

**Street Gangs in Winnipeg:
Inner-City Youth Prevention Programs as Sites of Resistance?**

By

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Abstract

Street gangs have come to be defined as a problem in marginalized communities globally, including in Winnipeg's inner-city communities where Indigenous street gangs proliferate. Drawing on both post-colonial literature and critical gang studies research, this study situates the advent and growth of Indigenous street gangs in the context of settler colonialism and global economic restructuring. While the current street gang problem is rooted in structural barriers created in the past, the turn to a New Right political rationality has meant that solutions must now be individually focused, economically efficient, and created within an "at risk" framework. A key question addressed, therefore, is: *to what extent can community-based organizations operating within an "at risk" framework act as sites of resistance to the New Right political rationality, and effect long-term changes to the street gang problem by addressing the underlying structures that have led to the inequality and marginalization of Indigenous peoples in Canada today?* Interviews with eight workers at four inner-city organizations in Winnipeg determined that community-based youth gang prevention programs are able to act as sites of resistance to the New Right rationality by redefining what it means for youth to be considered "at risk" from a set of individual choices to a product of multiple marginalities. For these organizations, for youth to make "smart choices" to "stay away from gangs and crime" involves providing them with long-term resources and support. Workers also actively endeavour to expand the definition of "success." Rather than simply defining success as making the choice to stay out of gangs, they interpret it as a series of small positive steps along a journey, such that over time through building relationships with youth large positive changes can occur. The study also found that short-term, program-based funding for street gang prevention programs results in

the inefficient use of resources, reduces the ability to create long-term, positive changes to the street gang problem, and often does not provide the resources to effect larger structural changes to the conditions that lead youth to join street gangs. Within this context both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community-based organizations have a role to play in working toward decolonization by challenging and changing the relational structures in society that perpetuate colonization, working together in mutual support, and moving forward in a shared understanding to meet the needs of everyone.

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Introduction

Around the world street gangs have come to be perceived as a growing problem, especially in inner-city neighbourhoods characterized by high levels of poverty, marginality, and social exclusion (Hagedorn 2008; Wacquant 2008; Vigil 2007, 2003, 2002; Klein and Maxson 2006; Moore 1978). In Canada there are an estimated 11,000 street gang members (Linden 2010: 4), with virtually all regions of the country having some level of street gang activity. The problem, however, is considered to be most severe in Western Canada, especially in the Prairie Provinces (Totten 2012: 64). With approximately 2,000 street gang members, Winnipeg has the highest proportion of street gang members in all of Canada (Chettleburgh 2007: 22). Activities such as murder, assault, drug trafficking, street-level drug dealing, and the sex trade have made street gangs a central focus of the criminal justice system (Comack et al. 2013; Levin 2013; Buddle 2011; Grekul and LaBoucane-Benson 2008).

Like other urban centres, Winnipeg's inner-city communities are characterized by poverty and its associated problems, including: family instability; limited opportunities to access stable, long-term employment that offers adequate wages; high-school and post-secondary graduation rates significantly lower than the Winnipeg average; and marginalization and social exclusion (MacKinnon, Fernandez, and Cooper 2012; Cooper 2011; Wilson and Macdonald 2010). Just over 20 percent of households in Winnipeg live in poverty (MacKinnon, Fernandez, and Cooper 2012: 17). Within the inner-city, however, 33 percent of households do not earn enough to meet their basic needs for items such as food, clothing, and shelter (Cooper 2011: 23).

At ten percent of the population, Winnipeg has the largest proportion of Indigenous peoples of the major urban centres in Canada (Statistics Canada 2010). Comprising

approximately 21 percent of the population—a number that rises to over 50 percent in some neighbourhoods (MacKinnon, Fernandez, and Cooper 2012: 15)—Winnipeg’s inner-city communities are home to a growing number of Indigenous peoples. In addition, nearly half (46 percent) of Indigenous households in Winnipeg live in poverty; for Indigenous peoples living in the inner-city this number climbs to a staggering 65 percent (p. 17). It is within these marginalized inner-city neighbourhoods that street gangs proliferate.

While street gangs have been present in Winnipeg for nearly a century (Buddle 2011: 176) it was in the 1990s that Winnipeg became known as “the birthplace of aboriginal gangs in Canada” (Dolha 2003) and garnered the reputation as the “gang capital of Canada” (Comack et al. 2013: 7; Buddle 2011: 178). Beginning with the Main Street Rattlers, Indian Posse, Manitoba Warriors, and Native Syndicate, Indigenous street gangs have continued to proliferate, especially in the inner-city. Winnipeg is now home to dozens of street gangs with names such as Redd Alert, Deuce, Nine O, North End Brotherhood, West End Boyz, and TOL (The Over Lords), to name a few (Buddle 2011: 182).

A host of community-based organizations (CBOs) operate in Winnipeg’s inner-city communities. Several of these CBOs have as their mandate to work with marginalized inner-city youth and therefore operate street gang prevention programs. The overall goal of many of these street gang prevention programs is to change the conditions that lead youth to join street gangs and thus to prevent youth from joining street gangs in the first place. Many street gang prevention programs are focused on alleviating poverty, improving family relationships and parenting practices, helping to prevent violence and abuse, working to find stable housing, improving education and training, finding youth stable long-term employment, and tackling broader issues of racism and discrimination (Curran, Bowness, and Comack 2010).

Understanding the proliferation of Indigenous street gangs in Winnipeg— and addressing the extent to which CBOs can meaningfully address this issue—requires that we attend to the broader context in which street gangs are located, as well as the impact of political rationalities that have increasingly come to inform the governance of the population by the state. To do so, this thesis will draw on a diverse literature.

Drawing on both post-colonial literature and critical gang studies research, the aim will be to situate the advent of Indigenous street gangs in the context of global economic restructuring and settler colonialism. Canada developed as a settler colonial project fuelled by capitalist expansion. The lasting result is a modern capitalist society that continues to marginalize Indigenous people through persisting colonization and related assimilationist discourses and practices. Furthermore, the spread of globalization has had several profound implications for those living in Canada, including keeping wages low and competition for jobs high so that even entry level positions require a significant amount of training and education (Cruikshank 2006). With the industrial labour jobs that in the past century helped to build and sustain Canada's working and lower middle classes moving overseas and to the global south, what remains are service sector jobs that do not offer a living wage or specialized jobs that require a high amount of skill and training. For people who have been and continue to be marginalized, acquiring adequate education and training and, in turn, stable long-term employment continues to be a struggle. The result has been many Indigenous youth resisting their marginalization by turning to street gangs for economic and social support.

