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A Cross-National Comparison of Gangs in the United States and Trinidad and Tobago

Charles M. Katz[1], Edward R. Maguire[2], and David Choate[1]

Abstract

This study compares the scope and nature of the gang problem in two communities: one in the United States and one in Trinidad and Tobago, a small-island developing state in the eastern Caribbean that has experienced a serious outbreak of violence over the past decade. Data drawn from surveys of adult arrestees reveal that among respondents, 3.2% of those in the U.S. sample and 5.1% of those in the Trinidad sample reported being a member of a gang. While there were a number of similarities between the two samples, significant differences were found between gang members in both countries. Most notably, gang members in Trinidad reported substantially more violence than gang members in the United States.

Keywords

gangs, United States, Trinidad, Tobago

Introduction

In recent years, gangs have become increasingly perceived in many regions of the world as a major problem contributing to crime and violence (Hagedorn, 2005). The perceived relationship between gangs and violence has led major international organizations like the World Health Organization, the Pan-American Health Organization, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to explore potential solutions to the problem (e.g., Berkman, 2007; Franco, 2005; Heinemann & Verner, 2006; Moser & Holland, 1997). While gang research has a long and rich history in the United States, and has recently begun to flourish in Europe (e.g., Blaya & Gatti, 2010; Esbensen & Weerman, 2005; Gatti, Tremblay, Vitaro, & McDuff, 2005), gangs have not been the focus of sustained empirical research elsewhere, including the Caribbean (Decker &

[1] Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ, USA
[2] Department of Justice, Law and Society, American University, Washington, DC, USA

Corresponding Author:
Charles M. Katz, Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Arizona State University 500 N. 3rd Street, Suite 200, Phoenix, AZ 85004, USA
Email: ckatz@asu.edu

Weerman, 2005; Heinemann & Verner, 2006). Scholars have lamented the paucity of research on the contributions of gangs to violence in the Caribbean region (Blum et al., 2003; Katz & Fox, 2010). The goal of the present study is to compare the scope and nature of the gang problem in two communities—one in the United States and another in Trinidad and Tobago, a small-island developing state in the eastern Caribbean that has experienced a serious outbreak of violence over the past decade. We compare Trinidad and Tobago's gang problem against a nation with a long-standing, chronic gang problem—the United States. The study draws on data from adult arrestees in both countries. We begin by discussing the current state of cross-national research on gangs as well as research on gangs in the Caribbean and Trinidad and Tobago more specifically.

Literature Review

Much of what is known about gangs has come from research in developed nations, particularly the United States. Researchers have invested considerable energy studying how factors such as communities (Curry & Spergel, 1988; Katz & Schnebly, 2011), peers (Battin, Hill, Abbott, Catalano, & Hawkins, 1998), drugs (Katz, Webb, & Decker, 2005), families (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996), subculture (Spergel, 1995), and the organizational structure of gangs (Decker, Katz, & Webb, 2008) influence gangs and gang-related outcomes.[1] Over the past decade, researchers have begun to examine the extent of the gang problem in Europe and characterize how it compares with other nations. Much of this work has been conducted by the Eurogang working group, which has developed common instruments and methodologies to examine the scope and nature of the gang problem in different nations. Their work has resulted in several volumes of research (e.g., Decker & Weerman, 2005; Van Gemert, Peterson, & Lien, 2008). The group has made substantial progress in "understanding the issue of definition, gang structure and organization, individual gang member characteristics and risk factors, neighborhoods, immigration and ethnicity, and the impact of groups and gangs on individual delinquent behavior, primarily at the national level" (Decker & Weerman, 2005, p. 287).

It was not until fairly recently that researchers began to collaborate on cross-national gang research. To our knowledge there have been only four cross-national quantitative studies examining gangs, all of which were conducted in developed countries and relied on samples of juvenile gang members. Huizinga and Schumann (2001) and Esbensen and Weerman (2005) examined the scope and nature of gang problems among high risk youth from Denver, Colorado and Berman, Germany and school samples participating in the U.S.-based Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) and the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) School Project, respectively. Both reported similar rates of gang joining across countries, and both found that gang members were significantly more likely to be involved in delinquency than non-gang members. However, Huizinga and Schumann (2001) reported that German gang members reported less drug sales than American gang members. Esbensen and Weerman (2005) indicated that Dutch gang members belonged to gangs that were less organized than American gangs.[2] Most recently, Gatti and his associates compared the prevalence and characteristics of deviant youth groups in Italy to those in France and Switzerland. Both studies (Blaya & Gatti, 2010; Haymoz & Gatti, 2010) were coordinated efforts and used the International Self-Report Delinquency Study (ISRD-2) instrument to collect data from students. These studies found that participation in deviant youth groups varied by nation, with France reporting the highest levels of gang membership, followed by Italy, then Switzerland. In all three countries, respondents involved with a deviant youth group were significantly more likely to be involved in delinquency and to have been a victim of a crime than those not involved in a deviant youth group.

Much less is known about gangs in developing nations. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of these nations have substantial gang problems that contribute to a breakdown in formal social control mechanisms and increased crime and violence. For example, some analysts have claimed that gangs

in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have become so pervasive that they represent a challenge to state sovereignty (Manwaring, 2007; Townsend, 2009). Unfortunately, criminological theory in these settings is not well developed and little is known about the extent to which mainstream theories from the developed world might help explain gang and crime phenomena in developing nations (Bennett, 1996). This problem is made even more challenging by the enormous political, social, and economic differences between the 120 or so developing nations in the world. However, development scholars have argued that a core issue faced by developing nations are the deep social and structural changes that tend to accompany globalization, many of which can result in substantial increases in crime, particularly violent crime. Though great differences exist between developing nations, some common patterns exist. For instance, Arthur and Marenin (1995) argue that a higher proportion of crime in developing nations is more violent than in developed nations.

From a theoretical standpoint, there are many reasons to expect differences between gangs, gang members, and gang crime in developed and developing nations. For example, gang scholars have long argued that problems associated with poverty, economic strain, social disorganization, and population mobility are root causes of gangs, gang membership, and gang crime (Spergel, 1995). These problems are often more extreme in developing nations, where poverty, unemployment, physical and social disorder, and economic migration tend to be endemic. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these structural factors lead to differences between gangs from developed and developing nations. For example, qualitative research conducted in El Salvador and Nigeria has reported that gangs in these nations are substantially more organized, having clear lines of authority and responsibility, and individuals join gangs in these nations for more instrumental purposes (Salaam, in press). Though the level of gang organization varies across U.S. cities, gangs in the United States have, in general, been found to lack organizational structure and individuals are more likely to join for social reasons (Decker et al., 2008).

