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“IT’S GETTING CRAZY OUT THERE”: CAN A CIVIL GANG INJUNCTION CHANGE A COMMUNITY?*

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Research Summary:

Civil gang injunctions are an increasingly popular gang suppression tactic. This article reports on the first scientific evaluation of the community impact of this strategy. San Bernardino residents in five neighborhoods were surveyed about their perceptions and experience of crime, gang activity, and neighborhood quality 18 months before and 6 months after the issuance of an injunction. Analyses indicated positive evidence of short-term effects in the disordered, primary injunction area, including less gang presence, fewer reports of gang intimidation, and less fear of confrontation with gang members, but no significant changes in intermediate or long-term outcomes except lower fear of crime. Comparison of this injunction area with a previous one suggested that improvements in neighborhood dynamics might accrue over the long term. Negative effects were observed in the secondary, less disordered injunction area.

Policy Implications:

This study suggests that the strategic suppression of gang member activities may translate into modest immediate improvements in community safety and well-being. Furthermore, the findings suggest that law enforcement use caution regarding the size of an injunction area and the type of gang targeted by the tactic. Coupling an injunction with

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efforts to improve neighborhood social organization and provide positive alternatives for gang members might substantially improve its effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: Street Gangs, Civil Gang Abatement, Community Organization, Neighborhood Safety

One weekend in November 2002, a drive-by shooting on the west side of San Bernardino, California left two teenagers and one adult wounded. A 15-year-old resident of the area told a reporter, "It's getting crazy out there" (Fisher et al, 2002). Living on a block where an 11-year-old recently had been stabbed during a burglary, she seemed to be stating the obvious. Police responded by instituting a civil gang injunction (CGI)—a process whereby selected gang members are prohibited from engaging in such activities as loitering at schools, carrying pagers and riding bicycles, or face arrest—against a local gang. They hoped that by curtailing the gang's activities, they could diminish residents' sense of insecurity and promote a safer, healthier community. As a local newspaper editorialized, the injunction would help a neighborhood where residents "suffer emotional distress, their children cannot play outdoors, and their pets must be locked up inside" (Staff Reports, 2002).

The 2002 National Youth Gang Survey (NYGS) found active youth gangs in more than 2,300 cities and 550 other jurisdictions served by county law enforcement (Egley and Major, 2004). Youth that join gangs account for most serious and violent crimes committed by adolescents, and offending rates are elevated during active periods of membership (Thornberry et al., 2003). Gang members are notoriously resistant to intervention, and gang interventions are equally resistant to evaluation. In concluding a volume reporting nine separate police gang interventions, Decker (2003:290) warns "that we lack even basic knowledge about the impact of interventions on gangs and youth violence" and this ignorance "should be a clarion call to police, legislators, researchers, and policymakers" to critically evaluate interventions.

The CGI is an increasingly popular anti-gang strategy. Although civil court injunctions to prohibit gang activity at specific locations date back to 1980, the first injunction against a gang and its members is credited to the Los Angeles city attorney in 1987 (see Los Angeles City Attorney Gang Prosecution Section, 1995).¹ Injunction activity increased at a moderate pace until the mid-1990s when it dramatically accelerated. Our interviews with gang officers and prosecutors and reviews of practitioner reports and

1. The historical information on CGIs was gathered from documents prepared by prosecutors (see particularly Castorena, 1998 and Whitmer and Ancker, 1996), newspaper articles, and interviews with police gang experts and injunction practitioners.

media accounts yielded 37 separate CGIs in Southern California between 1980 and 2000. In the four-year period from 1996 to 1999, a Southern California gang was enjoined, on average, every two months. As of July 2004, at least 22 injunctions had been issued in the city of Los Angeles alone. This growth in injunction activity has been fostered by how-to workshops sponsored by the California Association of District Attorneys, detailed training manuals (see Los Angeles County District Attorney, 1996, for an early example), and local descriptions in practitioner publications (Cameron and Skipper, 1997; Genelin, 1998; Mazza, 1999). Gang injunctions have also received widespread attention in local and national media.

Although most injunctions have occurred in California, law enforcement agencies nationwide are searching for new tools to combat the growth and impact of gangs in their neighborhoods. A nationwide interview survey of police officers in jurisdictions that the 1999 NYGS indicated had developed a CGI found a high rate of confusion about the tactic and confirmed 11 jurisdictions in 7 states outside California have obtained a CGI (Maxson, 2004). Anecdotally, police and public officials claim the tactic is very effective in eliminating gang activity. Yet, relatively little systematic research on the effectiveness of injunctions has been completed.

This article presents the findings of an evaluation of the impact of a CGI implemented in the Verdugo Flats neighborhood of San Bernardino, California, in Fall 2002. The research focuses on changes in the quality of life in this neighborhood, rather than on the injunction's effects on the targeted gang members or on levels of crime. The study's findings have clear implications for gang and crime researchers, law enforcement agencies that anticipate using this strategy, civil court judges who are asked to limit the activities of gang members to achieve more community order, and community members wondering if this strategy can improve their neighborhoods.

CIVIL GANG INJUNCTIONS

After conducting interviews with law enforcement gang specialists and reviewing the practitioner literature, we concluded that the CGI is a relatively flexible tool to combat gangs (Maxson, et al., 2003). Allan examined the variation in provisions in 42 injunctions requested by prosecutors and found that injunctions addressed "local gang problems with customized provisions based on specific local circumstances" (2004:241). The procedures used vary among jurisdictions within and outside California, the state where most of them have been issued (Maxson, 2004). Here, we describe the process of obtaining and implementing CGIs as it is generally understood in California.

Implementing a CGI is an elaborate process. Police officers, often in

collaboration with prosecutors, gather evidence that members of a street gang represent a public nuisance in their neighborhood, in violation of California Civil Code sections 3479 and 3480.² Evidence used to support an injunction includes the criminal history of gang members, written declarations by officers familiar with the neighborhood, and sometimes, declarations from community members that describe the effects of specific nuisance activities on neighborhood residents. The prosecutor uses the declarations and other materials to craft the injunction, working with officers to select the gang members to be named, the geographic area to be covered, and the specific behaviors that will be prohibited.³

The number of gang members, the size of the area, and the type of prohibited activities varies considerably.⁴ The number of gang members can range from a handful to the hundreds, and the initial string of names often is followed by “and any other members.”⁵ The targeted area can be a housing complex, several square blocks, or an entire city, but most often CGIs are spatially based, neighborhood-level interventions intended to disrupt the gang’s routine activities. Prohibited behaviors include illegal activities such as trespass, vandalism, drug selling, and public urination, as well as otherwise legal activities, such as wearing gang colors, displaying hand signs, and carrying a pager or signaling passing cars, behaviors associated with drug selling. Nighttime curfews are often imposed. Most disturbing to legal scholars and advocates is the commonly applied prohibition against any two or more named gang members associating with one another (Bjerregaard, 2003; Geis, 2002; Stewart, 1998).