Drawing on the governmentality literature, the aim will be to situate the responses to the street gang problem in the context of the shift from social welfarism to neo-liberal and neo-conservative political rationalities. Over the past forty years, in an attempt to work alongside as

well as accommodate the changing global economy, the prevailing political rationality in Canada has moved from one based on a commitment to social welfare to a more actuarial, economically focused neo-liberal political rationality. In conjunction with this shift has been the formation of an alliance between neo-liberals and neo-conservatives, resulting in a New Right ideology that has come to be the prevailing political rationality of Canadian policy makers. This New Right rationality is focused on individualism and free-market solutions while at the same time maintaining an authoritarian conservative ideology (O'Malley 1999: 185). The result has been a dismantling of the social welfare system while at the same time a heightening of law enforcement and punitive punishments. For example, as early as the 1960s police departments across North America began creating specialized street gang units, and with calls to "get tough on crime" intensifying the criminal justice system began defining street gangs as criminal organizations deserving of harsh punishments (Comack et al. 2013: 7; Spergel 2007: 15). From a time just after the end of the Second World War, when the level of wealth inequality in Canada was at its lowest and social and welfare policies were strongest, we have now moved to an era in which social and economic policy favours only a very small percentage of wealthy Canadians who continue to become even more wealthy while the poorest citizens fall even further behind (Yalnizyan 2007; Broad and Antony 2006). Increasingly, those deemed to be a "risk" have found themselves under increased scrutiny, often facing lengthy terms of confinement.

Governmentality is the power to "govern at a distance," working to create a population that is capable of governing itself without the direct influence of formal institutions but nonetheless reflecting the prevailing economic rationality (Pavlich 2011: 146). As part of governmentality and fitting with neo-liberal rationality is an actuarial approach that seeks to reduce harm and risk within society. Taking an actuarial approach, crime becomes a foregone

conclusion as something to be mitigated and managed and where youth are viewed as posing a level of risk. It is within this space that street gang prevention programs exist, most often working within a risk-based framework. Prevention programs, in this sense, work to reduce the risk posed by street gangs—as well as youth in general—and to transform street gang members into citizens who govern themselves and make “smart choices,” or as David Garland (1997: 188) calls them, “responsibilized actors.” The state, therefore, is not directly involved in the process of working with street gangs to responsibilize individuals; however, by establishing the parameters by which programs receive funding, government agencies are able to ensure that programs align with their political rationality. The government thereby extends its reach to the street gang members through the intermediaries of prevention programs (Garland 1997: 188). Therefore, while the government is not acting directly, it “governs at a distance” (ibid) through prevention programs.

Indigenous street gangs, therefore, have come to be seen as a key source of the problems confronting inner-city communities, and a key focus of government-sponsored strategies for ameliorating their harmful effects. In addition to heightened criminal justice interventions that rely on intensified policing and surveillance, stricter laws, and incarceration of street gang members, a diversity of community-based organizations (CBOs) have developed programs designed to address the effects of marginalization and social exclusion on inner-city youth and to prevent youth from turning to street gangs. A key question to be addressed in the following discussion, therefore, is: *to what extent can community-based organizations operating within an “at risk” framework act as sites of resistance to the New Right political rationality, and effect long-term changes to the street gang problem by addressing the underlying structures that have led to the inequality and marginalization of Indigenous peoples in Canada today?*

To address this question, qualitative interviews were conducted with eight workers at four CBOs working in Winnipeg's inner-city. The organizations were selected because they all are currently running street gang prevention programs and have all received funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre's (NCPC) Youth Gang Prevention Fund (YGPF). Using a governmentality framework, governance takes place indirectly and at a distance through various tactics and intermediaries (Garland 1997: 188; Foucault 1991: 103). As intermediaries take up this space and as the government's involvement becomes more indirect, the opportunity to resist the overarching government rationality of the New Right becomes possible. As Foucault (1991: 103) says, the state's importance may be "a lot more limited than many of us think."

The Outline of the Study

Chapter one examines the history of colonialism in Canada. The focus is on how directed efforts by the Canadian state to dispossess, assimilate, and destroy Indigenous peoples and their cultures have led to the marginalization of Indigenous peoples and formed the basis for the persisting effects of colonialism in Canada today. Furthermore, the connection between the marginalization of Indigenous peoples and the changing global economic landscape is examined. These connections are shown to be the underlying context for the disproportionate rates of poverty, marginality, and social exclusion currently affecting Indigenous peoples. It is within this context that Indigenous street gangs are located and the proliferation of street gangs occurs.

Chapter two examines the changing political landscape with the focus on the shift in political rationality from one rooted in social welfarism to the economically rational and punitive New Right. This includes a discussion of the proliferation of an actuarial, risk-based framework and the retreat from social welfare. With this context and with the use of a governmentality

framework responses to street gangs are examined. Particular attention is paid to historical responses to street gangs, the advent of more punitive solutions based on increasing surveillance and zero-tolerance, the creation of contemporary street gang prevention programs that focus on individual youth making “smart choices,” as well as community-based solutions.

Chapter three outlines the methodology employed in this research. Data were collected during eight in-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews with members of CBOs and these data were analyzed using a critical discourse analysis. Workers were interviewed with questions that focused on program development and implementation with respect to “at-risk” terminology, the effects of short-term, program-based funding, how success is defined by workers and government funders, and the extent to which their programs have the ability to make larger structural changes.

Chapter four examines the extent to which community-based youth gang prevention programs can offer alternative discourses and definitions of “success,” redefine what is meant by “at risk,” and examine what it means for youth to make “smart choices” through the implementation of their programs.

Chapter five examines the limits to which street gang prevention programs working in marginalized communities with limited short-term program funding are able to be successful. Particular attention is paid to the effects of the current political rationality on the federal government’s funding restrictions and how this affects the creation and implementation of youth gang prevention programs. The role of the local community in helping to shape and support street gang prevention is also examined. Finally, the role non-Indigenous organizations can play in working with Indigenous communities and youth is considered.

Chapter One

Colonization, Globalization, Marginalization, and Street Gangs

The contemporary Canadian state has not just suddenly come into existence but has developed through a process of colonization. As a settler nation, structures and processes were created to dispossess Indigenous peoples from their land and assimilate them into Euro-Canadian society. Consequently, the marginalization and inequality faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada today have their roots in the practices, policies, and laws that began with colonization. In addition, with the spread of globalization there have been profound changes to economic systems as well as local and global job markets. Jobs that at one time provided a living wage and a way out of poverty either no longer exist or have become difficult to access. The result is that Indigenous peoples in Canada today are more likely to be excluded from the mainstream economy, encounter family instability, experience violent victimization, graduate from high school at lower rates, live in poverty, and live shorter lives than non-Indigenous people. This chapter, therefore, examines the ongoing process of colonization and the changing political economy, and their contemporary repercussions on Indigenous people in Canada. It is within this context that the proliferation of Indigenous street gangs in Winnipeg can be situated.

