession
- Vandalism
- Criminal sexual assault
- Homicide
- Arson
- Prostitution
- Mob action

- Drinking in public
- Gang loitering
- Disorderly conduct
- Contempt of court
- Throwing gang signs
- Using profanity at cops
- Gambling / shooting dice
- Driving without a license
- Forgery
- Other (Specify:) _____

M. Police Contacts

111. In the past two months have you been stopped or questioned by the police?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

111a. How many times have you been stopped or questioned? _____

111b. What were you doing each time you got stopped or questioned?

112. Since you got out, have you been arrested?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

112a. How many times have you been arrested?

112b. What were the charges each time?

112c. What's happening with the case(s)?

N. *Wrap-up*

Okay, just a couple of final questions.

113. We're interested in finding out why guys like you have agreed to participate in this research project. Can you tell me some of your reasons for being a part of this? I'd like to know what motivated you to get involved in the first place? Also, what motivates you to stay involved?

114. Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered today?

I would now like to review the contact information I have for you to make sure it's still correct.

[Review locator form with respondent.]

Interviewer Remarks

Participant ID#: _____

Interview Date: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Location: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Compensation: \$_____

Completion (check one):

- Completed
- Took too long, participant requested interview end
- Ran out of time, participant needed to go to work/apptmt/etc.
- Participant unable to finish, incapacitated, too tired

Interview Setting

1. Were others present during the interview?

___ No

___ Yes

IF YES:

1a. Who else was present?

1b. How did their presence affect the interview?

	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
2. Participant's attention to you was				
3. Participant's general understanding of the questions was				
4. Participant's cooperation throughout most of the interview was				

5. At any time during the interview, did the participant appear to be

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very
6. Suspicious of you / the project			
7. Uncommunicative			
8. Depressed or withdrawn			
9. Anxious or nervous			
10. Hostile or angry			
11. Tired or in pain			
12. Intoxicated (by alcohol or drugs)			
13. Sad			

14. Please explain if you checked “somewhat or “very” for any of the emotions listed above:

15. Do you have any reason to believe that the subject wasn't being entirely honest or forthcoming in responding to your questions?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

15a. Please explain.

16. How conducive was the interview setting to maintaining the participant's privacy and confidentiality?

- Very conducive
- Somewhat conducive
- Not at all conducive

16a. Please explain:

17. How did you attempt to develop and/or maintain and/or enhance rapport with the participant?

18. What, if anything, did the participant ask you to help him with / do for him / give him / etc.?

18a. How did you respond?

***Community Reintegration: A Comparative Study of
Gang-Affiliated and Non-Gang-Affiliated Ex-
Offenders***

3rd Post-Release Interview (T2)

***DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois***

A. Clarifications, Corrections

I'd like to get started by asking you some questions that I didn't get to ask you or forgot to ask you in our last interview.

[Refer to lingering questions/issues from the previous interview.]

B. Personal Background

Now I have some general questions about your life in the past couple of months.

1. So how have the past two months been going for you? **[Probe for experiences with family, friends, work, education, reintegration in general, well-being, etc.]**

2. Where are you living now? _____

3. Is this the same place you were living when I interviewed you last?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

3a. How long have you lived at your current address? _____ weeks

3b. Why did you move to where you're living now?

3c. How many different places have you lived since our last interview? _____

4. How much longer do you plan to live at your current address?

5. Have you gotten married or seriously involved with someone since our last interview?

___ married

___ seriously involved

___ neither

IF MARRIED OR SERIOUSLY INVOLVED SINCE LAST INTERVIEW:

5a. How did that come about?

6. Have you gotten divorced or had a romantic relationship end since our last interview?

a. No

b. Yes

IF YES:

6a. What happened?

7. Were any children born to you since our last interview?

a. No

b. Yes

IF YES:

7a. How many? _____

7b. When did this happen?

7c. Have you been supporting them or their mother financially?

- a. No
- b. Yes

7d. Do you live with these children?

- ~~a.~~ a. No
- ~~b.~~ b. Yes

7e. How do you feel about this new situation?

C. Release and Supervision Details (Most Recent)

8. Are you still on parole?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

8a. On what date did it end? _____ / _____ / _____

8b. Why did it end?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 12

Now I have some questions about how your parole has been going.

9. Do you have the same parole officer you had at the time of our last interview, two months ago?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

9a. How many different parole officers have you had in the past two months? _____

9b. Since you got out of prison this last time, how many parole officers have you had in total? _____

9c. Why have they changed parole officers on you?

10. Have you had any contact with your parole officer since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

10a. What kind of contact have you had? **[Check all that apply.]**

___ in-person visits, unannounced (number: _____)

___ in-person visits, announced (number: _____)

___ telephone calls from parole officer (number: _____)

___ telephone calls to parole officer (number: _____)

___ other (Explain: _____)

10b. How much time would you say you have spent actually talking with your P.O., either by phone or in-person?

_____ hours _____ minutes

11. Overall, how helpful has your parole officer been in helping you get back into the community? **[If subject has had multiple P.O.s in past two months, probe for his assessment of each one.]**

D. Post-Release Expectations versus Reality

Now for some questions about your goals, successes, and challenges in the past couple of months.

12. What are some of your personal goals at this point in time?

13. Which of these goals did you have two months ago, when we did our last interview?

14. Which of these goals are new? Which have you set since we met two months ago?

15. How did these new goals become goals? **[Probe for influence of personal relationships on subject's development of personal goals.]**

16. The last time we met, you also said that _____ **[List goals subject articulated in previous interview but not articulated now]** were goals of yours. Would you say that these are still goals?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF NO:

16a. How did these end up not being goals anymore?

17. What will it take for you to be able to reach the goals you now have? **[Probe for external resources such as relationships, education, and social service, and also internal resources such as willpower, persistence, etc.]**
18. In terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of your successes or victories in the past two months?
19. Again, in terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of the biggest challenges or obstacles you have faced in the past two months?

E. Living Situation

Now I have a few detailed questions about your current living situation.

20. Who lives with you now? **[Document exact number of people and exact relationship to subject.]**

20a. Has anything about your living situation changed in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

20a.1. What has changed? **[Probe for reasons behind change.]**

21. What do you like best about living where you're living right now?

22. What do you like the least about living where you're living right now?

23. Has anyone you're living with ever been in prison or jail?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

23a. Who?

24. Are any of the people you live with involved with a street gang or street organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

24a. Who?

24b. Which gangs?

F. Community Attachments and Civic Participation

[In this section probe for subject's participation in religious institutions, recreational clubs, sports teams, music/artistic groups, governmental groups, block clubs, mutual aid societies, fraternal groups, political clubs, labor unions, nationality groups, etc.]

25. Do you belong to or associate with or volunteer for any organizations or groups in the community, such as churches or block clubs, or sports leagues?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF YES:

25a. What are you involved with?

26. Are there any people or groups in your community **that help you** in any way?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF YES:

26a. Which groups give you help?

- 26b. What do they give you? **[Probe for material help, such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as non-material help, such as moral support.]**

27. Are there any individual people or groups in your community **that you help** in some way?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

27a. Which people do you help?

27b. How do you help them?

28. In the past two months have you worked with others in this community to try to solve a community problem?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

28a. What was the problem?

28b. What exactly did you personally do to help out?

28c. What happened to the problem? Has it gone away?

28d. When was this exactly?

G. Work and Income

Now I'd like to talk about how you've been able to get money to meet your needs in the past two months. Here I'm talking about jobs, help from friends or family, and even illegal activity.

29. In the past two months how have you been making money to meet your needs and expenses? Please tell me a little bit about all the things you've been doing to make money, whether these things are legal or not legal. Then I'll ask you a few questions about each one.

Brief Description	Location	Distance	Hrs/wk	Income/wk	Like Best	Like Least

30. Are you currently looking for a legal (straight) job (or a different legal (straight) job)?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30a. How are you going about finding a job?

30b. How long have you been looking for a job? Since when?

30c. About how many hours a week do you spend looking for work? _____

30d. Have you gone on any interviews since you started looking?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30.d.1. How many interviews have you gone on? _____

30.d.2. How many of these interviews were first time interviews? _____

30.d.3. How have you dealt with the fact that you have a felony record?