The prosecutor files the application for a temporary restraining order

2. Nuisance is defined by section 3479 as “Anything which is injurious to health, or is indecent or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property, or unlawfully obstructs the free passage or use, in the customary manner, of any navigable lake or river, bay, stream, canal, or basin, or any public park, square, street, or highway.” According to section 3480, “A public nuisance is one which affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood, or any other considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon individuals may be unequal.”

3. Recent research on the formation of police gang units argues that law enforcement responses to gangs originate from a host of organizational factors, rather than from a rational assessment of the seriousness of local gang problems (Katz, 2001; Katz et al., 2002; see also, Decker, 2003). Any decision to pursue a CGI reflects these organizational, as well as other environmental, features.

4. Maxson et al. (2003) and Allan (2004) discuss the legal and procedural issues evident in the legal literature. For a detailed description of injunction forms in California and elsewhere, see also Maxson, 2004.

5. A recent CGI was issued against an estimated 1000 members of Oxnard’s Colonia Chiques gang, precluding any identified gang member from congregating in a 6.6-square-mile area that covers more than a quarter of the city.

(TRO) in civil court, and a hearing is scheduled. All named gang members are served notice of the hearing and the injunction. At this hearing, the judge considers the submitted evidence, hears testimony, and entertains questions from targeted individuals. Occasionally, legal counsel represents individuals, but as a rule, defendants are not provided with public counsel in civil proceedings.⁶ Judges have at times challenged the inclusion of certain individuals, the size of the targeted area, and the scope of prohibitions. If the preliminary injunction is issued at this hearing, targeted individuals must be served again with amended papers before the injunction can be enforced. Offenders can be prosecuted in either civil or criminal court for violation of a valid court order and fined up to \$1000 and/or incarcerated for up to six months. Some prosecutors seek enhanced bail amounts for arrested offenders, which can translate into significant jail time. The preliminary injunction can be in effect for a limited time, such as a year, or indefinitely. Prosecutors may seek a permanent injunction and can add individuals or provisions to an existing injunction with relative ease. A few gang injunctions have been denied, but judges usually approve them, particularly because the California Supreme court upheld a San Jose injunction in the *Acuna* case (*People ex rel. Gallo v. Acuna*, 929 P.2d 596, 1997).

The tactics used for implementation vary from one injunction to the next. Sometimes a special unit is tasked with enforcement. In other instances, the whole patrol force is alerted to the conditions of the injunction. No registry records the number of arrests resulting from injunctions. Interviews with law enforcement officials suggest the number varies widely, from very few to as many as several hundred.

THEORY: HOW CGIS MIGHT REDUCE GANG ACTIVITY

The criminological and social psychological literatures suggest several processes that might be relevant to understanding injunction effects on neighborhoods and gang members. First, social disorganization theory provides a foundation for predicting changes in social relationships. Resident participation in developing and implementing a gang injunction may spark a process of community engagement in efforts to build informal social control, social capital in the form of social networks, and supportive organizational structures (Bursik and Grasmick, 1993; Greene, 2004). Even if neighborhood residents are not engaged in the injunction activities directly, reducing the level of the immediate threat of the gang may lay a

6. In addition to pro bono services sometimes offered by private attorneys, occasionally a judge will grant public counsel.

foundation for improving the quality of neighborhood life by strengthening collective efficacy (Sampson et al., 1997). As levels of intimidation and fear ease, a community may be able to organize and become involved in the process of reversing the deterioration of the physical and social order in their community, with its attendant effects on fear of crime and civic engagement.

Practitioners often note these anticipated effects (see excellent examples in Los Angeles City Attorney Gang Prosecution Section, 1995 and Los Angeles County District Attorney, 1996). The goals of injunctions typically are couched in community policing terms, such as solving specific community crime, disorder, and fear problems (Allan, 2004; Greene, 2003; Stewart, 1998). As Ventura County prosecutor Karen Wold envisioned when seeking an injunction against the Colonia Chiques gang in Oxnard, California, "Parents can take their kids to the park again" (Wolcott, 2004). Higher levels of community involvement and greater impact on community environments might be expected from injunctions developed and implemented with this philosophical orientation, as compared with other forms of gang enforcement (Decker, 2003).

Second, two theories address how injunctions might influence individual gang members. Deterrence theory predicts that sure, swift, and severe sanctions will deter criminal behavior. Although the penalties for injunction violations are not severe, the notifications of hearings and injunction papers might make targeted gang members believe that they are being closely watched and more likely to be apprehended and prosecuted for violations (Grogger, 2002; Klein, 1993). Practitioners contend that issuance of the injunction has a profound effect on gang members. Longtime community gang intervention activist Father Greg Boyle was cited in a recent press report, "I mean, eight minutes after one was filed here on the Eastside, I had kids in my office saying, 'Get me a job' " (Fremon, 2003). Low arrest rates would presumably erode this perception.

In addition, social psychological theory suggests that group identity causes individuals to feel less responsible for their behavior, and influences them to conform to situation-specific group norms (cf., Postmes and Spears, 1998; Spears et al., 2001). In gangs, situation-specific norms promote violent and antisocial behavior (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996; Vigil, 1988, 2002). A gang injunction holds individuals personally accountable for their actions which could weaken gang identity and decrease levels of participation in gang-related behavior, especially among noncore members (cf., Ellemers et al., 2002). In this process of holding individuals responsible for their gang activities, identification with the gang might decline, as could the overall gang cohesiveness. Alternatively, if the injunction sends the message that law enforcement is targeting the group rather than individuals, fringe members might react with increased loyalty to fend off the

perceived group level threat and gang cohesiveness might increase (Klein, 1995).

Each theoretical perspective points to different evaluation designs to assess potential outcomes of CGIs. Deterrence and individuation might be tested by interviews with targeted gang members and the examination of changes in crime patterns. Community social disorganization theory suggests the assessment of changes in community perceptions of intimidation, fear, disorder, and neighborhood efficacy. This latter approach is adopted in this study.

Proclamations of the success of gang injunctions surface regularly in practitioner publications and media accounts. Many jurisdictions have multiple injunctions, and presumably, repetition of the strategy follows a positive experience. We have illustrated these success claims and the anecdotal evidence marshaled to support them elsewhere (Maxson et al., 2003). In these accounts, changes in crime rates are sometimes noted, but without adequate comparison with equivalent areas or offenders.