Colonization

Colonization took place as Europeans came to conquer the “New World.” One of the driving forces behind European imperialism was capitalist accumulation and the acquisition of new territories (McLeod 2000). Along with economic and territorial expansion was the “assumption of racial superiority” (Miller 1996: 185), which provided the justification for the imperialist

colonization practices perpetrated on Indigenous peoples around the world. During the colonization of the territory that would become Canada, the Indigenous peoples living in their territories became subject to colonial practices. As Patrick Wolfe (2012: 4; 2006: 388) notes, settler colonialism “is a structure not an event.” In Canada structures were put in place to facilitate the colonization of Indigenous peoples and helped to create and shape official discourses and policy.

Colonization was an uneven process that varied by region and affected different Indigenous peoples in a variety of ways. Beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century the government of Canada, in an effort to “facilitate regional and economic development,” began signing treaties with Indigenous peoples living in the central plains region (Daschuk 2013: 79). The state viewed the treaties as necessary in order to proceed with the settlement process. For First Nations, the treaties “were a means to secure their well-being in the face of an unsure future” (p. 79). The disappearance of the bison, for instance, meant the loss of Indigenous peoples’ main food source (Daschuk 2013: 99). Pursuant to the treaties, Indigenous peoples sought assistance from the government in order to alleviate the ensuing famine. The result, however, was the majority of Indigenous peoples in the prairie region becoming confined to reserves in order to receive food from the government (p. 99-100, 122). As a result of the treaty negotiations—exacerbated by famine and starvation—Indigenous peoples were dispossessed of the territories to which they had claimed ownership at the beginning of the treaty making process (Daschuk 2013: 93).

In addition, laws were enacted that banned traditional cultural practices, including the Potlatch (ceremonial gift-giving) and *Tamanawas* (medicine or healing ceremony), and terms of two to six months in jail could be imposed for those found to be in violation of these laws

(Comack 2012: 71; Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 68). Traditional Indigenous governance that had existed prior to colonialism was replaced by “a restricted and illusory form of democracy in which only adult men had a voice and a vote” (Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 64). In an effort to disrupt cultural practices the government created the “pass system” which was intended to prevent “extended families ... on different reserves from meeting together” (Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 69).

Colonization of Indigenous peoples also took place through assimilation practices (Miller 1996: 184). Indigenous peoples were deemed by the Canadian state and the white settler society to be “savage” and “uncivilized,” and Indigenous cultures were judged to be inferior. The prevailing belief was that in order for Indigenous peoples to become contributing members of society, Indigenous cultures would need to be destroyed (Miller 1996: 184-185).

The residential school system was implemented in the nineteenth century to further the assimilation of Indigenous peoples. At first attendance was voluntary; however, in 1895 changes to the Indian Act came into effect, making attendance mandatory (Miller 1996: 126). Duncan Campbell Scott, who served as the deputy superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, said in 1920 his goal, was “to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic” (cited in Titley 1986:50). Commenting on the role of the residential school system in transforming the children from “savages” to “citizens,” the 1889 Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs explained: “The boarding school dissociates the Indian child from the deleterious home influences to which he would otherwise be subjected. It reclaims him from the uncivilized state in which he has been brought up” (cited in Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 68). Similarly, in 1908 the Minister of Indian Affairs, Frank Oliver, said one of the goals of the residential schools was to “elevate the Indian from his condition of savagery”

(cited in Milloy 1999: 3). The conditions that were present in the residential schools were often appalling. The schools were most often poorly constructed and made of cheap construction materials (p. 78, 79). Improper heating and insulation led to freezing temperatures and risk of fire due to the number of stoves needed to heat the buildings, which was especially dangerous due to the insufficient number of fire escapes (p. 80, 83). The schools most often were too small, overcrowded, and had poor ventilation systems, which led to a tuberculosis outbreak that resulted in many deaths (p. 84). In fact, Duncan Campbell Scott estimated that approximately half of all students who attended residential schools died as a result of tuberculosis (Miller 1996: 133). Hunger was also common at the schools; “the food was inadequate, frequently unappetizing, and all too often consumed in inhospitable and intimidating surroundings” (p. 290). In addition, many children suffered physical and sexual abuse. In some cases the physical abuse was so extreme as to be called sadistic (Miller 1996: 325). Indigenous leader Phil Fontaine has spoken about his experiences at the Fort Alexander Indian Residential School, saying “it wasn’t just sexual abuse, it was physical and psychological. It was a violation” (cited in Miller 1996: 328).

Part of furthering the goal of destroying Indigenous cultures involved the devaluation and attempted destruction of Indigenous knowledge systems. Indigenous knowledge systems were replaced with scientific methodologies rooted in a European ontology and taught in such a way as to be “insidiously disorienting” (Milloy 1999: 37). In residential schools children’s re-education was designed such that “the wisdom of their elders would no longer be knowledge but the superstitions of the ‘savage’” (p. 38). Indigenous languages were prohibited and the Department of Indian Affairs insisted education take place in either English or French (Miller 1996: 199-200). This policy resulted “in the suppression of the oral tradition, which had been the

primary vehicle for intergenerational transmission of Native values, culture, and identity” (Lawrence 2004:106).

While the residential school system was aimed at destroying Indigenous cultures, it most often did not provide an adequate education for students. Girls were often taught domestic skills and boys were given vocational training that provided, at best, limited economic success (Miller 1996: 159, 164). Lack of funding during the Depression and Second World War resulted in even more inadequate education for the students such that, “by the late 1950s or 1960s, bureaucrats and missionaries knew that the residential schools were inadequate to equip their students with the academic skills they would need to succeed later in life” (p. 167). Continuing the colonial project and discourse that resulted in the creation of residential schools in the first place, the government blamed the students for their lack of success (p. 168).

Given the structures created within the Canadian state and formalized in Canadian law, the colonialism of the past is not an historical artifact. The trauma trails (Atkinson 2002) it engendered continue to have profound intergenerational effects on Indigenous peoples. Today Indigenous peoples are more likely to have unstable and abusive family environments, live in poverty, graduate from high school at lower rates, experience alcohol and substance abuse, be over-represented in the criminal justice system and receive longer terms of incarceration, and live shorter lives than non-Indigenous people. Moreover, the structures created to assimilate and destroy Indigenous cultures, rooted in the overtly racist policies of the past, have not disappeared. Contemporary Canadian society was not created in a vacuum; it has been shaped and developed out of past histories, discourses, and practices. According to Elizabeth Comack (2012: 79) “while past discourses cast Aboriginal people as ‘savage,’ ‘inferior,’ and ‘child-like’ (and therefore in need of a civilizing influence and the benevolent paternalism of the state), more

contemporary discourses include the notions of the ‘welfare recipient,’ the ‘drunken Indian,’ and the ‘criminal Other’ (and therefore in need of heightened surveillance and control).” It is these harmful stereotypes and the continued persistence of colonialism that have worked to shape the inequality we see today in Winnipeg’s inner-city communities.