IF NO:

30e. What are some of the reasons that you haven't looked for a job?

31. How much money do you get each week from the following sources?

a.x. Legal employment	\$ _____	(Take home pay)
b.y. Mate/spouse/partner	\$ _____	
z. Family		\$ _____
e.aa. Friends		\$ _____
d.bb. Food stamps	\$ _____	
e.cc. Unemployment		\$ _____
f.dd. Social Services		\$ _____
g.ee. TANF		\$ _____
h.ff. Worker's Comp	\$ _____	
i.gg. Social Security	\$ _____	
j.hh. Medicaid		\$ _____
k.ii. VA Disability		\$ _____
l.jj. Public Housing	\$ _____	
m.kk. SSI		\$ _____
n.ll. Pan handling	\$ _____	
o.mm. Street vending		\$ _____
p.nn. Theft/robbery	\$ _____	
q.oo. Selling stolen goods (fencing)	\$ _____	
r.pp. Selling drugs	\$ _____	
s.qq. Prostitution (of self)	\$ _____	
t.rr. Pimping		\$ _____
ss. Gambling/shooting dice	\$ _____	
u.tt. Other (Specify:)	_____	\$ _____

H. Education and Skills Programs

Now I'm going to list a some programs. As I do, please tell me whether or not you have done it, whether or not you think it has been helpful, and how you found out about it.

	PROGRAM	Done it? (Y/N)	Helpful? (Y/N) (Why/Why not?)	How found out about it?
32.	Adult basic education			
33.	GED			
34.	College			
35.	English as a Second Language			
36.	Life skills			
37.	Employment readiness – such as classes on writing a resume, filling out job applications, going on job interviews			
38.	Trade or job training			
39.	Parenting skills			
40.	Mental health treatment – such as help			

	with stress, depression, psychological issues			
41.	Alcoholics Anonymous / Narcotics Anonymous			
42.	Other substance abuse treatment(not AA or NA)			
43.	Marriage or relationship counseling			
44.	Anger management			
45.	Other (Specify:			

I. Relationships with Family and Friends

Now I have some questions about your relationships with close family and close friends.

Socio-list

I'd like you to think about the close friends and close family members you currently have. When I say "close" I am talking about people who will look out for you, who would do you a favor even when you don't ask them to, and who will listen to you and offer you advice when you need it. They're the kind of people who've got your back, and you've got theirs.

46. Please tell me which family members you feel closest to right now.

[Record family members in table by role: mother, father, etc.]

47. Please tell me the first names of the friends you feel closest to right now.

[Record friends' first names and last initial in table along with age.]

48. Can you tell me one thing that each of these people has done in the past two months to help you get back into the community.

[Record description in table. Probe for support of all kinds, including material/economic, emotional, psychological/cognitive, and spiritual.]

49. Which of the people on this list are gang-involved? Which gang?

[Record each person's gang involvement in the table with a check mark and name of gang.]

50. Which of the people on this list have ever been in the penitentiary?

[Record in the table with a check mark.]

	FAMILY MEMBERS	Sex	How Person Has Helped in Reintegration	Gang	Prison
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
	FRIENDS				
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

51. Which of the people on this list of family and friends has helped you the most in terms of staying out of trouble?

52. Which of the close friends in this list did you know before you went to prison?

[Record by line number]

53. Did you used to have close friends, before you went to prison, that aren't close friends anymore?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

53a. When did they stop being close friends?

53b. What happened? Why aren't they close friends of yours anymore?

54. Have you gotten any new close friends in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

54a. Who are they?

54b. How did they become close friends of yours?

55. Has your family changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

55a. How has it changed? **[Probe for changes in structure and in terms of relationship dynamics.]**

J. Substance Use

Now I'm going to list the names of legal and illegal substances. I'd like you to tell me how often you have used each of them in the past two months. Possible answers include: Daily or almost daily, at least once a week, at least once a month, less than once a month, and never.

[Give response card to subject.]

For each substance that you use daily or almost daily, I'll ask you to tell me how much you use in a typical day.

		Daily, or almost daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	None	How much in a typical day?
56.	Beer						_____ ounces
57.	Hard liquor						_____ ounces
58.	Wine						_____ ounces
59.	Cigarettes, cigars, or pipes						_____ packs
60.	Marijuana/cannabis						\$ _____
61.	Marijuana (Hydro)						\$ _____
62.	Heroin (inject)						\$ _____
63.	Heroin (snort)						\$ _____
64.	Methadone						
65.	Pain killers						
66.	Sedatives/tranquilizers						
67.	Powder cocaine						\$ _____
68.	Rock/crack cocaine						\$ _____
69.	PCP						
70.	LSD/hallucinogens						
71.	Crystal Meth						
72.	Other amphetamines						
73.	Inhalants						

74.	Other						
-----	-------	--	--	--	--	--	--

75. Has drinking or using drugs been the cause of any problems for you in the past month?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

75a. What kinds of problems?

[Probe cues: Loss of a job; Getting arrested; Separation / Divorce; Arguments with family / friends; Traffic accidents; Becoming violent; Loss of money; Medical treatment]

K. Gang Affiliation

Now I have some questions about street gangs and street organizations in your neighborhood and about how you are or are not involved with them.

76. Has there been any street gang activity in your neighborhood in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

76a. What kind of activity? [**Probes: Which gangs, where, what do they do, how do they operate, etc.**]

76b. Is this gang activity any different from the way it was before our last interview? In other words, is there anything new about the gang activity of the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

76b.1. What's new about it?

77. What would you say is your current gang status? **[Check ONLY ONE.]**

Retired

Inactive, but still affiliated (e.g., as “advisor”)

Active

Ex-member, no longer affiliated (i.e., has cut all ties)

Newly affiliated (in past two months)

Never been affiliated

Other (Explain: _____)

IF “NEVER BEEN AFFILIATED” SKIP TO QUESTION 101

IF “EX-MEMBER” SKIP TO QUESTION 100

IF “NEWLY AFFILIATED,” SKIP TO QUESTION 86

IF “RETIRED,” “INACTIVE BUT STILL AFFILIATED,” OR “ACTIVE,” CONTINUE WITH 78

78. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

78a. How come you haven't been hanging out with them?

IF YES:

78b. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

78c. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?

_____ hrs.

79. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

80. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

80a. How many violations have you received? _____

80b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

81. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

81a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

82. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

82a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

83. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

83a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

84. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

84a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

85. Has your rank or function changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

85a. How has it changed?

85b. Why did it change?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 100

86. Which gang are you involved with?

Name: _____

Location: _____ **[Intersection held by branch or set]**

Nation: _____

Allies: _____

Rivals: _____

Size: _____ members in the branch or set

[Interviewer: For each rival and ally gang, indicate whether it was/is in the subject's neighborhood by circling its name; also, indicate with a "P" or "F" whether each rival and ally is a People or Folks Nation gang.]

87. When did you become involved with this gang?

88. What were your reasons for getting involved with the gang?

89. Do you consider yourself to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

89a. How did you become a member?

89b. How are you different from, say, a guy who hangs out with the gang but isn't a member?

IF NO:

89c. Why not?

90. Do your fellow gang members consider you to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

90a. Why not?

91. Does your gang have a chain of command, a structure?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

91a. What is the chain? What are the different "offices" in the chain, the different levels?

92. Do you hold a function, or rank, in the organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

92a. What functions do you hold?

93. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

93a. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

93b. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?
_____ hrs.

94. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

95. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

95a. How many violations have you received? _____

95b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

96. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

96a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

97. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

97a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

98. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

98a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

99. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

99a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

100. Has your [past or current] gang affiliation affected your ability to get back into the community?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

100a. How has it affected your ability to get back into the community?

[Prompt subject to discuss how gang membership poses qualitatively different or quantitatively greater or more severe problems than ex-offenders status alone.]

[PROBE for subject's relationship with prospective employers, police, community organizations, etc.]

L. Criminal Activity

[Interviewer: Remind interviewee of the terms of the privacy certificate, of confidentiality, and of safeguards in place to protect against release of information he provides.]

Now I have some questions about laws you may have broken in the past two months. In other words, I'm interested in hearing about how you may have broken the law in ways that could have gotten you arrested if you had been caught.