Three independent evaluations of injunctions have used official crime data to measure outcomes. Maxson and Allen (1997) conducted a process evaluation of a CGI in Inglewood, California. Their brief assessment of reported crime in the target area suggested little support for a positive effect. A legal advocacy organization conducted a statistical analysis of various crime indicators in 19 reporting districts including and surrounding the Blythe Street injunction implemented by the Los Angeles Police Department in the San Fernando Valley (ACLU, 1997). The authors concluded that this injunction increased violent crime.

In the most rigorous study of crime patterns to date, Grogger (2002) assessed changes in reported serious violent and property crimes for 14 injunctions obtained in Los Angeles County between 1993 and 1998. Grogger compared crime trends in the injunction areas with those in matched comparison areas. Pooling the injunction areas, he found that violent crime decreased during the year after injunctions by roughly 5% to 10%. This effect was concentrated in reductions in assault, rather than in robbery. He found no effect in property crimes and no evidence that injunctions caused crime to increase in adjoining areas. Because all injunctions were aggregated in this analysis, it was unclear whether some injunctions were more effective than others. Moreover, he could not identify offenses committed by gang members or the specific individuals targeted by the injunctions. Still, this study is the first scholarly report of positive effects of injunctions on crime in neighborhoods targeted by CGIs.

The community disorganization perspective suggests that injunctions should improve patterns in community processes, such as neighborhood relationships, disorder, and informal social control. The evaluation in this study addresses community-level outcomes rather than the individual gang

member outcomes suggested by deterrence and individuation. Because the few evaluations of injunctions conducted to date consider the impact on criminal behavior, this study is the first to focus on neighborhood processes.

Conceptually, we expect that community-level effects of an injunction would unfold over time. If injunctions cause gang members to modify their behavior in the community, then the more immediate effects for neighborhood residents should be reduced gang visibility, graffiti, instances of gang intimidation, and fear of gang victimization. Only later should these benefits result in reduced fear of crime more generally, less crime victimization, and improved community order. Long term, residents in neighborhoods may experience increased neighborhood social cohesion and informal social control, more collective and neighborhood social efficacy, more willingness to call police in threatening situations, and improved perceptions of police authority.

SAN BERNARDINO AND THE VERDUGO FLATS INJUNCTION

An interview survey of more than two dozen Southern California police agencies with significant gang populations using multi-agency collaborations to combat them found that San Bernardino presented several advantages for the research. First, the San Bernardino Police Department (SBPD) had already conducted three injunctions (two against territorial street gangs and one against prostitutes along a main boulevard) before our first contact with them in Spring 2000. Second, the gangs that they were considering for further injunctions seemed excellent targets for studying the impact on communities. Third, the department welcomed our inquiry and proved very helpful in all regards.

San Bernardino is roughly 60 miles east of Los Angeles in the rapidly growing Inland Empire. In 2000, over 185,000 people lived in the city. Although the city is part of one of the fastest expanding economic areas in Southern California, it is also home to many poor minorities. Almost half of the population is Latino, roughly 18% are African Americans and about 30% are white. More than one in five of the residents in this city was born outside the United States, with another 20% born outside of California. Over one third of the population speaks only Spanish at home. The city has experienced gang activity for decades, and gangs have been expanding in the city throughout the last one third of a century. Although other Southern California cities were experiencing marked declines in violent and property crimes during the period of this study, reported crime in San Bernardino increased substantially between 2002 and 2003. San Bernardino police officials were quoted in local media reports as attributing

the rise in crime rates to “continued economic problems, high rates of gang membership and a large number of parolees” (Warren, 2003: B5).

In Summer 2002, five shootings and one assault suggested that the Verdugo Flats gang was actively defending its territory against a failed intrusion by an African-American gang. Verdugo Flats is a large Latino gang that has claimed a sizeable swath of southwestern San Bernardino since the 1970s. SBPD reported that the gang had roughly 150 members as of August 2001, a 20% increase from two years before. They noted repeatedly that Verdugo Flats is “turf-oriented,” claiming territory through extensive graffiti and intimidation of residents. SBPD officers stated that the combination of heightened violence and the inter-racial nature of the gang fight led San Bernardino authorities to move to file the long considered injunction on August 5, 2002.

Nineteen members of the gang were included in the requested injunction. The court instituted a TRO on September 24, 2002, prohibiting them from 22 activities. Prohibited activities included behaviors associated with selling drugs, trespass, a nighttime curfew, public order offenses (fighting, drinking, urinating, littering, vandalism, and graffiti), and public association with any other defendant.

SBPD officials implemented the injunction using procedures developed in their previous experiences. The enjoined individuals were named at patrol meetings, photographs of the individuals were placed on the wall of the room where patrol officers get their briefings, and Metropolitan Enforcement Team (MET) officers provided the primary enforcement for the injunction. As in earlier injunctions, the SBPD initiated a “sweep” of the injunction area right after they obtained the injunction. They searched homes of parolees and probationers and checked on outstanding warrants. They catalogued paraphernalia, photographs, and clothing.

After the initial implementation activities, SBPD continued to monitor the individuals named in the injunction, kept patrol officers informed, and attempted to ensure that the injunction restrictions were enforced. MET officers trained patrol officers to use the appropriate forms to arrest enjoined gang members and made sure that the in-house computer would notify patrol officers if an injunction member was stopped and identified. One police informant noted that he came in several times on his day off to work with patrol officers who had apprehended an enjoined individual. From the inception of the Verdugo Flats CGI in September 2002 until January 2004, five individuals were arrested related to the injunction. Arrested individuals were liable for enhanced bail of up to \$25,000.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A community assessment survey was conducted twice—once before the

injunction and once shortly after the injunction was imposed—to test the impact of the immediate change on neighborhood residents' attitudes and perceptions. We predicted that specific experiences of gang intimidation, fear of gang members, and visibility of the gang members and graffiti would all decrease within the first six months after the injunction. We also tested the impact on more intermediate outcomes: fear of crime, crime victimization, and perceived level of social disorder. We included long-term survey measures of neighborhood social cohesion, informal social control, collective efficacy, neighborhood efficacy, and willingness to call the police and trust in the police, although we expected that these changes would evolve over a longer period of time. Table 1 summarizes the measures used for each outcome variable.⁷

In addition to the residents of the injunction area called Upper Flats, four other neighborhoods were surveyed to control for local history such as crime trends in the city between the first and second waves of the survey. Two comparison areas were chosen because they had similarly high levels of social disorder, but they varied in the level of territorial gang activities. These areas were suggested by two police informants who had focused on gang crime in San Bernardino for several years and were very familiar with gang activities in this part of the city. North Area, located about a mile northeast of Upper Flats, is high in crime and physical and social disorder, the latter confirmed both by the authors' visual tour of the area and by residents' responses on the Wave 1 survey.⁸ SBPD sources repeatedly confirmed that North Area had no *territorial* gang presence