Economic Restructuring and Globalization

Along with the persistence of colonialism has been the ongoing and increasing spread of globalization. While the process of globalization has been taking place over the past several centuries, it was 1944 that saw the start of the modern globalization era with the creation of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (International Forum on Globalization (IFG) 2002: 18). These two organizations, along with an increase in free trade agreements around the world, have resulted in the “most fundamental redesign of the planet’s social, economic, and political arrangements since the Industrial Revolution” (ibid).

With the modern era of globalization there has been a significant shift in access to jobs, especially those jobs that offer adequate wages. The number of advanced service sector and highly technical jobs requiring a high degree of education and training has increased. But while earning potential in these jobs can be high they also have high barriers for entry (Sassen 2007: 103), such that those who are not able to access the education and training necessary to compete in the advanced service job markets are excluded. Furthermore, in order to operate effectively these advanced service industries require low-wage workers and service industries to support them. This creates demand for goods and services from low-wage workers and also from both the informal and criminal economy (ibid). The informal economy is activity that would otherwise be legal and part of the mainstream economy if it were reported to and regulated by

the government, whereas the criminal economy is illegal activity (Venkatesh 2006: 10, 11) that produces significant dangers for the communities in which it operates (e.g. the drug trade). For example, some people may rent rooms in their homes to street gangs as locations to process drugs or use their personal vehicles as taxis. Those businesses that need to compete with cheaply made foreign goods and services may employ cleaners or other service staff under the table for less than minimum wage (p. 25, 26).

Furthermore, many industries that previously employed full-time workers have turned to alternative strategies. Full-time employees have been replaced by part-time or temporary workers, third-party contractors are hired on short-term and temporary contracts, in many industries workers have been replaced by machines and new technologies, and in some cases labour that was previously the responsibility of those providing the goods and/or services has been shifted to the clients and customers to perform (Broad, Cruikshank, and Mulvale 2006: 38). With the changing global economy, jobs that previously provided adequate wages and helped to maintain a strong middle class have moved to developing countries or have been replaced by deskilled or temporary workers, resulting in an increase in unemployment (p. 41). While costs for some advanced service industries are reduced, work which already did not provide full-time hours or adequate wages in the mainstream economy has become even more dangerous and precarious.

The changing global economy and economic restructuring have had profound effects on the incomes of Canadians. The Canadian economy has fared better than that of many nations; however, the largest share of the increases in Canadian earnings have gone to the top 1 percent, and the gap between rich and poor has been increasing (Yalnizyan 2007 and 2010). Over the past thirty years the share of total earnings going to the bottom half of Canadian families dropped by

nearly 7 percent (from 27 percent to 20.5 percent) and the share going to the poorest 20 percent of Canadians dropped from 4.5 percent to 2.6 percent (Yalnizyan 2007: 12). During this same time period the share of total earnings going to the richest 10 percent of Canadians jumped from 23 percent to nearly 30 percent (p. 12). Furthermore, because of stagnant wages and reductions in benefits, those families who are able to find work are working longer hours today than they did in the past. The average Canadian family works nearly 200 hours more per year than they did about a decade ago, and because of the increase in part-time and temporary work Canadians are working more weeks a year (p. 19).

Globalization has resulted in the destabilization of local employment, a development that has especially affected youth. Youth are more likely to be unemployed than adults and when they are employed are more likely to work in informal, insecure, part-time, and low-wage jobs (Broad, Cruikshank, and Mulvale 2006: 41). This has resulted in a change in the relationship youth have towards work. As Saskia Sassen (2007: 106-107) explains, “One result is the emergence/production of new trajectories that relocate to the world of peers ... what in the past or among adults is centrally located in the world of regular work.” Previously, youth were often able to move fluidly from school to work where they could earn a living wage; however, for many youth and increasingly for adults as well—especially the most marginalized—this is no longer the case.

There has been a shift in job markets from a local focus to one based on a global economy. Industrial manufacturing jobs, which at one time provided a living wage and a route out of poverty, have moved to developing countries to exploit free trade agreements and low wages. What remains are advanced and low-wage service sector jobs. As the middle and working class jobs have become less available and the ability to earn a living wage becomes more

unattainable, the informal economy and, in some cases, the criminal economy become one of the few ways to earn enough money to survive. The result has been many marginalized youth, including Indigenous youth, turning to the criminal economy and street gangs for economic and social support.

Modern Repercussions for Indigenous Peoples

In Canada, and especially in the Prairie Provinces, the negative effects of colonialism and globalization have contributed to the continuing social and economic marginalization of Indigenous peoples. Winnipeg's inner-city is one place in particular where this pattern is evident. As reported in the 2006 Census, Winnipeg is home to the highest percentage of Indigenous peoples of all major cities in Canada (Statistics Canada 2010). Within the inner-city approximately 21 percent of the population is Indigenous, a number that rises to over 50 percent in some neighbourhoods (MacKinnon, Fernandez, and Cooper 2012: 15). Winnipeg's inner-city is considered by many as "the place where you go when you can't afford to live anywhere else, and a place where you shouldn't go if you can afford to live anywhere else" (p. 17).

One of the lasting effects of residential schools has been a "breakdown in traditional Aboriginal methods of teaching child-rearing and parenting" (Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 515). This is because children and young parents were denied access to their own parents and were prevented from drawing "upon the examples and advice of their extended families ... [and] without that example, many Aboriginal parents today feel that they have never learned how to raise their own children" (p. 515). Furthermore, "continuing cycles of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as addiction, suicide, and other markers of intergenerational trauma, within

Aboriginal communities are considered residual effects of the residential-school experience” (Woolford 2009: 85).

One consequence of colonialism is that many Indigenous peoples have histories of family instability. In 2009 over 37 percent of Indigenous children lived with a lone parent and 54 percent of mothers of Indigenous children had less than high school education (Government of Manitoba 2010: 51). As a result of these high rates of single parenting and inadequate education, many Indigenous parents have had to rely upon social assistance to make ends meet. The stress placed on parents has meant that child abuse and neglect have become a common occurrence (Curran, Bowness, and Comack 2010: 6). More than two-thirds of Indigenous males and three-quarters of Indigenous females living in Canadian inner-cities have reported childhood family abuse (La Prairie 1994: 406). Furthermore, a 2009 survey found that 15 percent of Indigenous women living with a spouse or in a domestic partnership were victims of domestic violence, compared to 6 percent of non-Indigenous women (Perreault 2011: 10).