101. I'm going to read a list of offenses. Please tell me which, if any, you have been involved in over the past two months. This doesn't mean that you were necessarily the one who did the crime or was in charge of pulling it, just that you participated in it somehow.

[Check all that apply; PROBE for circumstances surrounding each offense.]

- Burglary—residence
- Burglary—business
- Theft from a vehicle
- Theft of a motor vehicle
- Robbery—business
- Robbery—person
- Assault
- Battery
- Theft/larceny
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Drug dealing
- Drug possession
- Vandalism
- Criminal sexual assault
- Homicide
- Arson
- Prostitution
- Mob action

- Drinking in public
- Gang loitering
- Disorderly conduct
- Contempt of court
- Throwing gang signs
- Using profanity at cops
- Gambling / shooting dice
- Driving without a license
- Forgery
- Other (Specify:) _____

M. Police Contacts

102. In the past two months have you been stopped or questioned by the police?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

102a. How many times have you been stopped or questioned? _____

102b. What were you doing each time you got stopped or questioned?

103. Since you got out, have you been arrested?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

103a. How many times have you been arrested?

103b. What were the charges each time?

103c. What's happening with the case(s)?

N. *Wrap-up*

104. Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered today?

I would now like to review the contact information I have for you to make sure it's still correct.

[Review locator form with respondent.]

Interviewer Remarks

Participant ID#: _____

Interview Date: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Location: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Compensation: \$_____

Completion (check one):

- Completed
- Took too long, participant requested interview end
- Ran out of time, participant needed to go to work/apptmt/etc.
- Participant unable to finish, incapacitated, too tired

Interview Setting

1. Were others present during the interview?

___ No

___ Yes

IF YES:

1a. Who else was present?

1b. How did their presence affect the interview?

	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
2. Participant's attention to you was				
3. Participant's general understanding of the questions was				
4. Participant's cooperation throughout most of the interview was				

5. At any time during the interview, did the participant appear to be

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very
6. Suspicious of you / the project			
7. Uncommunicative			
8. Depressed or withdrawn			
9. Anxious or nervous			
10. Hostile or angry			
11. Tired or in pain			
12. Intoxicated (by alcohol or drugs)			
13. Sad			

14. Please explain if you checked “somewhat or “very” for any of the emotions listed above:

15. Do you have any reason to believe that the subject wasn't being entirely honest or forthcoming in responding to your questions?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

15a. Please explain.

16. How conducive was the interview setting to maintaining the participant's privacy and confidentiality?

- Very conducive
- Somewhat conducive
- Not at all conducive

16a. Please explain:

17. How did you attempt to develop and/or maintain and/or enhance rapport with the participant?

18. What, if anything, did the participant ask you to help him with / do for him / give him / etc.?

18a. How did you respond?

***Community Reintegration: A Comparative Study of
Gang-Affiliated and Non-Gang-Affiliated Ex-
Offenders***

4th Post-Release Interview (T3)

***DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois***

A. Clarifications, Corrections

I'd like to get started by asking you some questions that I didn't get to ask you or forgot to ask you in our last interview.

[Refer to lingering questions/issues from the previous interview.]

B. Personal Background

Now I have some general questions about your life in the past couple of months.

1. So how have the past two months been going for you? **[Probe for experiences with family, friends, work, education, reintegration in general, well-being, etc.]**

2. Where are you living now? _____

3. Is this the same place you were living when I interviewed you last?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

3a. How long have you lived at your current address? _____ weeks

3b. Why did you move to where you're living now?

3c. How many different places have you lived since our last interview? _____

4. How much longer do you plan to live at your current address?

5. Have you gotten married or seriously involved with someone since our last interview?

- married
- seriously involved
- neither

IF MARRIED OR SERIOUSLY INVOLVED SINCE LAST INTERVIEW:

5a. How did that come about?

6. Have you gotten divorced or had a romantic relationship end since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

6a. What happened?

7. Were any children born to you since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

7a. How many? _____

7b. When did this happen?

7c. Have you been supporting them or their mother financially?

- a. No
- b. Yes

7d. Do you live with these children?

- ~~a.~~ a. No
- ~~b.~~ b. Yes

7e. How do you feel about this new situation?

C. Release and Supervision Details (Most Recent)

8. Are you still on parole?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

8a. On what date did it end? _____ / _____ / _____

8b. Why did it end?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 12

Now I have some questions about how your parole has been going.

9. Do you have the same parole officer you had at the time of our last interview, two months ago?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

9a. How many different parole officers have you had in the past two months? _____

9b. Since you got out of prison this last time, how many parole officers have you had in total? _____

9c. Why have they changed parole officers on you?

10. Have you had any contact with your parole officer since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

10a. What kind of contact have you had? [**Check all that apply.**]

___ in-person visits, unannounced (number: _____)

___ in-person visits, announced (number: _____)

___ telephone calls from parole officer (number: _____)

___ telephone calls to parole officer (number: _____)

___ other (Explain: _____)

10b. How much time would you say you have spent actually talking with your P.O., either by phone or in-person?

_____ hours _____ minutes

11. Overall, how helpful has your parole officer been in helping you get back into the community? [**If subject has had multiple P.O.s in past two months, probe for his assessment of each one.**]

D. Post-Release Expectations versus Reality

Now for some questions about your goals, successes, and challenges in the past couple of months.

12. What are some of your personal goals at this point in time?

13. Which of these goals did you have two months ago, when we did our last interview?

14. Which of these goals are new? Which have you set since we met two months ago?

15. How did these new goals become goals? **[Probe for influence of personal relationships on subject's development of personal goals.]**

16. The last time we met, you also said that _____ **[List goals subject articulated in previous interview but not articulated now]** were goals of yours. Would you say that these are still goals?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF NO:

16a. How did these end up not being goals anymore?

17. What will it take for you to be able to reach the goals you now have? **[Probe for external resources such as relationships, education, and social service, and also internal resources such as willpower, persistence, etc.]**
18. In terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of your successes or victories in the past two months?
19. Again, in terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of the biggest challenges or obstacles you have faced in the past two months?

E. Living Situation

Now I have a few detailed questions about your current living situation.

20. Who lives with you now? **[Document exact number of people and exact relationship to subject.]**

20a. Has anything about your living situation changed in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

20a.1. What has changed? **[Probe for reasons behind change.]**

21. What do you like best about living where you're living right now?

22. What do you like the least about living where you're living right now?

23. Has anyone you're living with ever been in prison or jail?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

23a. Who?

24. Are any of the people you live with involved with a street gang or street organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

24a. Who?

24b. Which gangs?

F. Community Attachments and Civic Participation

[In this section probe for subject's participation in religious institutions, recreational clubs, sports teams, music/artistic groups, governmental groups, block clubs, mutual aid societies, fraternal groups, political clubs, labor unions, nationality groups, etc.]

25. Do you belong to or associate with or volunteer for any organizations or groups in the community, such as churches or block clubs, or sports leagues?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF YES:

25a. What are you involved with?

26. Are there any people or groups in your community **that help you** in any way?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF YES:

26a. Which groups give you help?

- 26b. What do they give you? **[Probe for material help, such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as non-material help, such as moral support.]**

27. Are there any individual people or groups in your community **that you help** in some way?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

27a. Which people do you help?

27b. How do you help them?

28. In the past two months have you worked with others in this community to try to solve a community problem?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

28a. What was the problem?

28b. What exactly did you personally do to help out?

28c. What happened to the problem? Has it gone away?

28d. When was this exactly?

G. Work and Income

Now I'd like to talk about how you've been able to get money to meet your needs in the past two months. Here I'm talking about jobs, help from friends or family, and even illegal activity.

29. In the past two months how have you been making money to meet your needs and expenses? Please tell me a little bit about all the things you've been doing to make money, whether these things are legal or not legal. Then I'll ask you a few questions about each one.

Brief Description	Location	Distance	Hrs/wk	Income/wk	Like Best	Like Least

30. Are you currently looking for a legal (straight) job (or a different legal (straight) job)?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30a. How are you going about finding a job?

30b. How long have you been looking for a job? Since when?

30c. About how many hours a week do you spend looking for work? _____

30d. Have you gone on any interviews since you started looking?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30.d.1. How many interviews have you gone on? _____

30.d.2. How many of these interviews were first time interviews? _____

30.d.3. How have you dealt with the fact that you have a felony record?