7. We consulted several surveys before beginning this one, including our sources for an earlier community policing survey for the Los Angeles Police Department (Maxson et al., 1999), among which were the New Jersey City Public Housing Resident Survey, University of Texas at Arlington Social Work Citizen Survey, University of Wisconsin Survey Research Laboratory Citizen Attitudes and Victimization Survey, the Chicago Community Policing Resident Survey, the Spokane Police Department and Washington State University Crime and Criminal Justice Survey, and the Joliet Police Department School Neighborhood Questionnaire. Other surveys from which we adapted additional material include the Denver Youth Study, the National Crime Victimization Survey, the University of California at Irvine Fear of Crime and Gangs Survey, the Chicago Neighborhood Study (Sampson et al., 1997), and others. In the second wave, we added a series of questions regarding community organization; these were adapted from the Harvard Social Capital Benchmark. Table 1 reports the measures used in analyses reported here. In constructing these measures, we considered the distribution of individual items and assessed all scales for reliability.

8. Residents' perception of social disorder in the five study areas in the Wave 1 surveys confirmed the observations and opinions of the police informants. Two homogeneous subsets were identified post hoc by the Dunnett test. Upper Flats, North Area, and Seventh Street were equivalent in perceived level of social disorder before the injunction ($M = 2.35, 2.52, \text{ and } 2.27$ respectively) and were higher than Lower Flats and South Area ($M = 1.75 \text{ and } 1.63$).

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF MEASURES FOR IMMEDIATE, INTERMEDIATE, AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

	Item	Response Options
Immediate Outcomes		
See gang members hang out	How often have you seen gang members? ¹	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
See new graffiti	How often have you seen new graffiti or gang tags?	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
Been hassled by gang members	How often has someone you know been hassled by gang members? ¹	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
Young persons bullied by gang members	How often have young persons been bullied by gang members? ¹	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
Frightened by gang member	How often have you or a family member felt frightened by a gang member? ¹	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
Gang activities made you anxious	How often have gang activities made you feel anxious at home in the evening or night? ¹	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
Any intimidation by gang members	Count if any of the four items above happened ¹	Never/ever for any of four items above
Fear confrontation with gang member	How much do you fear that you or a member of your family will be confronted by a gang member in the neighborhood?	Not at all fearful/a little fearful/fearful/very fearful
Intermediate Outcomes		
Fear of crime	How much do you fear that your home will be entered or damaged while you are away; that your car will be damaged or stolen; that you or a member of your family will be hurt by someone in the neighborhood; that you or a family member will be hurt even if you stay indoors? ¹	Not at all fearful/a little fearful/fearful/very fearful alpha=.88 (W1); .90 (W2)
Perceived level of social disorder	How often has [13 possible problems] occurred? ¹	Never/rarely/sometimes/monthly/more
Any violent victimization (or attempted)	How many times has someone robbed or tried to steal something from you by force; physically attacked you or attempted to do so; threatened or attacked you with a weapon? ¹	Not at all/yes to any of 3 items
Any property victimization (or attempted)	How many times has someone damaged or vandalized your home, e.g., stolen or tried to steal something belonging to you like your vehicle; something from inside your home or garage(not vehicle); something outside in your yard or in your vehicle? ¹	Not at all/yes to any of 4 items

¹ These questions included "in the last six months, in your neighborhood . . ."

Table 1 continued

Long-Term Outcomes

Social cohesion

People around here are willing to help their neighbors; This is a close-knit community; People in this neighborhood can be trusted; People in this neighborhood generally do not get along with each other; People in this neighborhood do not share the same values (r).

How strongly do you agree or disagree with these statements: strongly disagree/disagree/neither agree nor disagree/agree/strongly agree

Informal social control

How likely is it that a neighbor would do something: If someone was letting trash pile up in their yard or on their steps; if some young children were causing minor damage to a building in your neighborhood; if a suspicious stranger was hanging around the neighborhood; if youth in the neighborhood were getting into trouble?

Very unlikely/unlikely/neither likely nor unlikely/likely/very likely
alpha=.71 (W1); .78 (W2)

Collective efficacy

Believe neighborhood can solve problems

Sum of standardized social cohesion and informal social control scales

If there is a problem in this neighborhood, how likely is it that people who live here can get it solved?

Very unlikely/unlikely/neither likely nor unlikely/likely/very likely
Very unlikely/unlikely/neither likely nor unlikely/likely/very likely
alpha=.83 (W1); .82 (W2)

Willing to call police if a gang member threatens

How likely or unlikely is it that you would call the police if a gang member threatened someone in your family?

Trust police

The police in my neighborhood can be trusted; the police in my neighborhood treat people fairly; the police in my neighborhood are respectful of people?

How strongly do you agree or disagree with these statements: strongly disagree/disagree/neither agree nor disagree/agree/strongly agree
alpha=.86 (W1); .86 (W2)

over the course of the study. The second area, Seventh Street, is a territorial gang area, about a half-mile north of Upper Flats where a gang injunction had been filed in 1997. The two remaining areas, immediately south of Upper Flats, were defined as one area during the pre-injunction survey. When the Flats injunction was filed, part of this area was included in the injunction. We renamed that portion of the southern area Lower Flats, and the remaining comparison area was named South Area. The South Area served as a good comparison for the Lower Flats injunction area, because both had comparably lower social disorder before the injunction was filed (see Footnote 8). Beyond serving as comparisons for residents' perceptions about gangs, safety, and their community, these four comparison neighborhoods were also chosen as possible sites for displaced Verdugo Flats Gang activity because of the injunction.

Surveys were completed with 797 San Bernardino residents in five neighborhoods 18 months before and 1229 residents six months after the issuance of the injunction. Roughly two thirds were Latino, with the remainder equally distributed among other ethnic categories. All participants were adults (35–40% were 18–34 years, 40–45% were 35–54 years, and about 20% were over 54 years in the two surveys); two thirds were women. Census data were used to assess whether the achieved sample characteristics in Wave 1 roughly approximate the population it was designed to represent.⁹

9. Our ability to conduct a direct comparison to census data is limited to the five demographic variables for which there is a good match between our measurement categories and the census survey: age, gender, and education level of the respondent; home ownership; and the respondent's length of residency. Gender comparisons are rough approximations because the census data available are reported for the entire population, whereas our respondents were limited to adults. Our residential stability measure asked about length of time lived in the neighborhood, whereas the census asks if the respondent has moved within the last five years. We selected the Wave 1 sample as the best comparison because it was conducted just after the 2000 Census. Finally, the neighborhoods selected for our study are only roughly approximated by census block boundaries. Statistical comparisons of the two data sources reveal significant differences in all five areas on gender and educational attainment, and in a few areas on the other three variables. In all areas, survey respondents are disproportionately women and more educated when compared with the census population. It has implications for more limited generalizability of our findings to men and less educated persons. Beyond that, only scattered differences between the Census and the Wave 1 achieved sample were found. In Seventh Street, older individuals are more likely to respond to the survey. Homeowners disproportionately participated in the study in Upper Flats and North Area. In North Area and Lower Flats, survey respondents were less likely to have lived in the neighborhood for less than five years, but the Census incorporates any move, whereas our survey counted only moves from outside the neighborhood. In most areas, the match on age, homeownership, and residential stability between the Wave 1 and the census population was acceptable.