Indigenous peoples in general are three times more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to experience a violent victimization (Brzozowski, Taylor-Butts, and Johnson 2006: 1). The 2004 General Social Survey (GSS) reported that nearly 40 percent of Indigenous peoples over 15 years of age have been victimized in the previous year (p. 4). Indigenous youth are one of the most victimized groups; they not only suffer violence at higher rates than non-Indigenous youth but are victimized at higher rates than older Indigenous peoples. While representing 22 percent of Indigenous peoples, Indigenous youth between 15 and 24 years of age are the victims in almost half of non-spousal violent incidents reported by Indigenous people (Perreault 2011: 9).

Not only are Indigenous peoples more likely to suffer from unstable family environments and victimization, their average life expectancy is considerably shorter than their non-Indigenous counterparts. The life expectancy for Indigenous peoples in Canada is 7.4 years lower for men and 5.2 years lower for women than the Canadian average (Bracken, Dean, and Morrissette 2009: 65). Part of this statistic is due to the extremely high suicide rates among Indigenous peoples. Indigenous adults are two to three times more likely to commit suicide than non-Indigenous adults and Indigenous youth are five to six times more likely than non-Indigenous youth to commit suicide (Deane, Bracken, and Morrissette 2007: 126).

Poverty is another serious problem that complicates the lives of Indigenous peoples in Canada. In Winnipeg just over 20 percent of households live in poverty (MacKinnon, Fernandez, and Cooper 2012: 17). However, this number more than doubles to 46 percent for Indigenous households and climbs to a staggering 65 percent for Indigenous households in the inner-city (ibid). Indigenous people on average earn \$8,135 a year less than the Canadian median; a difference of 30 percent (Wilson and Macdonald 2010: 3). According to Daniel Wilson and David Macdonald (p. 13), “employed non-Aboriginal Canadians have median earned incomes of \$7,083 higher, on average, than employed Aboriginal people in urban settings and \$4,492 higher, on average, in rural settings.” Wilson and Macdonald (p. 3) also note, “Non-Aboriginal people working on urban reserves earn 34% more than First Nations workers. On rural reserves, non-Aboriginal Canadians make 88% more than their First Nation colleagues.” The income gap between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous people, while slowly narrowing, clearly persists (ibid).

The statistics for Indigenous peoples’ education in Manitoba are further evidence of systemic inequality in society. Indigenous peoples between the ages of 15 and 29 are “six times

as likely as non-Aboriginal people to have less than a grade 9 education” (Silver et al. 2002: 7). Approximately 50 percent of Indigenous youth in Winnipeg in 2002 did not have a high school diploma compared to some 20 percent of non-Indigenous youth (p. 7). While this percentage is improving, inner-city youth continue to have high school graduation rates below those seen in other areas of Winnipeg. For example, in two Winnipeg inner-city communities (the Point Douglas and Downtown areas) youth high school graduation rates are 26 and 20 percent, respectively, below the city average (MacKinnon, Fernandez, and Cooper 2012: 18). And for adults between 25 and 64 years, 16 percent fewer Indigenous adults compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts have completed some form of postsecondary education (p. 17).

Street Gangs

The economic and social marginalization faced by Indigenous peoples in contemporary Canadian society is undeniable. It is one of the most fundamental reasons for the increased presence of Indigenous street gangs in Canada, especially in Winnipeg’s inner-city. However, while street gangs continue to proliferate in inner-city communities, not only in Canada but around the world, there is not a clear consensus on how they should be defined. There is also disagreement on the social context in which street gangs form as well as which criteria must be present for a group to be labelled as a street gang.

As a result of exclusion from the mainstream economy, without access to stable well-paying jobs, and with limited access to a good education some youth join street gangs and take part in the criminal economy. Street gangs often make their money by engaging in break and enters, assaults, robberies, prostitution, illegal gambling, insurance fraud, and extortion; however, the majority of their profits come from the sale and distribution of illegal drugs

(Comack et al. 2013: 101; Buddle 2011: 182). This makes street gangs an important part of—and not separate from—the process of globalization and the global drug trade (Sassen 2007: 98).

While dealing drugs may earn profits for street gang members it also brings high levels of violence. Although, researchers point out that while drug dealing is the means by which street gangs make most of their money, the vast majority of their time is spent on mundane activities such as hanging out on the street or watching television and not involved in criminal or violent acts (Comack et al. 2013: 102; Klein 1995: 30). While other businesses can rely on the state and the courts to ensure customers pay their bills, those involved in the illegal drug trade do not have access to these forms of recourse and thus use violence as a means to ensure payment (Comack et al. 2013: 101). In addition, in order to maintain their customer base street gangs use violence to protect their territory or “turf.” As a result, “the trade in illegal drugs leaves considerable destruction in its wake” (p. 101). In an effort to address the growing street gang problem and the danger they pose to both their own communities and society in general several explanations have been developed.

Criminological Definitions and Explanations

In his classic study of gangs in the 1920s Fredric Thrasher (1963: 33) defined street gangs as “a natural and spontaneous type of organization arising through conflict, [and] is a symptom of disorganization in the larger social framework.” Thrasher (ibid) situates street gangs as a natural response to the “deterioration in housing, sanitation, and other conditions of life in the slum, [which] give the impression of general disorganization and decay.” This definition suggests that disorganized communities are responsible for the proliferation of street gangs in marginalized areas. Thrasher does not take into account larger structural inequalities that produce the

marginalized neighbourhoods. More contemporary research by James Short and Lorine Hughes (2006) continues the study of street gangs from a social disorganization framework. Hughes (2006: 39) suggests that street gang researchers pay “special consideration of the immediate and long-term effects of varying social forces and processes”; however, her analysis does not go beyond the local context. Furthermore, both Short and Hughes (2006: 227-229), while suggesting that global forces may have some effect on street gang formation and persistence, are clear to situate street gangs—as well as any solutions to this problem—within their specific neighbourhood contexts.

Other conventional theories of street gangs have continued this focus on the local or individual context as the cause of the creation and perpetuation of street gangs. For example, Albert Cohen’s subcultural approach suggests youth, especially young men, join street gangs because they are not able to adequately assimilate into the dominant culture and therefore join street gangs in a rebellion against authority. Instead of focusing on the individual, Walter Miller’s subcultural approach points to lower class communities as having a “culture of poverty” that produces street gangs due to “the dominance of female-headed households in their communities” (Comack et al. 2013: 11). Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin’s approach, which takes its lead from strain theory, suggests that youth join street gangs to acquire the material wealth and upward mobility they have been denied through legitimate means. As Comack and her colleagues (p. 12) note, these subcultural theories all place the blame on the individuals or their communities as the source of the street gang problem and point to inadequate assimilation into the dominant middle-class culture as the reason for why youth in marginalized communities join street gangs at far higher rates than their middle-class counterparts. None of these theoretical positions adequately takes into account the larger structural inequalities within society.