IF NO:

30e. What are some of the reasons that you haven't looked for a job?

31. How much money do you get each week from the following sources?

a-uu .Legal employment	\$ _____	(Take home pay)
b-vv .Mate/spouse/partner	\$ _____	
ww.Family		\$ _____
e-xx .Friends		\$ _____
d-yy .Food stamps	\$ _____	
e-zz .Unemployment		\$ _____
f-aaa .Social Services		\$ _____
g-bbb .TANF		\$ _____
h-ccc .Worker's Comp		\$ _____
i-ddd .Social Security		\$ _____
j-eee .Medicaid		\$ _____
k-fff .VA Disability		\$ _____
l-ggg .Public Housing		\$ _____
m-hhh .SSI		\$ _____
n-iii .Pan handling	\$ _____	
o-iii .Street vending	\$ _____	
p-iii .Theft/robbery	\$ _____	
q-iii .Selling stolen goods (fencing)	\$ _____	
r-iii .Selling drugs		\$ _____
s-iii .Prostitution (of self)	\$ _____	
t-iii .Pimping		\$ _____
ppp.Gambling/shooting dice	\$ _____	
u-iii .Other (Specify:)	\$ _____	

H. Education and Skills Programs

Now I'm going to list a some programs. As I do, please tell me whether or not you have done it, whether or not you think it has been helpful, and how you found out about it.

	PROGRAM	Done it? (Y/N)	Helpful? (Y/N) (Why/Why not?)	How found out about it?
32.	Adult basic education			
33.	GED			
34.	College			
35.	English as a Second Language			
36.	Life skills			
37.	Employment readiness – such as classes on writing a resume, filling out job applications, going on job interviews			
38.	Trade or job training			
39.	Parenting skills			
40.	Mental health treatment – such as help			

	with stress, depression, psychological issues			
41.	Alcoholics Anonymous / Narcotics Anonymous			
42.	Other substance abuse treatment(not AA or NA)			
43.	Marriage or relationship counseling			
44.	Anger management			
45.	Other (Specify:			

I. Relationships with Family and Friends

Now I have some questions about your relationships with close family and close friends.

Socio-list

I'd like you to think about the close friends and close family members you currently have. When I say "close" I am talking about people who will look out for you, who would do you a favor even when you don't ask them to, and who will listen to you and offer you advice when you need it. They're the kind of people who've got your back, and you've got theirs.

46. Please tell me which family members you feel closest to right now.

[Record family members in table by role: mother, father, etc.]

47. Please tell me the first names of the friends you feel closest to right now.

[Record friends' first names and last initial in table along with age.]

48. Can you tell me one thing that each of these people has done in the past two months to help you get back into the community.

[Record description in table. Probe for support of all kinds, including material/economic, emotional, psychological/cognitive, and spiritual.]

49. Which of the people on this list are gang-involved? Which gang?

[Record each person's gang involvement in the table with a check mark and name of gang.]

50. Which of the people on this list have ever been in the penitentiary?

[Record in the table with a check mark.]

	FAMILY MEMBERS	Sex	How Person Has Helped in Reintegration	Gang	Prison
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
	FRIENDS				
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

51. Which of the people on this list of family and friends has helped you the most in terms of staying out of trouble?

52. Which of the close friends in this list did you know before you went to prison?

[Record by line number]

53. Did you used to have close friends, before you went to prison, that aren't close friends anymore?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

53a. When did they stop being close friends?

53b. What happened? Why aren't they close friends of yours anymore?

54. Have you gotten any new close friends in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

54a. Who are they?

54b. How did they become close friends of yours?

55. Has your family changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

55a. How has it changed? **[Probe for changes in structure and in terms of relationship dynamics.]**

J. Substance Use

Now I'm going to list the names of legal and illegal substances. I'd like you to tell me how often you have used each of them in the past two months. Possible answers include: Daily or almost daily, at least once a week, at least once a month, less than once a month, and never.

[Give response card to subject.]

For each substance that you use daily or almost daily, I'll ask you to tell me how much you use in a typical day.

		Daily, or almost daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	None	How much in a typical day?
56.	Beer						_____ ounces
57.	Hard liquor						_____ ounces
58.	Wine						_____ ounces
59.	Cigarettes, cigars, or pipes						_____ packs
60.	Marijuana/cannabis						\$ _____
61.	Marijuana (Hydro)						\$ _____
62.	Heroin (inject)						\$ _____
63.	Heroin (snort)						\$ _____
64.	Methadone						
65.	Pain killers						
66.	Sedatives/tranquilizers						
67.	Powder cocaine						\$ _____
68.	Rock/crack cocaine						\$ _____
69.	PCP						
70.	LSD/hallucinogens						
71.	Crystal Meth						
72.	Other amphetamines						
73.	Inhalants						

74.	Other						
-----	-------	--	--	--	--	--	--

75. Has drinking or using drugs been the cause of any problems for you in the past month?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

75a. What kinds of problems?

[Probe cues: Loss of a job; Getting arrested; Separation / Divorce; Arguments with family / friends; Traffic accidents; Becoming violent; Loss of money; Medical treatment]

K. Gang Affiliation

Now I have some questions about street gangs and street organizations in your neighborhood and about how you are or are not involved with them.

76. Has there been any street gang activity in your neighborhood in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

76a. What kind of activity? [**Probes: Which gangs, where, what do they do, how do they operate, etc.**]

76b. Is this gang activity any different from the way it was before our last interview? In other words, is there anything new about the gang activity of the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

76b.1. What's new about it?

77. What would you say is your current gang status? **[Check ONLY ONE.]**

Retired

Inactive, but still affiliated (e.g., as “advisor”)

Active

Ex-member, no longer affiliated (i.e., has cut all ties)

Newly affiliated (in past two months)

Never been affiliated

Other (Explain: _____)

IF “NEVER BEEN AFFILIATED” SKIP TO QUESTION 101

IF “EX-MEMBER” SKIP TO QUESTION 100

IF “NEWLY AFFILIATED,” SKIP TO QUESTION 86

IF “RETIRED,” “INACTIVE BUT STILL AFFILIATED,” OR “ACTIVE,” CONTINUE WITH 78

78. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

78a. How come you haven't been hanging out with them?

IF YES:

78b. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

78c. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?

_____ hrs.

79. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

80. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

80a. How many violations have you received? _____

80b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

81. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

81a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

82. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

82a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

83. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

83a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

84. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

84a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

85. Has your rank or function changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

85a. How has it changed?

85b. Why did it change?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 100

86. Which gang are you involved with?

Name: _____

Location: _____ **[Intersection held by branch or set]**

Nation: _____

Allies: _____

Rivals: _____

Size: _____ members in the branch or set

[Interviewer: For each rival and ally gang, indicate whether it was/is in the subject's neighborhood by circling its name; also, indicate with a "P" or "F" whether each rival and ally is a People or Folks Nation gang.]

87. When did you become involved with this gang?

88. What were your reasons for getting involved with the gang?

89. Do you consider yourself to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

89a. How did you become a member?

89b. How are you different from, say, a guy who hangs out with the gang but isn't a member?

IF NO:

89c. Why not?

90. Do your fellow gang members consider you to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

90a. Why not?

91. Does your gang have a chain of command, a structure?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

91a. What is the chain? What are the different "offices" in the chain, the different levels?

92. Do you hold a function, or rank, in the organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

92a. What functions do you hold?

93. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

93a. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

93b. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?
_____ hrs.

94. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

95. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

95a. How many violations have you received? _____

95b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

96. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

96a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

97. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

97a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

98. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

98a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

99. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

99a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

100. Has your [past or current] gang affiliation affected your ability to get back into the community?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

100a. How has it affected your ability to get back into the community?

[Prompt subject to discuss how gang membership poses qualitatively different or quantitatively greater or more severe problems than ex-offenders status alone.]

[PROBE for subject's relationship with prospective employers, police, community organizations, etc.]

L. Criminal Activity

[Interviewer: Remind interviewee of the terms of the privacy certificate, of confidentiality, and of safeguards in place to protect against release of information he provides.]