The dearth of research on gangs in developing nations has resulted in poor theoretical development about gangs and gang-related problems in these areas. Even basic epidemiological studies documenting the existence and descriptive features of gangs in developing nations are rare. The lack of research on gangs in the Caribbean in particular is somewhat surprising, given that the region has the second highest homicide rate in the world (just behind Southern Africa) (Malby, 2010, p. 9), and gangs are believed to be the primary factor driving the violence (Moser & Holland, 1997).

Moreover, the Caribbean region is located in close proximity to the United States and is therefore of vital strategic importance. Trinidad is home to several Muslim gangs, some of which are reputed to have ties to terrorist in Libya and other nations of strategic importance to the United States.[3] One of the few studies to examine the prevalence of gang membership in the Caribbean reported that 17–24% of males and 11–16% of females were involved in a gang (Ohene, Ireland, & Blum, 2005). Their findings suggest that the Caribbean might have a significant gang problem relative to most developed nations.[4] Earlier research funded by the World Bank seems to support this notion. Moser and Holland (1997, p. 15) reported that in many Jamaican communities, gang violence had created a "virtual 'war,' dominating and pervading all aspects of community life and restricting mobility within the area." The authors concluded that gangs in Jamaica were a major contributor to that nation's homicide problem. Manwaring (2007) reported that in many Jamaican neighborhoods, "posses" (gangs) have effectively replaced the government in the eyes of residents and serve as the primary source of social control. In these communities, posses are believed to help provide education, medical assistance, and employment opportunities to residents. He argued that posses are the source of much of the nation's violence, which tends to stem from intergang rivalries. Although much has been written about gangs in Jamaica, we are not familiar with any reliable quantitative estimates of the number of gangs or gang members, or the contribution of gangs to violence and crime.

Similar findings have been reported for Trinidad and Tobago, the region's wealthiest nation. Official data gathered from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) reveals that at least 95 gangs and 1,269 gang members are known to the police (Katz & Choate, 2006). These gang members are responsible for more than 60% of the nation's homicides, engage in at least two times the violence, property crime and drug crime as non-gang members (Katz & Choate, 2006), and are highly involved in local firearm markets (Wells, Katz, & Kim, 2010). Maguire, King, Johnson, and Katz (2010) reported that the criminal justice system in Trinidad and Tobago has had a limited impact on reducing crime, including gang crime. One reason is that Trinidadians are reluctant to rely on the police for help. In one study, 86% of residents reported hearing gunshots in their neighborhood at least once in the past 30 days; however, only 7% of the residents who heard these gunshots reported them to the police (Johnson, 2007).

Two explanations have been proposed for why residents do not call the police for help. One is that residents fear gang members. For instance, in one community survey, about three quarters of residents "strongly agreed" that people who report crimes committed by gang members to the police are likely to experience retaliation from gang members (Johnson, 2007). Another possible reason is that they recognize the police will have a limited impact on the problem. An examination of gang homicides in the Besson street station district confirmed this explanation. Of 53 gang homicides that took place over a 13-month period, only 3 resulted in an arrest, and none of them resulted in a conviction (Katz & Maguire, 2006). Gang violence in Trinidad and Tobago resulted in a homicide rate of 44.3 per 100,000 persons in 2008, placing the nation among the world's most murderous (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2009). In summary, when contrasted to gang research conducted in the United States, Canada, and some European nations (Blaya & Gatti, 2010; Esbensen & Weerman, 2005; Gatti et al., 2005), some of the early attempts to examine gangs in the Caribbean have shown the gang problem there to be more prevalent, more organized, and more violent than in the developed nations where most research has taken place.

However, one recent study identified some similarities between gang involvement in the Caribbean and developed nations. Katz and Fox (2010) examined the factors associated with gang involvement in Trinidad and Tobago using self-report data from about 2,200 school youth enrolled in 22 urban schools. They reported that gang membership among school youth in Trinidad and Tobago was fairly similar to the figures from developed nations. Likewise, they reported that gang prevalence rates were similar to those in developed nations, with males and older respondents being more likely to report gang involvement. They also reported that many of the risk factors found to be associated with gang membership in the United States were also associated with gang joining in Trinidad and Tobago. These risk factors included the availability of handguns, residential mobility, early initiation to antisocial behavior, intention to use drugs, having antisocial peers, and having parents that engage in antisocial behavior. The current understanding of how gangs in the Caribbean differ from their counterparts in the developed world is spotty, with some similarities and some remarkable differences.

The Present Study

This article examines similarities and differences among gang members in Trinidad and Tobago and one jurisdiction in the United States (Maricopa County, Arizona) to understand the prevalence, nature, and seriousness of the gang problem in one developing and one developed nation.[5] The article explores five major issues: (a) the proportion of arrestees involved in gangs, (b) the sociodemographic characteristics of gang members, (c) the age individuals join a gang and the reasons they join a gang, (d) the organizational characteristics of gangs, and (e) differences between gang and nongang members in terms of their experiences with crime, drug use, and victimization. This study

is the first (to our knowledge) to compare gang-related phenomena in a developed nation and a developing nation and to use a sample consisting of adults.[6]

Method

This study relies on self-report data collected from independent samples of recently booked adult arrestees in the two countries.[7] The sample from the United States includes 2,285 recently booked arrestees participating in the Arizona Arrestee Reporting Information Network (AARIN) in Maricopa County, Arizona. Respondents from Trinidad and Tobago included 421 recently booked arrestees from Port of Spain, Trinidad, who participated in the Trinidad and Tobago Arrestee Project Survey (TTAPS).

To be clear, while we label respondents as being from the United States and Trinidad and Tobago, they are exclusively from two large communities in each nation: Maricopa County, Arizona, and the Port of Spain metropolitan area in Trinidad. Maricopa County is the fourth most populated county in the United States. Port of Spain is the capital of Trinidad and Tobago and is its most populated community. We do not claim that our data are generalizable to each nation as a whole, but only to the communities from which they are drawn.

The U.S. Sample

The AARIN project in Maricopa County was originally established in 1987 under the auspices of the Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program, and later the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program (ADAM), both sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to monitor drug use trends, treatment needs, and at-risk behavior among recently booked arrestees. The program collected data from recently booked arrestees in 35 sites across the United States. In 2007, after NIJ terminated the nationwide program due to funding constraints, a few jurisdictions continued to fund the program through the use of local funds. Maricopa County was one of those sites, with funding provided by the Maricopa County Manager's Office. The AARIN program maintained the same methodology as the ADAM project so that trends among recently booked arrestees could continue to be monitored over time. While the AARIN project samples males and females from both the adult and juvenile populations, the data used in the present study are restricted to adult arrestees.