A hybrid survey procedure¹⁰ was used to promote response rates in these difficult-to-survey neighborhoods. After five contacts to sampled addresses in support of the self-administered survey, trained field staff approached remaining addresses for a doorstep interview using the same protocol. Adjusted response rates were 64% for Wave 1 and 73% for Wave 2.¹¹

Three sets of analyses were conducted. The first set compared the primary injunction area, Upper Flats, with North Area, the highly disordered neighborhood with no discernible territorial gang. The principal hypotheses for this first analysis predicted that residents in the primary injunction area would experience a positive change after the injunction on the immediate outcome variables relative to any change that occurred in its comparison area. We compared differences in the change over time in these two areas by examining their interaction in an analysis of variance using wave and area as factors. Significant interactions in the predicted direction were interpreted as support for the principal hypotheses. These analyses were repeated comparing change in the secondary injunction area, Lower Flats, with change in its control, South Area. A second set of analyses compared

10. In our earlier work surveying highly disordered neighborhoods, we tested the efficacy of using a self-administered versus a telephonic personal interview survey approach. Anonymous self-administered surveys were more effective in these areas because residents seemed to be more forthcoming about their fears and perceptions than they were in personal interviews. (Explanations for survey mode differences are the subject of much debate, see Dillman, 2000 and Hennigan, Maxson et al., 2002). However, the self-administered approach in these communities resulted in lower than optimal response rates even after accruing responses over a three-month period according to Dillman's methods (Dillman, 1978, 1991). Consequently, for this work, we developed a hybrid approach for surveying in these areas that maximized the responses received from self-administered surveys (SA) and followed-up with face-to-face doorstep interviews (FTF) to achieve a higher response rate. Critical to the interpretation of comparisons across areas over time is the comparability of the ratio of SA to FTF achieved. In all except the South Area, the ratios were equivalent. More SA surveys were returned from the South Area in Wave 2 than in other areas, which created a bias toward less favorable neighborhood descriptions and more fear there. The direction of this bias, counter to the hypotheses and findings reported, suggests that differences between South and Lower Flats might be even stronger than indicated here. Furthermore, there were no interactions on any of the outcomes reported here between survey mode and wave. There were two significant mode by wave by area interactions on significant outcome effects. Testing the effects within survey mode revealed the reported differences were observed within both modes, but they were stronger within the FTF mode.

11. See Maxson et al., 2004, for a detailed statement of study areas, survey procedures, response rates, sample characteristics, the demographic comparability of the Wave 1 and Wave 2 achieved samples, and correspondence with U.S. Census data. We found no concern for methodological artifacts introduced by demographic shifts in any of the areas surveyed except for Lower Flats, where the Wave 2 demographics suggested an increase in renters and newcomers to the neighborhood.

the same pairs of areas, testing whether similar change had occurred for each intermediate and long-term outcome.

A third set of analyses assumed that the Seventh Street area was characterized by similar neighborhood experiences before to implementation of its injunction as those in the Upper Flats primary injunction area. Both areas, as described by police informants, had been high-crime, active gang territories before their injunctions. Outcomes from the Wave 2 survey were compared between the earlier injunction area and the new one. We predicted that long-term effects, unlikely to have developed in the recent injunction area, would evidence higher levels in the older injunction area. These effects were tested using t-tests and chi-square analyses.

RESULTS

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Our analyses supported the predictions that the gang injunction would have an impact on gang visibility almost immediately, and consequently they have an impact on the level of intimidation by gang members and the level of fear of gang members experienced by residents relatively soon after the injunction was filed and enforced. The top third of Table 2 shows the results of comparisons between Upper Flats and North Area, the two high disorder neighborhoods. Respondents living in Upper Flats reported seeing gang members hanging out in their neighborhoods less often than respondents in North Area, after the injunction than before. Although graffiti decreased in both areas, no significant difference appeared between the two areas on change in the level of graffiti from Wave 1 to Wave 2.

Fewer respondents in Upper Flats reported being hassled, frightened, or made anxious by gang members after the injunction than respondents in North Area. From Wave 1 to Wave 2, the percent of residents who reported experiencing any kind of intimidation fell eight percentage points in Upper Flats and rose by six percentage points in North Area. Similarly, fear of confrontation with a gang member decreased in Upper Flats over this time while it increased in North Area.

A different pattern of results emerged among immediate outcomes in the low disordered areas. Comparing the secondary injunction area, Lower Flats, with South Area, the top third of Table 3 shows respondents in Lower Flats reported *more* rather than less gang visibility than the low-disorder comparison South Area, and made to feel anxious by gang activity *more* rather than less often. The two low-disorder areas did not vary from wave-to-wave on any other immediate outcome measures.

TABLE 2. MEANS AND TESTS OF AREA BY WAVE INTERACTIONS IN TWO HIGH DISORDER AREAS ON THE IMMEDIATE, INTERMEDIATE, AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

	Upper Flats		North Area		Main effect for Area	Main effect for Wave	Statistical test of predicted interaction
	W1	W2	W1	W2			
	n = 287	n = 384	n = 227	n = 322			
Immediate Outcomes							
See gang members hanging out	2.86	2.53	2.88	2.90	*		$F(1,1189) = 4.38$, $p = 0.037$
See new graffiti	2.54	2.44	2.95	2.67	*	*	ns
Been hassled	1.55	1.47	1.62	1.80	*		$F(1,1183) = 4.31$, $p = 0.038$
Young persons bullied	1.51	1.46	1.56	1.71	*		ns
Frightened by gang member	1.51	1.57	1.53	1.92	*	*	$F(1,1186) = 5.69$, $p = 0.017$
Gang activities made you anxious	1.95	1.76	1.88	2.02			$F(1,1183) = 4.18$, $p = 0.041$
Any intimidation by gang members	55%	47%	55%	61%			Wave1 X^2 , ns; Wave2 $X^2 = 13.18$; df = 1,695; $p < 0.001$
Fear confrontation with gang member	2.11	1.99	2.04	2.33	*		$F(1,1192) = 10.32$, $p = 0.001$
Intermediate Outcomes							
Fear of crime	2.14	2.03	2.17	2.28	*		$F(1,1213) = 5.16$, $p = 0.023$
Perceived level of social disorder	2.35	2.17	2.52	2.46		*	ns
Violent victimization (or attempted)	19%	23%	18%	29%		*	ns
Property victimization (or attempted)	48%	52%	54%	59%			ns
Long-Term Outcomes							
Social cohesion	2.95	3.04	2.84	2.80	*		ns
Informal social control	3.01	3.06	2.98	2.95			ns
Collective efficacy	2.98	3.05	2.91	2.87	*		ns
Belief neighborhood can solve problems	2.78	2.91	2.77	2.75			ns
Willing to call police if a gang member threatens	3.76	3.91	3.67	4.05		*	ns
Trust police	3.42	3.41	3.41	3.28			ns