As their involvement in the criminal economy, their level of violence, and the danger they pose to their communities grows the criminal justice system has increasingly come to define street gangs as criminal organizations subject to harsh penalties. As criminal organizations, street gang activity falls under *Criminal Code* section 467.1, which states:

“*criminal organization*” means a group, however organized, that (a) is composed of three or more persons in or outside Canada; and (b) has as one of its main purposes or main activities the facilitation or commission of one or more serious offences that, if committed, would likely result in the direct or indirect receipt of a material benefit, including a financial benefit, by the group or by any of the persons who constitute the group.

Other criteria that are often included in defining street gangs include: a group name; distinctive group symbols or defining insignia (tattoos, colours, etc.); control of a specific territory or turf; group organization (i.e., leaders and followers); durability or stability (must exist as a social entity for a specified period of time); formal or informal gang rules; and initiation rituals for new gang members (such as “beating in” new members) (Comack et al. 2013: 9; Wortley 2010: 2). Often the police will take a broad definition when defining street gangs and will use as few as two of these criteria to label a group of youth as a street gang (Wortley 2010: 22).

While the conventional research on street gangs has focused on the local or individual context and the specific criteria used to identify street gangs and their members, critical gang studies researchers argue that the structural inequalities present in society are the most significant contributor to the proliferation of street gangs globally. Malcolm Klein (1995: 194,195) points to “the increasing urban underclass ... [as] the foremost cause of the recent proliferation of gangs and the likely best predictor of its continuation.” Klein (p. 195) goes on to say that the proliferation of street gangs “is simply a response to poverty.” Malcolm Klein and Cheryl Maxson (2006: 216) note that the changing economy, education system failure, and absence of well-paying jobs all contribute to street gang formation. James Vigil (2007: 9) makes it clear that

“the central and associated reasons for the rise of street gangs worldwide are poverty ... and the repercussions and ramifications associated with it.” Vigil (2007) situates gangs within the changing economy and as a direct result of the multiple marginalities faced by those living in ghettos, barrios, and other marginalized communities. According to Joan Moore (1978: 168) streets gangs are a direct result of limited access to education, the failure of the welfare system, and a lack of stable, well-paying jobs in marginalized communities. John Hagedorn (2008: 7) clearly situates the proliferation of street gangs around the world as the direct result of the spread of neo-liberal policy and the withdrawal of the state from the provision of social benefits. In the Canadian context these inequalities stem directly from the persisting effects of colonialism and the marginality faced by so many Indigenous peoples. According to Jana Grekul and Patti LaBoucane-Benson (2008: 76) “Aboriginal gang members experience structural inequality, racism, discrimination, family dysfunction, substance abuse, and violence—all indicators of marginalization.” They go on to say that “structural inequality and discrimination works against many Aboriginal youth to make gangs an attractive alternative to lives filled with hopelessness and despair” (ibid).

Critical gang studies researchers, therefore, point to the spread of globalization and neo-liberalism as the primary causes of the proliferation of street gangs. Within this context, solutions involve combating the social and economic exclusion of those marginalized through enabling participation in the local economy and providing increased access to education. However, the underlying structural inequalities created as a result of the global capitalist market economy, as well as what is meant by education, are not called into question. In the Canadian context, advocating for greater inclusion in the mainstream economy and access to the education system

without questioning and addressing the underlying inequality and settler world view may in fact work to further the process of colonization rather than promote decolonization.

Therefore, in defining street gangs several features must be taken into account. First, street gangs engage in illegal activities. This is important as these activities distinguish street gangs and their members from other youth and make them a danger to the communities in which they live. Second, they are self-identified (Klein 1995: 30) and distinct. This includes having a name, colours, symbols, and formal and informal rules known only to the gang that distinguish street gangs from each other. Third, while the street gang persists over a period of time the individual membership may be fluid—especially those on the periphery who are most susceptible to prevention programs. The fourth feature is the local community context in which the gang exists. While there are similarities across virtually all street gangs there are local community differences that can have a significant effect on street gang formation and therefore on the solutions to resolve this problem. Lastly, one of the most important aspects of street gang formation is the social context in which street gangs proliferate. This includes the economic, historical, and legal processes that have worked to marginalize communities and cultural groups. In Canada, the continued effects of colonialism together with the changing global economy have worked to marginalize Indigenous peoples and have resulted in Indigenous youth joining street gangs at far higher rates than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Comack and her colleagues (2013: 10) make this clear when they say “in Winnipeg’s North End, Aboriginal street gangs are located in the colonial context of entrenched racialized poverty.”

Liminal Spaces

Street gangs, especially in the Western Canadian context, can be understood as existing in liminal spaces. Liminal spaces exist between socially defined spaces and characterize the transition between these spaces (Turner 1974: 237). These spaces can include family, community and cultural groups, and socially defined roles within society. Excluded from mainstream culture, having limited access to stable employment, separated from their culture, and coming from unstable—in some cases violent—family environments, street gangs become a rational choice for Indigenous youth existing in the liminal space of the inner-city.

The lives of Indigenous children were deeply affected by the residential schools and, as such, both their homes and the schools became liminal spaces (Buddle 2011: 176). Within these spaces, some Indigenous people came together based on their shared experience of exclusion and displacement (ibid). Throughout the 1960s those youth who fled the schools and migrated to the city would often have to avoid detection by social services, which meant having to avoid going to family members' homes during the day (p. 177). These youth formed “kin groups and survival units, stealing food, ... finding hotel bars that would serve liquor to minors and landlords who would rent party rooms in vacant houses on a nightly basis, selling drugs to make ends meet, fighting often for their lives with other youth gangs, and at once avoiding the authorities at all costs” (ibid).

Bonita Lawrence (2010: 172) suggests that street gangs may represent not a “rejection of ‘family’ per se but rather a striving toward a more expansive notion of kin. Gangs, as fraternal organization, often supply the approval, support and recognition that are otherwise lacking.” As such, for those living within racialized spaces and “who find themselves unpersuaded by the disciplining effects of traditions and extended families, and equally unaffected by city controls

such as schools, police, and employers, urban gangs with their own boundaries, values, rules and styles of sociality emerge to provide structure where there is none” (Buddle 2011: 76).