In order to ensure representative results for the entire population of arrestees in Maricopa County, the AARIN project employs a systematic sampling protocol that includes the collection of data at multiple facilities, with target quotas at each facility. Data are collected quarterly at all facilities; interviews are conducted during a 2-week period at the 4th Avenue County Jail and during a 1-week period at the Glendale and Mesa Police Departments. Arrestees who were cited on the street and released, or released for other reasons, were not included in the study. During data collection periods, for 8 hr each day, interviews are conducted with arrestees who are randomly selected based on booking time. Consistent with the ADAM sampling strategy, a "stock" (i.e., arrested during non-data collection hours) and "flow" (i.e., arrested during data collection hours) selection process is employed to ensure a representative sample of arrestees (Zhang, 2009). Arrestees who were in custody longer than 48 hr were ineligible for participation in AARIN. As an incentive, respondents are provided with a candy bar if they complete the survey. Over the four data collection periods in 2009, 2,514 arrestees were invited to participate in the study, and 2,285 (90.9%) agreed.

The core AARIN survey instrument, modeled after the ADAM and DUF instruments, elicits self-report data on a variety of sociodemographic and behavioral variables, including drug use, victimization, and arrest history. After completing the core instrument, respondents completed a gang addendum that included questions about (a) the impact of gangs in the arrestee's neighborhood, (b) victimization, (c) gang membership, (d) gang composition and characteristics, (e) gang

organizational structure, and (f) gang-related activity. We used items from both the core AARIN instrument and the gang addendum in the present study.[8]

Trinidad and Tobago Sample[9]

The TTAPS was commissioned by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of National Security to examine the scope and nature of the nation's gang, gun, and drug problem among arrestees. The catchment area for the project encompassed the Port of Spain Police Division, one of eight police divisions in Trinidad and Tobago. Port of Spain is the capital of Trinidad and Tobago and is the urban center of the country. Arrestees who were cited on the street and released, or released for other reasons, were not included in the study. Interviewers were generally present at the booking facility between 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. to ensure that individuals were approached immediately after arrest but before they were taken to court for further processing and possible release. Interviews, which on average took 20 min to complete, were conducted in empty jail cells. Respondents were provided with a candy bar for participating in the project. Only the interviewer was present during consent procedures and during the interview.

All 612 individuals who were arrested and booked in the catchment area over an 8-month period between December 2005 and July 2006 were included in the study.[10] Of the 612 arrestees, 79 were not approached because they were transferred, deemed dangerous, or were believed to have a contagious disease. Of the 533 recently booked arrestees who were approached for inclusion in the study, 421 (78.9%) agreed to participate in the study and completed the questionnaire. Trained local staff conducted voluntary, anonymous interviews with males and females within the largest detention facility in the nation. Interviewers received 24 hr of structured training prior to their first interview. Approximately 55% of the respondents were interviewed within 48 hr of their arrest and 90% of respondents were interviewed within 72 hr of their arrest. The instrument included questions from both the AARIN core instrument and the gang addendum noted above. While the version of instrument used in Trinidad relied on the same questions as those used in the AARIN project, the Trinidad version contained substantially fewer questions and interviews were significantly shorter in duration.

Measures

A limitation of prior research has been that measures used across samples were not identical. A strength of the present study is that the measures used across the independent samples were identical (with the exception of the question about race/ethnicity). This allowed us to measure with greater specificity the scope and nature of each nation's gang problem. Measuring gang membership through self-identification is the most common method for identifying gang members (Klein & Maxson, 2006). Researchers using this method rely on survey instruments that ask questions like: "Have you ever belonged to a gang?" or "Do you currently belong to a gang?" However, recent research suggests that the word "gang" is not universally understood by youth across nations. For example, in Europe some researchers have argued that use of the term "gang" in survey research has generated misleading results because European youth may understand the term to mean having a tight relationship with a group of friends (Blaya & Gatti, 2010; Esbensen and Weerman, 2005). On the other hand, in the United States (Esbensen, Winfree, He, & Terrance, 2001; Webb, Katz, & Decker, 2006) and the Caribbean (Katz & Fox, 2010; Ohene, Ireland, & Blum, 2005), the term "gang" is more universally understood. The survey instruments used here relied on respondents identifying themselves as gang members.

Respondents' gang status was measured using the responses to two items: "Are you currently a member of a gang?" and "Have you ever been in a gang?" Based on these items, we assigned the

respondent to one of three categories: non-gang member, current gang member, or former gang member. The U.S. sample was initially comprised of 69 current gang members, 117 former gang members, and 2,098 non-gang members. The Trinidadian sample initially included 16 current gang members, 13 former gang members, and 383 non-gang members. Ten of the respondents, five from the United States and five from Trinidad, who reported being former gang members were recoded as current gang members. When we examined these individuals' responses on how long ago they had left their gang, most stated they had left in the very recent past (i.e., within the past 24 hr or over the past few days). Further analysis among these short-term former gang members indicated that they were not significantly different on any measure from current gang members. Given these findings, these respondents were coded as current gang members, yielding a total of 95 (USA = 74; TT = 21) current gang members. The remaining former gang members were coded as non-gang members.

Response options on ethnicity differ in the U.S. and Trinidad surveys because the two nations have different ethnic compositions. Respondents self-reported their age at the time of the interview and the interviewer recorded the sex of the respondent. The original educational attainment variables were labeled differently, owing to differences in naming conventions between U.S. and Trinidadian educational systems. Accordingly, we measured education by whether the respondent self-reported completing high school (U.S.) or secondary education (Trinidad). Our measure of housing includes three categories: private home; no fixed residence or homeless; and jail, hospital, or other public or group facility. Employment was divided into six categories: no income/unemployed; working full-time; working part-time; public assistance; other legal sources (i.e., family); and illegal sources. Source of income included four categories: no reported income; legal income only; illegal income only; and both legal and illegal income.

Measures of the respondents' behavior included lifetime and past 12-month drug and alcohol use, lifetime firearm possession, current arrest offense, and self-reported number of arrests in the past 12 months. Respondents were asked if they had used alcohol, marijuana, powder or crack cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin (or other opiates), and inhalants. The analyses examined alcohol and marijuana independently and collapsed the other drug types (powder and crack cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, and inhalants) into a single "other drug" category. For firearms, respondents were asked if they had ever possessed four types of firearms: handgun or pistol, rifle or shotgun, a semi-automatic gun, and a fully automatic firearm. Respondents were asked to exclude any guns they possessed through prior military or police experience. The measure for most serious arrest offense was collected from the official booking log, then coded into one of the four offense categories, in order of priority from most to least serious: violent, drug related, property, and miscellaneous. Violent offenses included, but were not limited to: assault, murder, robbery, weapons violation, and wounding. Drug-related offenses were primarily possession of marijuana or some other drug, or sales or trafficking of an illicit drug. Property crimes included, but were not limited to: fraud, larceny, theft, motor vehicle theft, burglary, breaking and entering, and criminal property damage. Miscellaneous offenses were those offenses that did not fit into the above three categories and included such offenses as probation violation, failure to pay fines, sleeping in the streets, traffic violations; and disorderly conduct. Respondents were asked to report whether they had been the victim of seven types of violence in the past 12 months, and if so, how many times. The seven types of victimization included: threatened with a gun, shot at, shot; threatened with a weapon other than a gun, injured with a weapon other than a gun, assaulted without a weapon, and robbed. We truncated responses to questions related to the incidence of victimization to correct for skewness.[11]