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

The gang injunction was also predicted to affect several intermediate outcomes if the influence of the injunction on gang intimidation and fear was strong and pervasive. Intermediate outcomes are less immediate because changes in gang behavior are just one of many factors in neighborhoods that may influence fear of crime, perceived level of disorder, and

TABLE 3. MEANS AND TESTS OF AREA BY WAVE INTERACTIONS IN TWO LOW-DISORDER AREAS ON THE IMMEDIATE, INTERMEDIATE, AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

	Lower Flats		South Area		Main effect for Area	Main effect for Wave	Statistical test of predicted interaction
	W1 n = 72	W2 n = 107	W1 n = 42	W2 n = 104			
Immediate Outcomes							
See gang members hanging out	1.72	2.06	1.73	1.51	*		$F(1,315) = 5.97,$ $p = 0.015$
See new graffiti	2.11	2.23	1.82	1.62	*		ns
Been hassled	1.20	1.38	1.20	1.12			ns
Young persons bullied	1.23	1.43	1.23	1.14			ns
Frightened by gang member	1.22	1.41	1.27	1.20			ns
Gang activities made you anxious	1.37	1.56	1.56	1.28			$F(1,312) = 6.58,$ $p = 0.011$
Any intimidation by gang members	38%	42%	41%	26%			ns
Fear confrontation with gang member	1.49	1.71	1.28	1.38	*		ns
Intermediate Outcomes							
Fear of crime	1.62	1.88	1.58	1.58	*		ns
Perceived level of social disorder	1.75	2.06	1.63	1.61	*		$F(1,321) = 4.44,$ $p = 0.036$
Violent victimization (or attempted)	6%	23%	2%	8%		*	Wave 1 X^2 , ns; Wave 2 $X^2 = 9.27;$ $df = 1, n = 209,$ $p = 0.002$
Property victimization (or attempted)	28%	43%	36%	25%			Wave 1 X^2 , ns; Wave 2 $X^2 = 8.19;$ $df = 1, n = 209,$ $p = 0.004$
Long-Term Outcomes							
Social cohesion	3.36	3.24	3.50	3.40			ns
Informal social control	4.04	4.22	4.31	4.35			ns
Collective efficacy	3.43	3.32	3.46	3.47			ns
Belief neighborhood can solve problems	3.29	3.11	3.25	3.59			$F(1,315) = 4.28,$ $p = 0.039$
Willing to call police if gang member threatens	3.50	3.39	3.41	3.54			ns
Trust police	3.61	3.59	3.45	3.64			ns

victimization. The analyses summarized in the middle of Table 2 showed little carryover of the injunction's impact to these more general outcomes. Residents of the primary injunction area, Upper Flats, reported less fear of crime than residents in North Area, but no significant differences on perceived social disorder or victimization.

Table 3 shows the results on these more general outcomes when comparing the secondary injunction area, Lower Flats, with its comparison,

South Area. Both of these areas were low in disorder and victimization at Wave 1, but Lower Flats increased in perceived social disorder and victimization in the post-injunction survey relative to South Area.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The long-term outcomes measured include neighborhood social cohesion, informal social control, collective efficacy, perceived neighborhood efficacy, and willingness to call and trust the police, which are indicators of the police's and community's ability to work together to combat crime. As a group, these outcomes might be influenced by changes set in motion by successful gang injunctions if the community became empowered as a result of changes in disorder, fear, and safety. However, statistical tests failed to reveal significant changes in the predicted direction on the long-term outcomes in the injunction areas relative to their comparison areas, as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Contrary to predictions, perceived neighborhood efficacy decreased in the secondary injunction area, Lower Flats, relative to South Area. Residents here were less inclined to believe that the community could solve its problems after the injunction than before. Taken with the results of analyses in these areas above, lower neighborhood efficacy is consistent with the unexpected perceptions of higher gang visibility and disorder in the secondary injunction area.

As noted, Seventh Street is the territory of an active gang that had undergone an injunction five years before the second survey. Comparing the primary current injunction area, Upper Flats, with this area provides an opportunity to consider the impact on long-term outcomes as well as on immediate and intermediate ones. The results, as provided in Table 4, show that these two areas are not significantly different as regards immediate and intermediate outcomes when comparing the Wave 2 surveys. However, four of the six long-term outcomes showed significant differences between the two areas, with more favorable conditions in Seventh Street than in Upper Flats. One possible interpretation of these findings is that neighborhood social cohesion, collective efficacy, neighborhood efficacy, and willingness to call the police were higher in the Seventh Street Area than in Upper Flats because their gang injunction had been in place over a longer period of time. Although consistent with our hypotheses, the research design does not permit us to definitively rule out plausible alternative interpretations.

OUTCOMES BY AGE, ETHNICITY, AND GENDER

Each of the analyses reported were repeated adding age (18 to 34 vs. 35 and older), ethnicity (Hispanic vs. Nonhispanic), and gender as factors.

TABLE 4. MEANS AND TESTS BY AREA
 COMPARING TWO HIGH-DISORDER INJUNCTION
 AREAS ON WAVE 2 IMMEDIATE, INTERMEDIATE,
 AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

	Upper Flats W2 n = 384	Seventh Street W2 n = 312	Statistical Tests t test or chi-square
Immediate Outcomes			
See gang members hanging out	2.53	2.49	ns
See new graffiti	2.44	2.4	ns
Been hassled	1.47	1.54	ns
Young persons bullied	1.46	1.55	ns
Frightened by gang member	1.57	1.56	ns
Gang activities made you anxious	1.76	1.8	ns
Any intimidation by gang members	47%	52%	ns
Fear confrontation with gang member	1.99	2.1	ns
Intermediate Outcomes			
Fear of crime	2.03	2.04	ns
Perceived level of social disorder	2.17	2.24	ns
Violent victimization (or attempted)	23%	20%	ns
Property victimization (or attempted)	52%	42%	$\chi^2(1) = 7.687, p = 0.006$
Long-Term Outcomes			
Social cohesion	3.04	3.16	$t(606)^1 = 2.132, p = 0.033$
Informal social control	3.06	3.2	ns
Collective efficacy	3.05	3.18	$t(622)^1 = 2.329, p = 0.020$
Belief neighborhood can solve problems	2.91	3.12	$t(620)^1 = 2.611, p = 0.009$
Willing to call police if a gang member threatens	3.91	4.16	$t(688) = 2.813, p = 0.005$
Trust police	3.41	3.46	ns

¹ adjusted for test with unequal variances.