Now I have some questions about laws you may have broken in the past two months. In other words, I'm interested in hearing about how you may have broken the law in ways that could have gotten you arrested if you had been caught.

101. I'm going to read a list of offenses. Please tell me which, if any, you have been involved in over the past two months. This doesn't mean that you were necessarily the one who did the crime or was in charge of pulling it, just that you participated in it somehow.

[Check all that apply; PROBE for circumstances surrounding each offense.]

- Burglary—residence
- Burglary—business
- Theft from a vehicle
- Theft of a motor vehicle
- Robbery—business
- Robbery—person
- Assault
- Battery
- Theft/larceny
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Drug dealing
- Drug possession
- Vandalism
- Criminal sexual assault
- Homicide
- Arson
- Prostitution
- Mob action

- Drinking in public
- Gang loitering
- Disorderly conduct
- Contempt of court
- Throwing gang signs
- Using profanity at cops
- Gambling / shooting dice
- Driving without a license
- Forgery
- Other (Specify:) _____

M. Police Contacts

102. In the past two months have you been stopped or questioned by the police?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

102a. How many times have you been stopped or questioned? _____

102b. What were you doing each time you got stopped or questioned?

103. Since you got out, have you been arrested?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

103a. How many times have you been arrested?

103b. What were the charges each time?

103c. What's happening with the case(s)?

N. *Wrap-up*

104. Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered today?

I would now like to review the contact information I have for you to make sure it's still correct.

[Review locator form with respondent.]

Interviewer Remarks

Participant ID#: _____

Interview Date: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Location: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Compensation: \$_____

Completion (check one):

Completed

Took too long, participant requested interview end

Ran out of time, participant needed to go to work/apptmt/etc.

Participant unable to finish, incapacitated, too tired

Interview Setting

1. Were others present during the interview?

___ No

___ Yes

IF YES:

1a. Who else was present?

1b. How did their presence affect the interview?

	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
2. Participant's attention to you was				
3. Participant's general understanding of the questions was				
4. Participant's cooperation throughout most of the interview was				

5. At any time during the interview, did the participant appear to be

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very
6. Suspicious of you / the project			
7. Uncommunicative			
8. Depressed or withdrawn			
9. Anxious or nervous			
10. Hostile or angry			
11. Tired or in pain			
12. Intoxicated (by alcohol or drugs)			
13. Sad			

14. Please explain if you checked “somewhat or “very” for any of the emotions listed above:

15. Do you have any reason to believe that the subject wasn't being entirely honest or forthcoming in responding to your questions?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

15a. Please explain.

16. How conducive was the interview setting to maintaining the participant's privacy and confidentiality?

- Very conducive
- Somewhat conducive
- Not at all conducive

16a. Please explain:

17. How did you attempt to develop and/or maintain and/or enhance rapport with the participant?

18. What, if anything, did the participant ask you to help him with / do for him / give him / etc.?

18a. How did you respond?

***Community Reintegration: A Comparative Study of
Gang-Affiliated and Non-Gang-Affiliated Ex-
Offenders***

5th Post-Release Interview (T4)

***DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois***

A. Clarifications, Corrections

I'd like to get started by asking you some questions that I didn't get to ask you or forgot to ask you in our last interview.

[Refer to lingering questions/issues from the previous interview.]

B. Personal Background

Now I have some general questions about your life in the past couple of months.

1. So how have the past two months been going for you? **[Probe for experiences with family, friends, work, education, reintegration in general, well-being, etc.]**

2. Where are you living now? _____

3. Is this the same place you were living when I interviewed you last?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

3a. How long have you lived at your current address? _____ weeks

3b. Why did you move to where you're living now?

3c. How many different places have you lived since our last interview? _____

4. How much longer do you plan to live at your current address?

5. Have you gotten married or seriously involved with someone since our last interview?

___ married

___ seriously involved

___ neither

IF MARRIED OR SERIOUSLY INVOLVED SINCE LAST INTERVIEW:

5a. How did that come about?

6. Have you gotten divorced or had a romantic relationship end since our last interview?

a. No

b. Yes

IF YES:

6a. What happened?

7. Were any children born to you since our last interview?

a. No

b. Yes

IF YES:

7a. How many? _____

7b. When did this happen?

7c. Have you been supporting them or their mother financially?

- a. No
- b. Yes

7d. Do you live with these children?

- ~~a.~~ a. No
- ~~b.~~ b. Yes

7e. How do you feel about this new situation?

C. Release and Supervision Details (Most Recent)

8. Are you still on parole?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

8a. On what date did it end? _____ / _____ / _____

8b. Why did it end?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 12

Now I have some questions about how your parole has been going.

9. Do you have the same parole officer you had at the time of our last interview, two months ago?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

9a. How many different parole officers have you had in the past two months? _____

9b. Since you got out of prison this last time, how many parole officers have you had in total? _____

9c. Why have they changed parole officers on you?

10. Have you had any contact with your parole officer since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

10a. What kind of contact have you had? **[Check all that apply.]**

___ in-person visits, unannounced (number: _____)

___ in-person visits, announced (number: _____)

___ telephone calls from parole officer (number: _____)

___ telephone calls to parole officer (number: _____)

___ other (Explain: _____)

10b. How much time would you say you have spent actually talking with your P.O., either by phone or in-person?

_____ hours _____ minutes

11. Overall, how helpful has your parole officer been in helping you get back into the community? **[If subject has had multiple P.O.s in past two months, probe for his assessment of each one.]**

D. Post-Release Expectations versus Reality

Now for some questions about your goals, successes, and challenges in the past couple of months.

12. What are some of your personal goals at this point in time?

13. Which of these goals did you have two months ago, when we did our last interview?

14. Which of these goals are new? Which have you set since we met two months ago?

15. How did these new goals become goals? **[Probe for influence of personal relationships on subject's development of personal goals.]**

16. The last time we met, you also said that _____ **[List goals subject articulated in previous interview but not articulated now]** were goals of yours. Would you say that these are still goals?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF NO:

16a. How did these end up not being goals anymore?

17. What will it take for you to be able to reach the goals you now have? **[Probe for external resources such as relationships, education, and social service, and also internal resources such as willpower, persistence, etc.]**
18. In terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of your successes or victories in the past two months?
19. Again, in terms of trying to reach your goals, what have been some of the biggest challenges or obstacles you have faced in the past two months?

E. Living Situation

Now I have a few detailed questions about your current living situation.

20. Who lives with you now? **[Document exact number of people and exact relationship to subject.]**

20a. Has anything about your living situation changed in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

20a.1. What has changed? **[Probe for reasons behind change.]**

21. What do you like best about living where you're living right now?

22. What do you like the least about living where you're living right now?

23. Has anyone you're living with ever been in prison or jail?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

23a. Who?

24. Are any of the people you live with involved with a street gang or street organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

24a. Who?

24b. Which gangs?

F. Community Attachments and Civic Participation

[In this section probe for subject's participation in religious institutions, recreational clubs, sports teams, music/artistic groups, governmental groups, block clubs, mutual aid societies, fraternal groups, political clubs, labor unions, nationality groups, etc.]

25. Do you belong to or associate with or volunteer for any organizations or groups in the community, such as churches or block clubs, or sports leagues?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF YES:

25a. What are you involved with?

26. Are there any people or groups in your community **that help you** in any way?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

IF YES:

26a. Which groups give you help?

- 26b. What do they give you? **[Probe for material help, such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as non-material help, such as moral support.]**

27. Are there any individual people or groups in your community **that you help** in some way?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

27a. Which people do you help?

27b. How do you help them?

28. In the past two months have you worked with others in this community to try to solve a community problem?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

28a. What was the problem?

28b. What exactly did you personally do to help out?

28c. What happened to the problem? Has it gone away?

28d. When was this exactly?

G. Work and Income

Now I'd like to talk about how you've been able to get money to meet your needs in the past two months. Here I'm talking about jobs, help from friends or family, and even illegal activity.

29. In the past two months how have you been making money to meet your needs and expenses? Please tell me a little bit about all the things you've been doing to make money, whether these things are legal or not legal. Then I'll ask you a few questions about each one.

Brief Description	Location	Distance	Hrs/wk	Income/wk	Like Best	Like Least

30. Are you currently looking for a legal (straight) job (or a different legal (straight) job)?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30a. How are you going about finding a job?