Participants who reported ever belonging to a gang were asked when and how they joined their gang, and about some organizational characteristics of their gang. Gang members provided the age (in years) they first started "hanging-out" with their gang and when they joined their gang. They were then asked what they had to do to join their gang. Response options were not mutually

exclusive to allow respondents to indicate multiple requirements for membership. Responses were coded into six categories: jumped-in, had to fight someone, commit a crime, sexed-in, born into it, or "nothing." Finally, respondents were asked about the organizational characteristics of their gang. Questions included: (a) Does the gang have a name? (b) Does the gang have a territory or turf it claims? (c) Is there a leader? (d) Does the gang have regular meetings that members attend? (e) Does the gang have rules? (f) If the gang has rules, are there punishments if they are broken? (g) Does the gang have special colors, signs, symbols, or clothes? (h) Do members give money to the gang? and (i) Does the gang make money from drug sales?

Findings

Table 1 shows the proportion of respondents from each sample classified as gang and non-gang members and their demographic characteristics. The analysis indicated that 3.2% of the U.S. sample and 5.1% of the Trinidadian sample were current gang members. Non-gang members were significantly older than gang members in both nations, but gang members in the United States were significantly older than gang members in Trinidad. The majority of the arrestees in the United States (76.6%) and Trinidad (91.7%) were male. While there was no significant difference between the two nations in terms of gender, it is important to note that none of the gang members in Trinidad were female; however, about 15% of gang members in the United States were female. Gang and non-gang members in the United States were significantly different in terms of their ethnicity, but there was no significant difference in ethnicity between gang and non-gang members in Trinidad. In the United States, gang members were more likely to self-report being African American or Hispanic and less likely to report being Caucasian or from another ethnic group. Educational attainment was significantly lower for U.S. gang members than their non-gang counterparts, with 37.8% of gang members completing high school compared to 64.8% of non-gang members. There was no significant difference in the Trinidadian sample, with 61.9% of gang members and 64.2% of non-gang members completing secondary school (i.e., high school). There were no significant differences in housing between gang members and non-gang members in either nation, but our analysis did show that arrestees in the United States were more likely to have resided in a private home and less likely to have resided in a jail, hospital, or other residence compared to arrestees in Trinidad.

Results displayed in Table 1 show that gang members in both samples were less likely to report being employed than non-gang members. For example, nearly 56% of U.S. non-gang members reported being employed at least part-time, compared to about 29% of gang members. The difference was more pronounced among Trinidadian arrestees, with 61.2% of non-gang members reporting at least some employment, compared to just 23.8% of gang members. Similarly, gang and non-gang members reported significant differences in the source of their income, with more than three quarters of non-gang members in both countries (81.7% in the U.S., 77.7% in T&T) reporting income from legal sources only, compared to less than half of gang members (46.6% U.S., 38.1% TT). U.S. gang members were more likely to report that the sole source of their income was illegal (26% U.S. vs. 4.8% T&T) or legal (46.6% U.S. vs. 38.1% T&T), whereas Trinidadian gang members were more likely to report that their income was derived from both legal and illegal sources (38.1% T&T vs. 19.2% U.S.) or that they had no source of income (19% T&T vs. 8.2% U.S.).

Table 2 presents characteristics associated with gang joining in the United States and Trinidad. We find significant differences between the two samples. Gang members in the United States started hanging out (mean age = 11.8) and joined a gang (mean age = 14.36) at a younger age than gang members from Trinidad (hanging out = 16.3 and joining a gang = 17.4). U.S. gang members were significantly more likely to state that they were jumped into their gang (54.1% U.S. vs. 0.0% T&T), but were significantly less likely to state that they committed a crime to join their gang (2.7% U.S. vs. 21.1% T&T). When asked what they did to join their gang, gang members in the United States

Table 1. Demographic and Background Characteristics

	United States			Trinidad and Tobago		
	Non-Gang (n = 2,210) %	Gang (n = 74) %	Total (n = 2,284) %	Non-Gang (n = 391) %	Gang (n = 21) %	Total (n = 412) %
Gang status	96.8	3.2	100.0	94.9	5.1	100.0
Age[a,b,c]						
Mean[d]	32.25	24.45	32.00	28.23	25.38	28.08
SD	11.03	7.21	11.01	10.74	3.91	10.52
Sex						
Male	76.3	85.1	76.6	91.3	100.0	91.7
Female	23.7	14.9	23.4	8.7	0.0	8.3
Race/ethnicity[a]						
Caucasian	38.0	21.6	37.5			
African American	13.1	23.0	13.4			
Hispanic	35.5	44.6	35.8			
Other	13.4	10.8	13.3			
African				68.5	76.2	68.9
East Indian				8.4	4.8	8.3
Afro-Indian				22.8	19.0	22.6
Other				0.3	0.0	0.2
Education[a]						
Completed secondary/H.S.	64.8	37.8	63.9	64.2	61.9	64.1
Housing (past 30 days)						
No fixed residence	6.5	5.4	6.4	8.7	4.8	8.5
Jail, hospital, public, or other	3.0	4.1	3.0	16.4	19.0	16.5
Private home	90.5	90.5	90.5	74.9	76.2	75.0
Employment[a,b]						
No income/unemployed	6.8	6.9	6.8	10.5	9.5	10.5
Working full-time	32.9	18.1	32.4	38.6	14.3	37.3
Working part-time	23.0	11.1	22.6	22.6	9.5	22.0
Public assistance	9.1	11.1	9.2	6.2	9.5	22.0
Other legal sources	20.8	20.8	20.8	18.3	42.9	19.5
Illegal sources	7.3	31.9	8.1	3.9	14.3	4.4
Source of income[a,b,c]						
No income	7.5	8.2	7.5	13.3	19.0	13.6
Legal only	81.7	46.6	80.6	77.7	38.1	75.7
Illegal only	5.9	26.0	6.6	3.6	4.8	3.6
Both legal and illegal	4.9	19.2	5.4	5.4	38.1	7.0

[a] Significant differences at $p < .05$ within United States between gang/non-gang.
[b] Significant differences at $p < .05$ within T&T between gang/non-gang.
[c] Significant differences at $p < .05$ between U.S. and T&T gang members.
[d] Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests for significance with means, chi-square (or Fisher's Exact Test where appropriate) for all other measures.

and Trinidad reported no significant differences for fighting or being born into the gang. In the United States, gang members noted that the most common means of joining a gang were being jumped in (54.1%), doing nothing (24.3%), and being born into the gang (12.2%). On the other hand, 50% of gang members in Trinidad did not have to do anything to join their gang, followed by committing a crime (21.1%), and being in a fight (15%).