Street Gangs in Winnipeg

In the early part of the twentieth century there were few if any gangs in Winnipeg. Those groups that the media had labelled as gangs were mostly small crews of young men who would rob stores and banks in the city. As Christopher Giles (2000: 48) notes, “these groups were not street gangs *per se*, but more appropriately termed ‘criminal groups’. Unlike a street gang, these criminal groups lacked a collective name, they were small in size, they had no clear territorial boundaries, were not visible in the community and engaged, primarily, in profitable property crimes for limited periods of time.” There were also groups of youth that the *Winnipeg Free Press* labelled as gangs but were organized around violent assaults and vandalism and did not share the other characteristics of street gangs today (p. 48, 50). They were “gang-like, but they were short-term, transitory and event specific” (p. 50).

By the 1970s communities in Winnipeg’s inner-city were more and more reflecting the inequality faced by Indigenous peoples as a result of colonialism (Comack et al. 2013: 73). The number of Indigenous peoples incarcerated in the criminal justice system was increasing and the incidence of drug dealing and drug use were becoming prevalent (ibid). As Indigenous peoples began moving from rural communities into Winnipeg’s stigmatized inner-city neighbourhoods Indigenous street gangs began to emerge. Forming in the first half of the 1980s and only in existence for a short time, the Main Street Rattlers emerged as the first Indigenous street gang in Winnipeg. They mostly worked as drug dealers for the biker gangs and became the focus of several newspaper reports (Comack et al. 2013: 74; Giles 2000: 53).

Following the Rattlers, Indian Posse was formed in 1988 by Daniel and Richard Wolfe (Friesen 2011; Giles 2000: 63) and in the 1990s the Manitoba Warriors were formed (Comack et al. 2013: 74). The Manitoba Warriors began mostly as security on reserves and took part in the Oka crisis of 1990. Shortly after that they became a key part of the drug trade in Winnipeg (ibid). Native Syndicate, beginning as a prison gang, would join Indian Posse and the Manitoba Warriors as part of the growing Indigenous street gang problem in Winnipeg (p. 77). It was in the fall of 1993 that Winnipeg saw its first street gang murder when Chris Robichaud was stabbed for a package of cigarettes (Giles 2000: 59).

Street gangs develop out of poor inner-city communities and are made up of people who are racially, spatially, and economically marginalized. As John Hagedorn (2008: xxiv) has noted, “Gangs are shaped by racial and ethnic oppression, as well as poverty and slums, and are reactions of despair to persisting inequality.” Inner-city Winnipeg is one such area and it is from these beginnings that Winnipeg became the “gang capital of Canada” (Comack et al. 2013: 7; Buddle 2011: 178). Today in Winnipeg there are an estimated 2,000 street gang members belonging to dozens of street gangs with names such as Indian Posse, Manitoba Warriors, Native Syndicate, MOB (Most Organized Brothers), Redd Alert, Deuce, Nine O, North End Brotherhood, West End Boyz, East Side Crips, and TOL (The Over Lords) (Buddle 2011: 182; Chettleburgh 2007: 22; Giles 2000: 64).

These street gangs have violent histories that have caused significant harm to inner-city families and communities. Even the street gang members themselves have made it clear that they are violent individuals from whom the community needs protection (Comack et al. 2009: 3). Furthermore, for Indigenous street gang members the “rates of internalized violence, including suicide, drug overdose, and self-injurious behaviors are far higher than externalized criminal

forms of violence” (Totten 2009: 138). In fact some research shows “far more Aboriginal youth gang members die from suicide and drug overdoses than homicide” (p. 138).

Concluding Remarks

Indigenous peoples in Canada have been—and continue to be—subjected to colonial processes, resulting in the marginalization of Indigenous peoples, especially Indigenous youth. Due to the increased presence of police and perceived threat of street gangs in inner-city communities, many more Indigenous youth than their non-Indigenous counterparts become suspected of street gang activity and are questioned, stopped, and detained by police. According to Comack and her colleagues (2009: 4) “Everyone who ‘fits the description’—especially those who are young, male, and Aboriginal—is being targeted.” While Short and Hughes are correct in their assertion that the experience of street gang members can vary considerably and therefore the local context in which street gangs exist is important (Short and Hughes 2006: 229), the larger political and economic context is equally important. This is one of the reasons critical gang studies researchers have argued that the social, political, and economic context in which contemporary street gangs exist be included in the definition (Comack et al. 2013: 10).

While contemporary colonization and the changing global economy have created the current conditions that have helped to foster the proliferation of street gangs in the inner-city, the political rationality that has taken hold over the past half century has also worked to contribute to the current street gang problem and has shaped many of the solutions that have been developed. The next chapter examines the changing political rationality from one rooted in social welfarism to an economically rational and punitive New Right, which includes a risk-based framework that

has become ubiquitous within this rationality. Furthermore, the street gang prevention strategies that have been produced from within these various political rationalities will also be examined.

Chapter Two

The New Right, Risk, and Street Gang Prevention

Colonization continues to have significant negative effects on Indigenous peoples. In addition, the spread of globalization has not only resulted in the continued marginalization of Indigenous peoples but has also exacerbated the street gang problem. However, the changes that have occurred in the prevailing political rationality have been no less profound. In order to meet the demands of the changing global economy many governments and policy makers moved from frameworks rooted in strong social welfare policies to more economically rational perspectives with distinct neo-liberal agendas. With increased globalization and the spread of the global capitalist class agenda this new economic rationality has become hegemonic. Along with the increasing prevalence of neo-liberalism has been the spread of a more punitive neo-conservative political rationality. Those on the right of the political spectrum have coalesced into the “New Right”—a political rationality comprised of an amalgam of the punitive aspects of neo-conservatism and the economically rational, risk-based actuarial framework of neo-liberalism. This chapter examines the political shift from social welfare to the New Right, how risk-based frameworks have become ubiquitous, and the ways in which the New Right rationality has informed various strategies adopted to respond to the issue of street gangs. Specifically, street gang prevention initiatives that involve telling youth to make “smart choices,” military-style police interventions into the inner-city, the intensive supervision of street gang members, and community-based approaches are discussed.

From Social Welfare to the New Right

The end of the Great Depression and the Second World War saw the creation of strong social welfare policies in Canada (Teeple 2000: 16). These policies were meant to reduce the impact of income inequalities and prevent high unemployment as experienced during the Great Depression. The creation of welfare policies were made possible, however, through the struggles of first-wave feminists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These early feminists laid the foundation of the Canadian welfare state as they worked to “entrench a welfare model of family in law and social policy” (Chunn 2014: 233). The welfare policies developed were—like other state policies of the modern era—tied to the economic system of capitalist production. John Maynard Keynes, referred to as “a driving force behind the creation of the modern welfare state,” argued that the limitations of capitalism to maintain full employment should be resolved with increased state intervention (Olsen 2011: 65, 167; Backhouse and Nishizawa 2010: 1). As Gary Teeple (2000: 15) discusses, the welfare state “has intervened in the form of social policies, programs, standards, and regulations ... to provide for, answer, or accommodate certain social needs for which the capitalist mode of production in itself has no solution.” These social welfare policies are premised on the notion that all citizens should have access to equal rights, resources, and protection within society.