30b. How long have you been looking for a job? Since when?

30c. About how many hours a week do you spend looking for work? _____

30d. Have you gone on any interviews since you started looking?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

30.d.1. How many interviews have you gone on? _____

30.d.2. How many of these interviews were first time interviews? _____

30.d.3. How have you dealt with the fact that you have a felony record?

IF NO:

30e. What are some of the reasons that you haven't looked for a job?

31. How much money do you get each week from the following sources?

a.rrr. Legal employment	\$ _____	(Take home pay)
b.sss. Mate/spouse/partner	\$ _____	
ttt. Family		\$ _____
e.uuu. Friends		\$ _____
d.vvv. Food stamps	\$ _____	
e.www. Unemployment	\$ _____	
f.xxx. Social Services	\$ _____	
g.vvy. TANF		\$ _____
h.zzz. Worker's Comp	\$ _____	
i.aaa. Social Security	\$ _____	
j.bbb. Medicaid		\$ _____
k.ccc. VA Disability	\$ _____	
l.ddd. Public Housing	\$ _____	
m.eee. SSI		\$ _____
n.fff. Pan handling	\$ _____	
o.ggg. Street vending	\$ _____	
p.hhh. Theft/robbery	\$ _____	
q.iii. Selling stolen goods (fencing)	\$ _____	
r.iii. Selling drugs	\$ _____	
s.kkk. Prostitution (of self)	\$ _____	
t.iii. Pimping		\$ _____
mmmm.Gambling/shooting dice	\$ _____	
u.nnn. Other (Specify:) <u> </u>	\$ _____	

H. Education and Skills Programs

Now I'm going to list a some programs. As I do, please tell me whether or not you have done it, whether or not you think it has been helpful, and how you found out about it.

	PROGRAM	Done it? (Y/N)	Helpful? (Y/N) (Why/Why not?)	How found out about it?
32.	Adult basic education			
33.	GED			
34.	College			
35.	English as a Second Language			
36.	Life skills			
37.	Employment readiness – such as classes on writing a resume, filling out job applications, going on job interviews			
38.	Trade or job training			
39.	Parenting skills			
40.	Mental health treatment – such as help			

	with stress, depression, psychological issues			
41.	Alcoholics Anonymous / Narcotics Anonymous			
42.	Other substance abuse treatment(not AA or NA)			
43.	Marriage or relationship counseling			
44.	Anger management			
45.	Other (Specify:			

I. Relationships with Family and Friends

Now I have some questions about your relationships with close family and close friends.

Socio-list

I'd like you to think about the close friends and close family members you currently have. When I say "close" I am talking about people who will look out for you, who would do you a favor even when you don't ask them to, and who will listen to you and offer you advice when you need it. They're the kind of people who've got your back, and you've got theirs.

46. Please tell me which family members you feel closest to right now.

[Record family members in table by role: mother, father, etc.]

47. Please tell me the first names of the friends you feel closest to right now.

[Record friends' first names and last initial in table along with age.]

48. Can you tell me one thing that each of these people has done in the past two months to help you get back into the community.

[Record description in table. Probe for support of all kinds, including material/economic, emotional, psychological/cognitive, and spiritual.]

49. Which of the people on this list are gang-involved? Which gang?

[Record each person's gang involvement in the table with a check mark and name of gang.]

50. Which of the people on this list have ever been in the penitentiary?

[Record in the table with a check mark.]

	FAMILY MEMBERS	Sex	How Person Has Helped in Reintegration	Gang	Prison
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
	FRIENDS				
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

51. Which of the people on this list of family and friends has helped you the most in terms of staying out of trouble?

52. Which of the close friends in this list did you know before you went to prison?

[Record by line number]

53. Did you used to have close friends, before you went to prison, that aren't close friends anymore?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

53a. When did they stop being close friends?

53b. What happened? Why aren't they close friends of yours anymore?

54. Have you gotten any new close friends in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

54a. Who are they?

54b. How did they become close friends of yours?

55. Has your family changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

55a. How has it changed? **[Probe for changes in structure and in terms of relationship dynamics.]**

J. Substance Use

Now I'm going to list the names of legal and illegal substances. I'd like you to tell me how often you have used each of them in the past two months. Possible answers include: Daily or almost daily, at least once a week, at least once a month, less than once a month, and never.

[Give response card to subject.]

For each substance that you use daily or almost daily, I'll ask you to tell me how much you use in a typical day.

		Daily, or almost daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	None	How much in a typical day?
56.	Beer						_____ ounces
57.	Hard liquor						_____ ounces
58.	Wine						_____ ounces
59.	Cigarettes, cigars, or pipes						_____ packs
60.	Marijuana/cannabis						\$ _____
61.	Marijuana (Hydro)						\$ _____
62.	Heroin (inject)						\$ _____
63.	Heroin (snort)						\$ _____
64.	Methadone						
65.	Pain killers						
66.	Sedatives/tranquilizers						
67.	Powder cocaine						\$ _____
68.	Rock/crack cocaine						\$ _____
69.	PCP						
70.	LSD/hallucinogens						
71.	Crystal Meth						
72.	Other amphetamines						
73.	Inhalants						

74.	Other						
-----	-------	--	--	--	--	--	--

75. Has drinking or using drugs been the cause of any problems for you in the past month?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

75a. What kinds of problems?

[Probe cues: Loss of a job; Getting arrested; Separation / Divorce; Arguments with family / friends; Traffic accidents; Becoming violent; Loss of money; Medical treatment]

K. Gang Affiliation

Now I have some questions about street gangs and street organizations in your neighborhood and about how you are or are not involved with them.

76. Has there been any street gang activity in your neighborhood in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

76a. What kind of activity? [**Probes: Which gangs, where, what do they do, how do they operate, etc.**]

76b. Is this gang activity any different from the way it was before our last interview? In other words, is there anything new about the gang activity of the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

76b.1. What's new about it?

77. What would you say is your current gang status? **[Check ONLY ONE.]**

Retired

Inactive, but still affiliated (e.g., as “advisor”)

Active

Ex-member, no longer affiliated (i.e., has cut all ties)

Newly affiliated (in past two months)

Never been affiliated

Other (Explain: _____)

IF “NEVER BEEN AFFILIATED” SKIP TO QUESTION 101

IF “EX-MEMBER” SKIP TO QUESTION 100

IF “NEWLY AFFILIATED,” SKIP TO QUESTION 86

IF “RETIRED,” “INACTIVE BUT STILL AFFILIATED,” OR “ACTIVE,” CONTINUE WITH 78

78. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

78a. How come you haven't been hanging out with them?

IF YES:

78b. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

78c. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?

_____ hrs.

79. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

80. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

80a. How many violations have you received? _____

80b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

81. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

81a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

82. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

82a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

83. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

83a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

84. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

84a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

85. Has your rank or function changed at all in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

85a. How has it changed?

85b. Why did it change?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 100

86. Which gang are you involved with?

Name: _____

Location: _____ **[Intersection held by branch or set]**

Nation: _____

Allies: _____

Rivals: _____

Size: _____ members in the branch or set

[Interviewer: For each rival and ally gang, indicate whether it was/is in the subject's neighborhood by circling its name; also, indicate with a "P" or "F" whether each rival and ally is a People or Folks Nation gang.]

87. When did you become involved with this gang?

88. What were your reasons for getting involved with the gang?

89. Do you consider yourself to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

89a. How did you become a member?

89b. How are you different from, say, a guy who hangs out with the gang but isn't a member?

IF NO:

89c. Why not?

90. Do your fellow gang members consider you to be a member?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

90a. Why not?

91. Does your gang have a chain of command, a structure?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

91a. What is the chain? What are the different "offices" in the chain, the different levels?

92. Do you hold a function, or rank, in the organization?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

92a. What functions do you hold?

93. Have you talked to or hung out with any of your gang associates in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

93a. How many different associates have you talked to or hung out with? _____

93b. About how many hours in a week do you spend talking to or hanging out with them?
_____ hrs.

94. What kinds of gang-related things have you been involved with in the past two months?

95. Have you received any violations in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

95a. How many violations have you received? _____

95b. What were they for? [**Probe for initiation, exit, disciplinary, etc.**]

96. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by a member of your own gang?