Table 2. Age of Onset and Reasons for Joining a Gang

	United States	Trinidad and Tobago	Total
	$n = 74$	$n = 21$	$n = 95$
Age first started "hanging-out"[a]			
Mean[b]	11.82	16.29	12.84
SD	5.76	4.68	5.82
Age joined[a]			
Mean[b]	14.36	17.43	15.80
SD	5.80	4.81	5.71
What did you do to join?	%	%	%
Jumped-in[a]	54.1	0.0	42.6
Fight	10.8	15.0	11.7
Commit a crime[a]	2.7	21.1	6.5
Sexed-in	2.7	0.0	2.1
Born into	12.2	10.0	11.7
Nothing	24.3	50.0	29.8

[a] Significant differences at $p < .05$ between U.S. and T&T gang members.
[b] Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests for significance with means, chi-square (or Fisher's Exact Test where appropriate) for all other measures.

Table 3. Organizational Characteristics of Gangs

	United States	Trinidad & Tobago	Total
	$n = 74$ %	$n = 21$ %	$n = 95$ %
Name[a]	100.0	63.2	91.3
Territory/Turf	81.1	90.5	83.2
Leader	35.1	61.9	41.1
Meetings[a]	50.0	81.0	56.8
Rules	81.1	90.5	83.2
Punishments	77.0	76.2	76.8
Colors, Signs, Symbols, Clothes[a]	86.5	47.6	77.9
Members give money to gang	2.7	0.0	2.1
Sell drugs	64.9	81.0	68.4

[a] Significant differences at $p < .05$ between U.S. and T&T gang members.
[b] Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests for significance with means, chi-square (or Fisher's Exact Test where appropriate) for all other measures.

We also found significant differences in the organizational characteristics of gangs in Trinidad and in the United States. Table 3 shows significant differences with respect to having a gang name, having meetings, or having distinguishing colors, signs, symbols, or clothing. All of the U.S. gang members reported that their gang had a name, compared with two thirds (63.2%) of Trinidadian gang members. Gang members in Trinidad, on the other hand, were significantly more likely to report that their gang held meetings (81%) than gang members in the United States (50%). U.S. gang members were more likely to report that their gang had particular colors, signs, symbols, or clothes to identify itself or its members than gang members in Trinidad (86.5% U.S., 46.7% T&T).

Table 4 shows the behavioral characteristics of the respondents. Our finding indicated that U.S. gang members were significantly more likely to have reported ever using alcohol (98.6% U.S. vs.

Table 4. Relationship Between Gang Membership and Drugs, Alcohol, and Crime

	United States			Trinidad and Tobago		
	Non-Gang $n = 2,210$ %	Gang $n = 74$ %	Total $n = 2,284$ %	Non-Gang $n = 391$ %	Gang $n = 21$ %	Total $n = 412$ %
Ever used						
Alcohol[a]	96.2	98.6	96.3	80.3	81.0	80.3
Marijuana[a,b,c]	82.4	100.0	83.0	56.8	90.5	58.5
Other[a,b]	61.2	71.6	61.5	10.7	23.8	11.4
Used in past 12 months						
Alcohol[b]	77.0	86.5	77.3	67.0	81.0	67.7
Marijuana[b,c]	48.3	83.8	49.5	47.8	81.0	49.5
Other[a,b,c]	36.9	55.4	37.5	9.2	23.8	10.0
Firearm possession (ever)						
Handgun[b,c]	29.6	67.6	30.8	11.8	81.0	15.3
Rifle or Shotgun[a,b,c]	27.1	56.8	28.0	4.1	28.6	5.4
Semiautomatic[b,c]	17.9	41.9	18.7	7.7	61.9	10.5
Fully automatic[b,c]	7.3	28.4	8.0	4.9	42.9	6.8
Most serious arrest charge[a]						
Violent	19.1	23.0	19.2	36.3	52.4	37.1
Drug related	24.5	18.9	24.3	16.6	9.5	16.3
Property	21.1	24.3	21.2	14.3	4.8	13.8
Miscellaneous	35.3	33.8	35.2	32.7	33.3	32.8
Arrests in past 12 months[b,c]						
Mean[d]	0.62	1.95	0.69	0.86	1.53	0.88
SD	1.53	1.88	1.58	1.76	1.78	1.76

[a] Significant differences at $p < .05$ between U.S. and T&T gang members.
[b] Significant differences at $p < .05$ within U.S. between gang/non-gang.
[c] Significant differences at $p < .05$ within T&T between gang/non-gang.
[d] Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests for significance with means, chi-square (or Fisher's Exact Test where appropriate) for all other measures.

81% T&T), ever using marijuana (100% U.S. vs. 90.5% T&T), ever using other drugs (71.6% U.S. vs. 23.8% T&T), and using other drugs in the past 12 months (55.4% U.S. vs. 23.8% T&T). Gang members in the United States were also significantly more likely to have ever possessed a rifle or shotgun compared to gang members in Trinidad (56.8% U.S. vs. 28.6% T&T). With respect to most serious charge at arrest, gang members from Trinidad were more likely to have been arrested for a violent crime (52.4% T&T vs. 23% U.S.), but were less likely to be arrested for a drug-related crime (9.5% T&T vs. 18.9% U.S.) or a property crime (4.8% T&T. vs. 24.3% U.S.).

With respect to within country differences, U.S. gang members were significantly more likely than non-gang members to report having *ever* used marijuana or an "other" drug and were significantly more likely to report having used alcohol, marijuana, or an "other" drug *in the past 12 months*. Conversely, in Trinidad, gang membership was unrelated to ever having used alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs; it was also unrelated to having used alcohol in the past 12 months. However, gang members in Trinidad were significantly more likely than non-gang members to have used marijuana (47.8% non-gang vs. 81% gang) and other drugs (9.2% non-gang vs. 23.8% gang) in the past 12 months. In both the United States and Trinidad, arrestees who were gang members were significantly more likely to have ever possessed a handgun, rifle, semiautomatic firearm, or fully automatic firearm. However, while gang members in the United States were roughly two times more likely than non-gang members to have ever possessed a firearm, gang members in Trinidad

were roughly seven to nine times more likely than non-gang members to have ever possessed a firearm (varying by type of firearm). Similarly, gang members were arrested significantly more often compared to non-gang arrestees in both countries. U.S. gang members averaged about 2 prior arrests in the past 12 months, compared to .62 arrests for non-gang members, and gang members in Trinidad averaged 1.53 prior arrests, compared to 0.86 for non-gang members.