No significant interactions with these demographics qualified the findings reported in comparison within the high-disorder areas. One triple interaction was significant in comparisons of Upper Flats and South Area. Older respondents showed an increase in trust, whereas younger respondents showed a decrease in trust in South Area, with little change from wave to wave in Upper Flats ($F = 6.88; df = 1,294; p = 0.009$). The findings reported in Tables 2–4 are robust across age, gender, and ethnicity.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Our analyses provide evidence of short-term effects of a CGI on the primary neighborhood targeted. Our surveys of community residents reveal less gang presence in the neighborhood, as compared with changes in the primary control area. Furthermore, fewer residents report acts of gang intimidation and residents express less fear of confrontation with gang members.

Police reported no territorial gang presence in the primary comparison area, but residents reported substantial gang activity on the pre-injunction survey. As crime increased in the city over the two-year period between the surveys (Warren, 2003), gang fear and intimidation increased in the disordered control area (North Area) but not in the neighborhood with the new injunction (Upper Flats). Thus, this strategy seemed to yield salutary effects in the primary injunction area: Immediate benefits accrued to residents' experience of gang visibility, intimidation, and fear.

These immediate benefits did not extend to the intermediate or long-term outcome indicators. Only in fear of crime did the primary injunction area show a relative decrease. No significant relative changes were observed on the other intermediate outcomes, perceived social disorder or crime victimization. Little evidence was found that immediate effects on residents translated into larger improvements in neighborhood quality, such as neighborhood social cohesion, informal social control, collective efficacy, and police/community relationships, although reductions in fear of crime and gang visibility, fear, and intimidation may be precursors to such change in the long run.

We found tantalizing hints of such changes in the comparison of the new injunction area (Upper Flats) with a contiguous area in which an injunction had been implemented five years before the second survey (Seventh Street). The two areas had similar levels of gang visibility, fear, and intimidation, but the longstanding injunction area showed favorable levels of social cohesion, neighborhood and collective efficacy, and willingness to call the police if a gang member threatened residents. If we assume the two areas had similar neighborhood characteristics at baseline before their injunction, these results are consistent with the view that community improvements will accrue once fear and intimidation are mitigated by implementation of a CBI. However, as the similarity of immediate outcomes might indicate, these gains are continually threatened by the persistence of gang activities.

Theories of social disorganization provide a context for interpreting changes brought about by the injunction. There was no direct community involvement in the development or implementation of the Flats injunction—a typical pattern identified in other studies as well (Allan, 2004;

Maxson, 2004)—so the absence of relative change in collective efficacy or relationships with police is not surprising. The immediate changes in gang intimidation and fear in the primary injunction area may yet spark a dynamic of community improvement, as would be predicted from social disorganization theory. In this near-term assessment, reducing intimidating gang activity did not net this community the broader benefits of neighborhood social capital. The community-level processes apparently heightened in the older injunction area may have been initiated by an earlier lowering of gang intimidation and fear there. The comparison between the two injunction communities is consistent with an interpretation of community change: willingness to engage with police in crime control efforts, a perspective that neighbors can and will intervene to resolve incipient crime problems, and greater social bonds among neighbors.

The decreases in gang visibility, gang intimidation, and fear of gang crime in Upper Flats also could be the result of individual level processes such as deterrence or social identity-mediated deindividuation spawned by the injunction. The apparent decrease in intimidating gang behavior suggests that this injunction did not spur an increase in gang cohesion over the short term, although it could be triggered at a later date.

The unexpected expansion of the territory covered by the Flats injunction into the less disordered injunction area (Lower Flats) provided the opportunity to investigate the impact on a neighborhood with considerably less gang activity. Our comparison of this secondary injunction area with a similarly low-disorder, contiguous community produced results that caution those who would promulgate the efficacy of gang injunctions in diverse settings. Lower Flats evidenced negative impacts, relative to its comparison area (South Area): more gang visibility, anxiety, social disorder, and property victimization, and less faith that a neighborhood can solve its problems. Why didn't this injunction work as well in this area? We can speculate about several possible explanations.

The secondary injunction area might have been the locale for the displacement of gang activity from the primary injunction area. This area was surveyed as a comparison area before the injunction because of its potential vulnerability to displacement. Analysis showed that the location of police contacts with named gang members before the issuance of the injunction took place almost exclusively in the primary injunction area. The increased gang activity in Lower Flats also might have reflected the unanticipated consequences of increased suppression activities. This view would argue that police over-reached by including this neighborhood with less gang activity and less social disorder in the injunction. Suppression activities may have backfired by building cohesiveness (Klein, 1995) or oppositional defiance (Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991) among the targeted gang members who lived or were active in this area.

Finally, these negative results may be a reflection of weaknesses in the study design or methodology that affected the secondary area comparisons in particular. The area experienced substantial demographic change, with generally more renters and less residential longevity in the neighborhood. Our controls for these demographic changes did not change our conclusions¹² but such transitions may foster neighborhood dynamics that increase gang activity, independent of intervention efforts. We are cautious about drawing broad generalizations about the negative outcomes detected in the secondary injunction area.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Very little empirical research has been conducted investigating the impact of civil gang injunctions, despite their increasing popularity with law enforcement agencies. This study is the first that examines potential effects on community residents. Future studies that replicate the essential method of this research are needed in a variety of contexts: different injunction forms and implementation procedures, gang structures, law enforcement and court venues, and community environments. Given the expanding interest in this type of intervention, surprisingly little sound information is available regarding the effects on gang members or communities. A primary limitation of this study derives from its uniqueness: Any generalization of findings from one study of one injunction on one gang is clearly premature. The effects detected in this study reflect modest improvements in only the primary injunction area, and these may not be replicated in future studies.

Knowledge about injunctions could be improved substantially by the inclusion of other data collection components. An ethnographic component might address the activities and group processes in the gang targeted for an injunction before, during, and after implementation. Structured interviews with gang members, coupled with ethnographic field observation methods, are the optimal approach to investigating how injunctions do or do not work. A spatial analysis of gang and nongang crime in the targeted and comparison communities could inform the discourse on injunction impact and displacement.