_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

96a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

97. How many times in the past two months have you been beaten up by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

97a. What were their reasons for beating you up?

98. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by a member of your own gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

98a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

99. How many times in the past two months have you been shot by someone from a rival gang?
_____ times

IF ONE OR MORE:

99a. What were their reasons for shooting you?

100. Has your [past or current] gang affiliation affected your ability to get back into the community?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

100a. How has it affected your ability to get back into the community?

[Prompt subject to discuss how gang membership poses qualitatively different or quantitatively greater or more severe problems than ex-offenders status alone.]

[PROBE for subject's relationship with prospective employers, police, community organizations, etc.]

L. Criminal Activity

[Interviewer: Remind interviewee of the terms of the privacy certificate, of confidentiality, and of safeguards in place to protect against release of information he provides.]

Now I have some questions about laws you may have broken in the past two months. In other words, I'm interested in hearing about how you may have broken the law in ways that could have gotten you arrested if you had been caught.

101. I'm going to read a list of offenses. Please tell me which, if any, you have been involved in over the past two months. This doesn't mean that you were necessarily the one who did the crime or was in charge of pulling it, just that you participated in it somehow.

[Check all that apply; PROBE for circumstances surrounding each offense.]

- Burglary—residence
- Burglary—business
- Theft from a vehicle
- Theft of a motor vehicle
- Robbery—business
- Robbery—person
- Assault
- Battery
- Theft/larceny
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Drug dealing
- Drug possession
- Vandalism
- Criminal sexual assault
- Homicide
- Arson
- Prostitution
- Mob action

- Drinking in public
- Gang loitering
- Disorderly conduct
- Contempt of court
- Throwing gang signs
- Using profanity at cops
- Gambling / shooting dice
- Driving without a license
- Forgery
- Other (Specify:) _____

M. Police Contacts

102. In the past two months have you been stopped or questioned by the police?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

102a. How many times have you been stopped or questioned? _____

102b. What were you doing each time you got stopped or questioned?

103. Since you got out, have you been arrested?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

103a. How many times have you been arrested?

103b. What were the charges each time?

103c. What's happening with the case(s)?

N. *Wrap-up*

104. Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered today?

I would now like to review the contact information I have for you to make sure it's still correct.

[Review locator form with respondent.]

Interviewer Remarks

Participant ID#: _____

Interview Date: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Location: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Compensation: \$_____

Completion (check one):

Completed

Took too long, participant requested interview end

Ran out of time, participant needed to go to work/apptmt/etc.

Participant unable to finish, incapacitated, too tired

Interview Setting

1. Were others present during the interview?

___ No

___ Yes

IF YES:

1a. Who else was present?

1b. How did their presence affect the interview?

	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
2. Participant's attention to you was				
3. Participant's general understanding of the questions was				
4. Participant's cooperation throughout most of the interview was				

5. At any time during the interview, did the participant appear to be

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very
6. Suspicious of you / the project			
7. Uncommunicative			
8. Depressed or withdrawn			
9. Anxious or nervous			
10. Hostile or angry			
11. Tired or in pain			
12. Intoxicated (by alcohol or drugs)			
13. Sad			

14. Please explain if you checked "somewhat or "very" for any of the emotions listed above:

15. Do you have any reason to believe that the subject wasn't being entirely honest or forthcoming in responding to your questions?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

15a. Please explain.

16. How conducive was the interview setting to maintaining the participant's privacy and confidentiality?

- Very conducive
- Somewhat conducive
- Not at all conducive

16a. Please explain:

17. How did you attempt to develop and/or maintain and/or enhance rapport with the participant?

18. What, if anything, did the participant ask you to help him with / do for him / give him / etc.?

18a. How did you respond?

***Community Reintegration: A Comparative Study of
Gang-Affiliated and Non-Gang-Affiliated Ex-
Offenders***

6th Post-Release Interview (T5)

Life History

***DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois***

A. Clarifications, Corrections

I'd like to get started by asking you some questions that I didn't get to ask you or forgot to ask you in our last interview.

[Refer to lingering questions/issues from the previous interview.]

B. Personal Background

1. So how have the past two months been going for you? **[Probe for experiences with family, friends, work, education, reintegration in general, well-being, etc.]**

C. Release and Supervision Details (Most Recent)

2. Are you still on parole?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

2a. On what date did it end? ____ / ____ / ____

2b. Why did it end?

NOW SKIP TO QUESTION 6

Now I have some questions about how your parole has been going.

3. Do you have the same parole officer you had at the time of our last interview, two months ago?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF NO:

3a. How many different parole officers have you had in the past two months? ____

3b. Since you got out of prison this last time, how many parole officers have you had in total? ____

3c. Why have they changed parole officers on you?

4. Have you had any contact with your parole officer since our last interview?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

4a. What kind of contact have you had? **[Record number of contacts by type.]**

___ in-person visits, unannounced

___ in-person visits, announced

___ telephone calls from parole officer

___ telephone calls to parole officer

___ other (Explain: _____)

4b. How much time would you say you have spent actually talking with your P.O., either by phone or in-person?

_____ hours _____ minutes

5. Overall, how helpful has your parole officer been in helping you get back into the community? **[If subject has had multiple P.O.s in past two months, probe for his assessment of each one.]**

D. Living Situation

Now I have a few detailed questions about your current living situation.

6. Who lives with you now? **[Document exact number of people and exact relationship to subject.]**

6a. Has anything about your living situation changed in the past two months?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

6a.1. What has changed? **[Probe for reasons behind change.]**

E. Work and Income

Now I'd like to talk about how you've been able to get money to meet your needs in the past two months. Here I'm talking about jobs, help from friends or family, and even illegal activity.

7. In the past two months how have you been making money to meet your needs and expenses? Please tell me a little bit about all the things you've been doing to make money, whether these things are legal or not legal. Then I'll ask you a few questions about each one.

Brief Description	Location	Distance	Hrs/wk	Income/wk	Like Best	Like Least

F. Police Contacts

8. In the past two months have you been stopped or questioned by the police?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

8a. How many times have you been stopped or questioned? _____

8b. What were you doing each time you got stopped or questioned?

9. Since you got out, have you been arrested?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

9a. How many times have you been arrested?

9b. What were the charges each time?

9c. What's happening with the case(s)?

G. *Personal History*

Now I'd like to do something a little different than we normally do. Since this is our last interview together, I'd like to learn about your background, your life history. This will help us to better understand you and the other guys in this study.

10. Looking back on your whole life, what would you say were the most important things you experienced, the most important things that happened to you, the most important turning points? **[Probe for detailed descriptions of each event, experience, turning point and how each affected him.]**

11. If you had to pick just three words to describe yourself, what would they be?

- 11a. Now, tell me why you chose each word – what does each word mean to you?

12. Which people in your life have had the biggest influence on who you are as a person? **[Probe for the nature of each person's influence on participant.]**

13. Where did you grow up?

City: _____

Neighborhood: _____

13a. What was it like there when you were coming up?

14. What kinds of things do you remember most clearly from your upbringing?

15. Who raised you?

16. Who were you closest to as a child?

16a. What made you feel close to this person/these people?

17. What were the biggest changes in your family from the time you were born to the time you left home?

18. Have you ever felt really tied into, really connected to a neighborhood, to a community?

- No
- Yes

IF YES:

18a. When was that? What was that all about?

IF NO:

18b. Why do you think you've never felt connected to a community?

19. What's the best money-making gig you ever had – here I'm talking about either straight jobs or hustles.

19a. What made it so good?

20. What's the worst money-making gig you ever had?
 - 20a. What made it so bad?
21. When you were coming up, how did you do in school? What was school like for you?
22. Tell me about the best friends you've had in your life – how you met them, why you were so close to them, what happened to the friendship.
23. When did you first start getting involved in delinquency, crime? What about gangs?
24. How did your family react when you first starting doing crime?

25. When did you first “do time” either in jail or prison?

25a. What was that like for you?

25b. Do you think that changed you?

No

Yes

IF YES:

25b1. How did it change you?

FOR FORMERLY OR CURRENTLY GANG-INVOLVED [For all others, skip to Q30.]

26. Tell me about how you first got involved in gang stuff. What was that like? How old were you? What led you to get involved in the first place?