Table 5 shows our findings on the relationship between gang membership and victimization for arrestees in both countries. Gang members in Trinidad were significantly more likely to have been the victim of a violent crime in the past 12 months than U.S. gang members. In particular, Trinidadian gang members were more likely to have been shot (28.6% T&T, 9.5% U.S.), threatened with a gun (66.7% T&T, 37.8% U.S.), injured with a weapon other than a gun (52.4% T&T, 27.0% U.S.), and robbed (42.9% T&T, 18.9% U.S.) than U.S. gang members. A similar pattern was observed for the frequency of victimization. When compared to U.S. gang members, Trinidad gang members were threatened with a gun two times more often, shot 10% more often, injured with a weapon 2.3 times more often, and robbed 5.96 times more often.

Analyses of within country differences between gang and non-gang members were fairly consistent, with gang members being victimized more often than non-gang members. In both countries, gang members were significantly more likely than non-gang members to report that in the past 12 months they had been threatened with a gun, shot, shot at, threatened with a weapon other than a gun, and injured with a weapon. In the United States, gang members were significantly more likely to have been assaulted than non-gang members; in Trinidad, the difference was not statistically significant. There was no significant difference between gang and non-gang members in the United States and Trinidad with respect to having been robbed in the past 12 months. Varying slightly by type of victimization, Trinidadian gang members experienced about two to three times the number of violent victimizations when compared to non-gang members. In the United States, when compared to non-gang members, gang members were threatened with a gun 4.4 times more often, shot at about 50 times more often, shot 15 times more often, threatened with a weapon 2.8 times more often, injured with a weapon about 3 times more often, and assaulted about 5 times more often.

Limitations

It is important to note three limitations of this study. First, data are drawn from one large community within each nation and therefore are not necessarily representative of arrestees from each nation as a whole. Previous research conducted in Arizona in general and Maricopa County specifically indicates that its gang problem is fairly similar to other communities across the United States. For example, prior research by Katz (2003) indicated that the prevalence of gang membership among school-aged youth, their involvement in delinquency and victimization, and the risk and protective factors associated with gang joining were similar to findings from scholars using a similar school-based methodology in other communities across the United States. Similarly, prior research using data obtained from recently booked arrestees in Maricopa County has found that the community's gang problem (including gang prevalence, gang member involvement in crime, drug use and drug dealing, and the organizational structure of gangs) is fairly comparable to other communities in the United States (Decker et al., 2008; Katz et al., 2005; Katz, Fox, Webb, & Shaffer, 2011). Every community's gang problem is unique to some extent, and we are not suggesting the Maricopa County can serve as a proxy for the United States, but we also believe that Maricopa County is fairly representative of other U.S. metropolitan areas.

Given the lack of research, it is more difficult to assess the extent to which findings from the Port of Spain area are generalizable to other areas. There is good reason, however, to believe that it might be unique. The data used in this study were gathered in the nation's capital and its most populous metropolitan area. We found out early that detention facilities in many other communities either did

Table 5. Relationship Between Gang Membership and Victimization

	United States			Trinidad and Tobago		
	Non-Gang $n = 2210$ %	Gang $n = 74$ %	Total $n = 2284$ %	Non-Gang $n = 391$ %	Gang $n = 21$ %	Total $n = 412$ %
Victimized in past 12 months						
Threatened with a gun[a,b,c]	14.1	37.8	14.9	30.4	66.7	32.3
Shot at[a,b]	6.7	43.2	7.9	20.5	61.9	22.6
Shot[a,b,c]	1	9.5	1.3	8.4	28.6	9.5
Threatened with a weapon[a,b]	16.2	40.5	17	29.9	52.4	31.1
Injured with a weapon[a,b,c]	7.2	27	7.8	19.9	52.4	21.6
Assaulted[a]	20	40.5	20.7	27.9	47.6	28.9
Robbed[c]	11.2	18.9	11.5	24	42.9	25
	Mean[d] (*SD*)	Mean[d] (*SD*)	Mean[d] (*SD*)	Mean[d] (*SD*)	Mean[d] (*SD*)	Mean[d] (*SD*)
# of victimizations in past 12 months						
Threatened with a gun[a,c]	0.43 (3.881)	1.89 (6.13)	0.47 (3.981)	2.07 (15.624)	3.29 (4.734)	2.13 (15.257)
Shot at[a,c]	0.17 (1.136)	8.53 (44.357)	0.44 (8.095)	0.8 (3.41)	2.29 (3.552)	0.87 (3.429)
Shot[a]	0.02 (0.288)	0.3 (1.247)	0.03 (0.364)	0.19 (0.831)	0.33 (0.577)	0.19 (0.82)
Threatened with a weapon	0.76 (9.215)	2.12 (6.845)	0.8 (9.151)	2.07 (15.885)	4.52 (10.875)	2.19 (15.668)
Injured with a weapon[b,c]	0.18 (2.302)	0.57 (1.217)	0.19 (2.276)	0.47 (1.335)	1.33 (1.798)	0.52 (1.373)
Assaulted[a]	3 (40.319)	15.93 (103.621)	3.42 (43.838)	0.95 (2.772)	1.95 (4.399)	1 (2.878)
Robbed[b,c]	0.44 (7.792)	0.28 (0.673)	0.43 (7.665)	0.54 (1.46)	1.67 (3.773)	0.6 (1.667)

[a] Significant differences at $p < .05$ within United States between gang/non-gang.
[b] Significant differences at $p < .05$ within T&T between gang/non-gang.
[c] Significant differences at $p < .05$ between U.S. and T&T gang members.
[d] Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests for significance with means, chi-square (or Fisher's Exact Test where appropriate) for all other measures.

not book enough arrestees to generate a sufficient sample size or were located in very remote and sparsely populated areas. Consequently, while the data obtained from Trinidad reflect the scope and nature of the gang problem in the nation's most populated community, our findings are probably not generalizable to more rural communities in the nation or to Tobago. Our findings should not be generalized to each nation as a whole, but rather should be interpreted as a comparison between two large communities within each country.

Second, our analyses indicated that arrestees from the United States and Trinidad and Tobago were not identical. As presented in Table 4, when compared to the United States, arrestees in Trinidad and Tobago were significantly more likely to be arrested for a violent crime and less likely to be arrested for a property or drug crime. Our finding is consistent with previous research that has identified a different mix of crime in developing nations—where a higher proportion of total crime is classified as violent (Arthur & Marenin, 1995). Differences in arrest charges between each jurisdiction's arrestees could be influenced by a number of other factors, including (but not limited to) resources available to the police, police staffing levels, police culture and policies, citizen perceptions of the police, and other factors. Regardless, individuals arrested in Trinidad and Tobago were more likely to have been apprehended for violent offenses when compared to arrestees in the United States, which in turn might have biased our findings.