An expanded longitudinal survey design is necessary to trace the long-term impacts of injunctions on community residents. Subsequent survey waves, conducted on an annual basis, could chart changes in community characteristics, such as social cohesion and informal social control, and neighborhood efficacy and policy/community relationships that might be

12. The only difference was observed in the homeownership category on the intermediate outcome of perceived level of social disorder. The increase in social disorder in Lower Flats relative to South Area was observed only among renters.

precipitated by the injunction intervention. The tenets of community social disorganization theory suggest that interventions like injunctions can produce positive community change and that these must be measured over an extended period of time. The tentative interpretation of differences in the new injunction area as compared with the previous injunction neighborhood would be ameliorated if these communities were surveyed over a longer period.

Just one area was available for each comparison with an injunction area. Our positive conclusions rest on differences detected between the primary injunction area and one similarly disordered comparison area. Visual inspection of the trends plotted on graphs suggests that the observed differences were more the result of negative changes in the comparison area than positive changes in the injunction area. The neighborhood that was selected as a comparison area possibly suffered from situational or idiosyncratic assaults on community health. Future research should include several comparison areas that mimic the intervention area at the baseline survey point.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The CGI against the Verdugo Flats gang in San Bernardino seems to have decreased the visibility of the gang, episodes of gang intimidation, fear of gang confrontations, and fear of crime in the targeted community. These effects are encouraging for law enforcement agencies wishing to experiment with this strategy. Coupled with the findings from another study that found small reductions in violent crime levels in injunction areas (Grogger, 2002), this study suggests that strategic suppression of gang member activities may translate into modest improvements in community safety and well-being. We recommend further experimentation with this strategy, if such efforts are coupled with a program evaluation that continues to build on the assessment of the intervention's effects.

The recent history of gang intervention policy and practice is not a positive record. Rigorous evaluations of gang programs are rare, and positive evidence of intervention is even more rare (see Decker, 2003; Klein and Maxson, 2005). One of the more visible recent efforts is Boston's Operation Ceasefire, which combined a focused deterrence strategy ("pulling levers") with activism from community groups and youth service providers (Kennedy, 1998; McDevitt et al., 2003). Researchers determined that implementation of Operation Ceasefire was associated with declines in youth homicides and gun assaults, but potential changes in community characteristics, such as those included in this study, were not monitored (Braga et al., 2001). Thus, we cannot weigh the relative merits of a CGI

with other approaches to targeted deterrence, particularly those that may mobilize community participation in support of the intervention.

The study findings offer some guidelines for further refinement of the CGI strategy and recommendations for restraint or caution in some aspects. The negative results that emerged in the secondary injunction area argue for caution to be exercised when determining the geographic area to be covered by an injunction. Law enforcement and judicial practitioners should review spatial depictions of gang activity and crime to ensure that the area within which individual conduct is to be constrained is limited to spaces most often frequented by gang members. No evidence exists that expanding the geographic reach of the injunction reduces the displacement of gang activity. During the most recent campaign for mayor of Los Angeles, the incumbent proposed a citywide gang injunction, albeit with few details regarding the logistics or legality of such an operation (Faussett, 2005). Our findings would argue against such a broad geographic expansion of CGIs.

The Verdugo Flats gang—and most gangs included in the injunctions studied by Grogger—is a traditional, territorial gang. This type of gang is assumed by law enforcement to be most appropriate for injunctions, because of the geographic limitations imposed (Maxson et al., 2003). An alternative argument can be made for the viability of injunctions against specialty drug gangs, because they are more organized and have clear leadership (Klein, 1995). Until more is known about the mechanisms whereby injunctions reduce gang activity, limiting the strategy to the gang forms that have produced positive results thus far is advisable.

This study found tentative support for salutary injunction effects on community residents and neighborhoods. Theory and research on communities suggest that these effects could be substantially increased if injunction development and implementation engaged community residents in a process of neighborhood empowerment and improvement. Social networks and both formal and informal community organizations provide social capital through which neighborhoods can continue on a positive trajectory.

The positive effects of injunctions might be expanded if this strategy was coupled with the provision of skill-development and treatment resources for targeted gang members. The serving of injunction papers may open a window of opportunity for change. Offering a carrot of positive opportunity for vocational, educational, or personal growth with the stick of promised incarceration for violation of the injunction prohibitions may provide more immediate and long lasting change in negative gang behavior than that obtained from an injunction implemented alone.

McGloin's article in this volume suggests that better targeting of gang intervention efforts might derive from network analyses that identify gang

“cut-points.” She argues that key cut individuals provide a crucial structural or communication link between subunits or cliques within a gang. Conversely, CGIs target individuals whom police, and sometimes residents, have identified as central, or the most active, members of gangs. Each method supposes that targeting such individuals will help law enforcement better intervene in gang activities, by removing individuals crucial to gang functioning. Certainly, network analysis provides an empirical approach to identifying interactional linkages among group members. Identifying the role that cut-point individuals play regarding communication, leadership, and the fostering of criminal activity is an important step in better understanding gang linkages. Whether cutting off these cut-points would have a lasting effect of weakening the gang, diminishing gang cohesiveness, or reducing criminal activity is a necessary next step in evaluating the efficacy of a network analysis.

Studying the sociometrics of a gang before planning an intervention is a sound recommendation, especially when information about linkages is derived from expert knowledge about gang interactional patterns. For example, Fleisher (2002) conducted interviews with gang members and neighborhood residents. As noted by McGloin, the results of such an analysis might lead to program support and services for less centrally involved gang members, while limiting suppression efforts to a few, critical targets. Furthermore, the structured collection of systematic information about individual activities may avoid reliance on more general perspectives that, as McGloin notes, “may tap into myths and perceptions rather than specific information and expertise.” Such general perceptions may have led officers to include the Lower Flats area in the injunction, to the detriment of the success of this particular gang intervention.

Finally, even successful law enforcement suppression programs have limited utility as a solution to violent gang activity. As Bjerregaard states in reference to the anti-gang legislation that is sweeping the nation (2003: 186–187):

Perhaps the biggest problem with these approaches is that they provide only temporary solutions and ignore the real problems that have contributed to the increase in both gangs and gang-related activity in our society. By focusing on gang suppression, we take the emphasis off of identifying and eradicating the ultimate causes of gang development and gang membership.

If CGIs crack the window of opportunity for change in communities, then public officials must seize this moment to put in place social policies that might check the economic disadvantage and social inequities that spawn gangs in communities. If they succeed, it might get a little less crazy out there.

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