27. How did your involvement in gang life change from the time you got involved to the point when you left it behind [or until now for those still involved]?

28. How did the gang itself change from the time you got involved until the point when you left it behind? What caused this change?

29. Looking back on the time when you first got interested in the gang stuff, what do you know now about gang life that you wish you had known then?

FOR EVERYONE

30. What do you like most about the life you've had to this point?

31. What do you like least about the life you've had to this point?

32. If you could wave a magic wand and change yourself, how would you change?

33. If you had all the money and power in the world to help ex-offenders, what would you do?

H. Wrap-up

34. Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered today?

I would now like to review the contact information I have for you to make sure it's still correct. As we get results out of this study, we'll send them to you if you like. Do you want us to?

- No
 Yes

If YES: Review locator form with respondent.

Thank you very much for participating in this study. We wish you all the best.

Interviewer Remarks

Participant ID#: _____

Interview Date: _____

Start Time: _____

End Time: _____

Location: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Compensation: \$_____

Completion (check one):

Completed

Took too long, participant requested interview end

Ran out of time, participant needed to go to work/apptmt/etc.

Participant unable to finish, incapacitated, too tired

Interview Setting

1. Were others present during the interview?

___ No

___ Yes

IF YES:

1a. Who else was present?

1b. How did their presence affect the interview?

	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
2. Participant's attention to you was				
3. Participant's general understanding of the questions was				
4. Participant's cooperation throughout most of the interview was				

5. At any time during the interview, did the participant appear to be

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very
6. Suspicious of you / the project			
7. Uncommunicative			
8. Depressed or withdrawn			
9. Anxious or nervous			
10. Hostile or angry			
11. Tired or in pain			
12. Intoxicated (by alcohol or drugs)			
13. Sad			

14. Please explain if you checked "somewhat or "very" for any of the emotions listed above:

15. Do you have any reason to believe that the subject wasn't being entirely honest or forthcoming in responding to your questions?

- a. No
- b. Yes

IF YES:

15a. Please explain.

16. How conducive was the interview setting to maintaining the participant's privacy and confidentiality?

- Very conducive
- Somewhat conducive
- Not at all conducive

16a. Please explain:

17. How did you attempt to develop and/or maintain and/or enhance rapport with the participant?

18. What, if anything, did the participant ask you to help him with / do for him / give him / etc.?

18a. How did you respond?

TABLE 1: Study Duration by Respondent

Pseudonym	1st Interview (T0)	2nd Interview (T1)	3rd Interview (T2)	4th Interview (T3)	5th Interview (T4)	6th Interview (T5)
Antwan Smith	█	█	█	█	█	█
Tyrell Williams	█					
Juan Perez	█	█	█	█	█	█
Dekolby Jackson	█	█	█	█	█	█
Martin Roberts	█					
Billy Smith	█	█	█	█	█	
Marvin Heller	█					
Shawn Colvin	█					
Jeffrey Gantry	█	█	█	█	█	█
Jayson Combs	█					
Clifton Pirie	█	█	█	█	█	█
Stan Jenkins	█	█	█	█	█	█
Jerome Davis	█	█	█			
Anthony Wurley	█					
Tony Rogers	█	█	█			
Syrus Kendall	█	█	█	█	█	█
Jackson Burnell	█					
Rudy Ortiz	█	█	█	█	█	█
Michael Christie	█					
Will Small	█	█	█	█	█	█
Samuel Johnson	█					
Eddie Battle	█	█	█	█	█	█
Jose Ramos	█					
Theo Barber	█	█				
Ted Jameson	█					
Mark Velma	█	█	█	█	█	█
Hector Gonzalez	█	█	█	█	█	█
Steven Edison	█					

Gregory Lee	[REDACTED]					
John Snyder	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Danny Delroy	[REDACTED]					
Eric White	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
David Simpson	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Frank Patterson	[REDACTED]					
Duane Wilkins	[REDACTED]					
Darnell Davis	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Julio Huerta	[REDACTED]					
Calvin Myers	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
Christopher McDeering	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				

Table 2: Respondent Demographics

	Pseudonym	Age	Race	Gang Inv.	Married	Children	Graduated HS	Seeking Emp.	Volunteer	Time Served	Time Served (Mos.)	Times in Prison
2004	Antwan Smith	37	Black	0	0	0	0	1	0	1 yr.	12	3
2004	Tyrell Williams	21	Black	0	0	0	0	1	0	9 mos.	9	1
2004	Juan Perez	27	Latino	1	0	1	0	0	1	5 mos.	5	3
2004	Dekolby Jackson	26	Black	1	0	1	0	1	0	6 mos.	6	1
2004	Martin Roberts	29	Black	0	0	1	0	1	0	13 mos.	13	2
2004	Billy Smith	52	Black	0	0	1	1	1	1	61 days	2	1
2004	Marvin Heller	43	Black	1	0	0	0	0	0	7.5 yrs.	90	4
2004	Shawn Colvin	41	Black	1	0	1	0	1	1	3 yrs.	36	2
2004	Jeffrey Gantry	47	Latino	1	0	1	0	N/A	0	51 days	2	4
2004	Jayson Combs	31	Black	N/A	0	0	1	1	0	4 yrs. 9 mos.	57	2
2004	Clifton Pirie	44	Black	1	0	1	1	1	0	61 days	2	1
2004	Stan Jenkins	25	Black	1	0	0	0	1	1	1 yr.	12	1
2004	Jerome Davis	46	White	0	1	1	1	1	1	61 days	2	1
2004	Anthony Wurley	19	Black	1	0	0	0	1	0	120 days	4	1
2004	Tony Rogers	47	Black	1	1	1	0	1	1	6 mos.	6	3
2004	Syrus Kendall	44	Black	1	0	0	0	1	1	5.5 mos.	5.5	5
	Jackson Burnell	51	Black	0	0	0	0	1	0	28 years		1
	Rudy Ortiz	35	Latino	1	0	1	0	0	0	2 years		3
2004	Michael Christie	44	Black	1	0	1	0	0	1	3.5 yrs.	42	1
2004	Will Small	47	Black	1	0	1	1	1	0	30 days	1	5
2004	Samuel Johnson	35	Black	N/A	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	1 yr.	12	3
2004	Eddie Battle	46	Black	0	0	1	0	1	0	18 mos.	18	5
2004	Jose Ramos	37	Latino	1	0	0	0	1	0	2.5 yrs	30	5
2004	Theo Barber	34	Black	1	0	1	0	1	0	5 yrs.	60	5
2004	Ted Jameson	33	Black	1	0	1	0	1	0	1.5 yrs.	18	1
2004	Mark Velma	27	Black	0	0	1	0	1	0	1 yr.	12	3
2004 1971	Hector Gonzalez	33	Latino	0	0	0	0	1	0	1 yr	12	2
2004 1969	Steven Edison	35	Black	1	0	0	1	0	1	10 yrs.	120	1
2004 1975	Gregory Lee	29	Black	1	0	1	1	0	0	1.5 yrs.	18	2
2004 1971	John Snyder	33	White	0	0	0	0	1	1	4.5 yrs.	54	3
2004 1972	Danny Delroy	32	Black	1	0	1	1	1	0	3.5 mos	3.5	3
2004 1970	Eric White	34	Black	1	0	0	1	0	1	5 years	60	3
2004 1959	David Simpson	45	White	1	0	1	0	0	0	3 years	36	6

2004 1962	Frank Patterson	42	Black	1	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	6 mos.	6	6
2004 1964	Duane Wilkins	40	Black	1	0	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
2004 1962	Darnell Davis	42	Black	1	0	0	0	1	1	4 mos.	4	3
2004 1970	Julio Huerta	34	Latino	1	0	1	0	1	N/A	6 ys. 8 mos.	80	2
2004 1971	Calvin Myers	33	White	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	61 days	2	1
2004 1980	Chris McDeering	24	Black	1	0	1	0	1	1	11 mos.	11	2
Number of Responses				39	37	39	39	39	36	34		
Number Indicated				N/A	26	2	22	10	27	13	YEARS	
Average (if relevant)				39	70%	5%	56%	26%	75%	38%	2.00	2.00
											TIMES IN PRISON	2.62