Third, analyses involving comparisons of gang members in the United States and Trinidad are based on relatively small number of gang members from Trinidad ($n = 21$). We attempted to interview *all* eligible arrestees in the largest metropolitan area in the nation over an 8-month period; we made no attempt to sample arrestees. Ideally, we would have continued data collection until capturing a larger number of gang members, but for logistical reasons beyond our control, we were unable to continue data collection beyond this 8-month period. However, the small number of gang members raises questions about statistical power—the ability of a statistical test to detect an effect in the sample if one exists in the population. Statistical power is a function of four elements: sample size, sample variance, statistical significance level, and effect size (Cohen, 1988). Our power analyses revealed that our comparisons of gang members in two countries only have sufficient sample size to detect *large* effects. For instance, the *t* tests comparing means in two groups have statistical power of .89 to detect large effects (Cohen's $d \geq .80$), .52 to detect medium effects (Cohen's $d \geq .50$), and .13 to detect small effects (Cohen's $d \geq .20$).[12] Our within-country comparisons of gang members and non-gang members have larger sample sizes than our comparisons between countries, so power is slightly less of an issue in those analyses. In the U.S. sample, for instance, *t* tests have power of nearly .99 to detect *medium* effects, but power to detect *small* effects is weak. The Trinidad arrestee sample is smaller than the U.S. sample and *t* tests only have sufficient power to detect large effects. At the same time, statistical power is really only a major concern in analyses that fail to detect differences or effects. Recall that in this study, we detected a number of compelling differences and these cannot be ignored on statistical power grounds. Nonetheless, future comparative research on gangs should focus on improving statistical power by recruiting larger samples of gang members.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our findings point to a number of similarities between gangs in the United States and Trinidad, but the study also reveals some important differences. Perhaps one of the most important differences is the extent to which gangs in Trinidad are involved with guns and violence. These findings are unlikely to come as a surprise to people familiar with crime and violence in the Caribbean generally and in Trinidad and Tobago more specifically. It is well known that gangs and gang violence have reached epidemic proportions in Trinidad and Tobago (Katz & Fox, 2010; Maguire, Willis, Snipes, & Gantley, 2008, 2010; Townsend, 2009).

Our findings indicate that adult arrestees in Trinidad and Tobago are substantially more likely than those in the United States to be involved in gangs (5.1% in T&T and 3.2% in the U.S.). While it is fairly common for gangs in the United States to include some female members, this is less common in Trinidad. In our study, none of the gang members in Trinidad were female, compared with about 15% in the United States. Although we are familiar with several instances of very young gang members in Trinidad, on average gang members in Trinidad join gangs at a much older age than gang members in the United States. Our study found that, on average, gang members in the United States started hanging out with the gang when they were 11.8 years old, compared with 16.3 years old in Trinidad. We did not examine gang desistance in this study, but anecdotal evidence from our interviews with police gang experts in Trinidad suggests that gang members continue to embrace gang life until they are much older than gang members in the United States.

Alarmingly, gang members in Trinidad are substantially more likely than those in the United States to report committing a crime to be admitted into the gang. While U.S. gang members were more likely to report that the sole source of their income was either exclusively illegal or legal, Trinidadian gang members were more likely to report that their income was derived from *both* legal and illegal sources. One potential interpretation of this finding involves a government program in Trinidad and Tobago called the Unemployment Relief Program (URP) that pays unemployed people to perform public service tasks like fixing sidewalks and drains. However, the program is thought by many to be corrupt and to have been infiltrated by criminal street gangs. Gangs are known to fight over lucrative URP jobs and a number of homicides have been traced to URP-related conflicts (Maguire et al., 2008, 2010). Thus the URP is simultaneously a legitimate and illegitimate form of income for gangs.

Gang characteristics also varied between the two jurisdictions, with all of the U.S. gang members belonging to a gang with a name, compared with only two thirds of Trinidadian gang members. We suspect that there may be some confusion on the part of Trinidadian respondents about the meaning of a gang name, since anecdotal evidence from our interviews with police gang experts suggests that most gangs in Trinidad do not have a name in the same way as American gangs. Some gangs in Trinidad have a name borrowed from the United States (e.g., "the G-Unit" and "the Gambinos"), some are known by the name of the public housing complex or the neighborhood where their members live, and some are simply known by the name (or street name) of the gang's leader. Many are known by multiple names and do not have a single, stable gang name like gangs in the United States.

Gang members in Trinidad were also significantly less likely to report that their gang had particular colors, signs, symbols, or clothes to identify itself or its members. Our interviews with gang members for another part of the study, as well as our ride-alongs with police in gang-controlled neighborhoods, confirmed this finding. Similarly, we observed very little gang graffiti compared with gang territories in the United States. These dynamics started to change toward the end of our study period as some gangs began to copy some of the gang culture themes they observed in movies and television, particularly from the United States. According to many of the criminal justice officials we interviewed, this tendency is being exacerbated by deportees from the United States, many of whom bring criminal experience from the United States with them in joining (or starting) Trinidadian gangs.

Gang members in Trinidad were substantially more likely than gang members in the United States to report that their gang held meetings. These findings were confirmed through numerous stories told to us by gang outreach workers, members of the faith community, and police gang experts about Trinidadian gangs holding meetings during which gang leaders discipline their own members for violating "the order." Examples of such violations include losing one of the gang's guns (to the police or to other offenders), getting arrested, or committing an unsanctioned offense. One Trinidadian gang leader (a deportee from the United States) explained to us how he rescued a kidnapping victim and then "gave licks" (administered a severe beating) to a member of his own

gang for having carried out the kidnapping without the leader's permission. In addition, we also heard stories about some gangs holding meetings during which they disciplined neighborhood residents, including children whose parents turned to the gang leader for assistance in dealing with their child's misbehavior. Taken together, these various themes point to a pattern in which gangs serve an informal social control function in many of Trinidad's distressed urban communities. Funerals for dead gang leaders are often highly attended affairs in which the deceased is eulogized as a community leader, a Robin Hood-style figure who used unconventional methods to aid the less fortunate in the community (Maguire et al., 2008). This pattern is one reason why many of the criminal justice officials we interviewed expressed fears about Trinidad "becoming another Jamaica." Jamaica's dons (gang leaders) and posses (gangs) have become a dominant source of informal social control in that nation's garrison communities and appear to have evolved to organized crime (Manwaring, 2007; Moser & Holland, 1997).

U.S. gang members were significantly more likely than gang members in Trinidad to report using alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs. Gang members in the United States were also significantly more likely to have possessed a rifle or shotgun. However, in what we view as an important pattern, gang members in Trinidad were substantially more likely to have possessed a handgun or a semiautomatic or fully automatic weapon. This is an especially striking finding when considering that gun laws are much more permissive in the United States than in Trinidad (Wells, Katz, & Kim, 2010). Gang members in Trinidad were less likely to be arrested for a drug-related or property crime than gang members from the United States, but they were more likely to have been arrested for a violent crime. They were also significantly more likely to have been the victim of a violent crime in the past 12 months than U.S. gang members. Finally, Trinidadian gang members were more likely to have been shot, threatened with a gun, injured with a weapon other than a gun, and robbed than U.S. gang members.

Due to capacity problems in the criminal justice system, the escalating violence by gang members in Trinidad has gone unchecked and much of it is based on petty issues (Maguire et al., 2010). For instance, when asked why so many young people in Trinidad are shot and killed, one gang leader told us "it's a ranking thing." He went on to explain that respect is vital among young men in his community and when people disrespect others, they get shot. Another gang leader explained that a gang war that left several people dead started over "small talk," a phrase he used to refer to petty disputes. Another gang leader told us that a gang war started when he overheard a member of another gang saying disrespectful things about him on a footpath linking his turf to the other gang's turf. While some of the violence is instrumental, clearly intended to achieve calculated objectives, some of it is more indiscriminate. For instance, a gang outreach worker who is well respected by the gangs told us in a frustrated tone of voice that workers from the power company and the telephone company are reluctant to come into gang neighborhoods because the gang members shoot at them. He tries to explain to the gang members: "if you shoot every stranger that comes here, how will anybody be able to come to you . . . if you're shooting people when they put their ladder up, how they going to fix the light?" Violence, particularly with guns, has become a daily reality for Trinidad's gang members, both as victims and offenders.

Overall, these findings point to a pattern in which Trinidad's gangs recruit older members, they hold an elevated status in their communities, they have access to more lethal weaponry, and they are both the perpetrators and the victims of violence more often than their peers in U.S. gangs. These are the kinds of insights that systematic comparative research can provide. Although this study faced some challenges with regard to statistical power, the effects were sufficiently large that we were able to discover a number of important patterns that provide insights about the gang problem in both the United States and Trinidad. The study is unique because it employed a research design that relied on common survey instruments and common measures to illuminate differences in the nature and scope of the gang problem in two nations. As research on gangs continues to spread beyond the United

States and become more global, we look forward to a body of comparative scholarship that continues to build on this study, examining the scope and nature of gangs in both developed and developing nations.

Authors' Note

The points of view expressed in this paper are those of the authors alone and do not represent the official policies or positions of Maricopa County, the Ministry of National Security, or the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. This research was approved by the Human Subjects Protection committee at Arizona State University (IRB Protocols 0607000977 and 0610001246).

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Notes

1. Space limitations preclude us from conducting a thorough review of the large body of gang research conducted in the United States. For an exhaustive review, see Klein and Maxson (2006).
2. A limitation of Esbensen and Weerman's (2005) work is that data collection was not coordinated across both countries. As a result, instrumentation, methods, and measures of gang membership and delinquency were not identical.
3. A Trinidadian with reputed ties to Muslim gangs in Trinidad was implicated in plot to blow up JFK airport in New York City in 2007.
4. This is a difficult issue to assess, in large part because school-based methodologies differ and perceptions of what constitutes gang membership might diverge from one country to another.
5. The two sites for the current study were selected because the lead author was responsible for conducting a gang assessment using similar methods and instruments in both locations. We make no claim that the gang problem in Maricopa County is representative of the nation as a whole. However, the absence of scholarship comparing gang problems in developed and developing nations suggests that it may be worthwhile to take advantage of this opportunity to compare these two jurisdictions.
6. Quantitative research on adult gang membership is rare. To our knowledge, no prior research has examined sociodemographic differences between adult and juvenile gang members; their experiences with crime, drug use, and victimization; and the organizational features of their gangs. Two American studies examining adult gang members were conducted by Kissner and Pyrooz (2009) and Fox et al. (2010). Both studies used data obtained from adults in jail. Fox et al. (2010) reported that gang members experienced significantly higher rates of victimization than non-gang members, and Kissner and Pyrooz (2009) reported that both self-control and differential association exerted a strong effect on gang members when compared to non-gang members. The findings from both studies are consistent with research using samples of juveniles.
7. There is a fairly substantial body of research on the validity of self-report data obtained from recently booked arrestees in general (Katz, Webb, Gartin, & Marshall, 1997) and self-report data obtained from gang members who participated in both school-based (Esbensen et al., 2001) and arrestee-based studies (Webb et al., 2006), specifically. This body of research suggests that these methodologies are some of the most valid and robust for understanding gangs, gang membership, and gang-related problems.
8. Ideally we would like to have included data from other sites in the United States; however, we are unaware of any other locations where similar data from adult arrestees were available.

9. Trinidad and Tobago is a two-island nation located 7 miles off the northeastern coast of Venezuela, between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. Trinidad and Tobago obtained independence from Great Britain in 1962; however, it remains a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, and it continues to be highly influenced by British culture and law. Although Trinidad and Tobago was once an agrarian society, over the past 30 years, it has transformed into one of the wealthiest and most industrialized Caribbean countries, largely through petroleum production and the provision of regional finance. It currently has the highest per capita gross national income and the second fastest-growing economy among all Caribbean, Central American, and South American countries. The nation is comprised of about 1.26 million people, of whom 40% are East Indian, 37.5 % are African, and 20.5 % are Afro-Indian.
10. Study participants included *all* eligible arrestees booked at the Port of Spain detention facility during the study period who agreed to participate. Thus we did not draw a sample of arrestees. Although the participants are not representative of the entire population of arrestees in Trinidad and Tobago during the study period, they should serve as an effective reflection of the arrestee population in the Port of Spain metropolitan area.
11. We truncated item responses at the 99th percentile to reduce outliers. The questions asking whether the respondent was threatened with a gun, threatened with a weapon, and robbed were truncated at 23; shot at and injured with a weapon were truncated at 12, assaulted was truncated at 20, and shot was not truncated.
12. All of the power calculations discussed here assume two-tailed tests and a statistical significance level of .05.

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Bios

Charles M. Katz is Watts Director of the Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety and is a professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. He received his PhD from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 1997. His research interests include gangs and gang control, quality of gang data, and police organizational theory.

Edward R. Maguire is an associate professor and chair in the Department of Justice, Law & Society at American University. He received his PhD in Criminal Justice from the State University of New York at Albany in 1997. His professional interests cover a wide range, but most of his work focuses on three topics: police organizations, violent crime, and social science measurement.

David Choate is an associate director of the for the Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety and a PhD Student in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. His research interests include research methods involving active offenders, drug use, and program evaluation.