The Canadian welfare state created supports in four main areas (Teeple 2000: 15). First, it addressed the reproductive needs such as health care, education, child care, child/family allowance, food stamps, and support for single mothers. Second, it provided workers with protection against unfair labour practices that include insufficient wages, child labour, unreasonable work hours, and compensation for injuries sustained while at work. Third, the state provided regulation and laws that protected workers and gave them the ability to negotiate with

employers more equally; most notably, this included collective bargaining rights. The fourth area of support was for those who were not able to work or require assistance to do so, such as persons with disabilities or the elderly who receive old age pension (p. 15). These changes were developed through “the struggles and growing vitality of national labour movements, women’s organizations, civil rights protests, and other groups and their ability to challenge and resist the power of the dominant classes and corporations, as well as their organizations, interests, and ideologies in a period of economic growth” (Olsen 2011: 6). Beginning with the work of Keynes, the state became viewed as the necessary purveyor of social benefits, such that those who need support are able to receive it and do not have to rely on exploitive capitalist market forces. The welfare state—achieved through hard work and struggle—was created to mitigate the power of capital, provide minimum standards within contemporary society to which all people should have access, and give all members of society access to resources in the growing economy. Thus, while there is demand for strong social welfare policies, they remain in place; however, as the political rationality shifts, so too does the state’s provision of social support.

Beginning in the 1970s, increasing significantly in the 1980s, and persisting today has been a shift away from policies rooted in social welfare to those focused on increasing economic activity (Olsen 2011: 7-8). With the increase in globalization and an economic system changing from one centred in nation states to a more global system of production where economies are integrated into “the capitalist world market” (Broad and Antony 2006: 22), the result has been governments and policy makers increasingly taking on a neo-liberal rationality. This rationality exists as a policy, ideology, and as a technique of governmentality in order to socialize citizens to the changing economic system (Larner 2000: 6).

As policy neo-liberalism is focused on three main beliefs. First, along with globalization and changing economic markets came the belief that the free market is a “panacea” and “the most neutral, or non-political, way to provide for the needs of society” (Teepie 2000: 85). Loïc Wacquant (2009: 301) adds that for the proponents of neo-liberalism the free market is “the optimal device, not only for guiding corporate strategies and economic transaction... but for organizing the gamut of human activities, including the private provision of core public goods.” Furthermore, not only do the proponents of neo-liberalism view the free market as the most effective system for guiding and solving economic and social policies and problems, they also view the state as introducing inefficiencies and hindering economic growth. In neo-liberal terms, therefore, the less interference by the state, the more effective will be the economy.

Second, along with the shift to the free market and deregulation have been calls to increase economic efficiency in all areas of governance, including social welfare policies and spending such that “rather than formulating policies to ensure full employment and an inclusive social welfare system, governments are now focused on enhancing economic efficiency” (Larner 2000: 6). The result has been the shrinking of the social welfare system in favour of “market provisioning of formerly ‘public’ goods and services” (p. 7). Therefore, non-profit local and community-based solutions, including for-profit, third-party organizations, are increasingly called upon to fill the gap left by the withdrawal of the state from the provision of social benefits (Wacquant 2009: 45, 104). Although, as a significant portion of their funding often comes from state funders, the services CBOs are able to provide are diminishing as funding becomes scarcer.

The third main tenet of neo-liberal policy is a focus on what Wacquant (2009: 301) calls “the cultural trope of individual responsibility.” This belief often conflates structural inequalities present in the system with individual failings. Increases in state intervention in the form of social

assistance are seen as limiting individual freedom and condoning a poor work ethic. Those who advocate for neo-liberalism suggest that individuals' need for social support is due to a lack of effort or personal failing on their part; those who find themselves requiring social support are cast as lazy and unproductive.

As Wendy Larner (2000: 9) discusses, neo-liberalism is not simply a reflection of a few policy changes made by government officials; it also exists as an ideology. Throughout the world neo-liberal ideology has influenced a wide range of people from every social class (ibid). Larner (ibid) makes the point, however, that the hegemony of neo-liberalism "is only achieved through an ongoing process of contestation and struggle." This point is important because it suggests that the sway of neo-liberalism is not certain and that oppositional discourses can compete with (and counter) the hegemony of the neo-liberal rationality. In fact, as the state becomes further removed from people's daily lives space becomes available for alternative discourses and ideas. CBOs, for example, that offer social services no longer provided by the state have the potential to act as sites of resistance and alternative discourses.

In addition to the policy changes and ideological shift that have taken place, neo-liberalism has resulted in the implementation of new techniques of governmentality concerned with the way that conduct is shaped (O'Malley 2010: 14). While the turn to a neo-liberal rationality has meant the withdrawal of the state from providing social benefits and increased economic deregulation, this does not mean there is less governance. Instead, as Larner (2000: 12) notes, "on one hand neo-liberalism problematizes the state and is concerned to specify its limits through the invocation of individual choice, on the other hand it involves forms of governance that encourage both institutions and individuals to conform to the norms of the market." What has occurred is not the removal or limiting of the state from all social intervention, but the

indirect influence of the state to promote a particular political agenda, referred to as “government-at-a-distance” (Garland 1997: 175, 182).

As will be discussed in more detail below, the shift to neo-liberalism has meant the increased use of actuarial techniques of large scale governance. One result of this shift has been the creation of new powers of governance; specifically, “biopolitics” or “biopower” that work to manage social life on a large scale (Pavlich 2011: 146). According to George Pavlich (ibid), “biopolitics is an instrument of a wider governmentality by which modern liberal subjects are increasingly called upon to govern themselves outside of direct, formal institutions.” This has resulted in government interventions that have as their focus “new ways to govern through the ‘conduct of conduct’ in which subjects increasingly regulate their own being in contexts deployed by government formations” (ibid). Therefore, while individuals are becoming increasingly responsible for their own conduct this conduct is nonetheless shaped and expected to conform to the prevailing political rationality.

Furthermore, through alliances of the private sector and non-state agencies the state is able to “responsibilize” citizens and “‘translate’ power from one locale to another” (Garland 1997: 182). Through such policies citizens are responsibilized in that

Neo-liberal strategies of rule, found in diverse realms including workplaces, educational institutions and health and welfare agencies, encourage people to see themselves as individualized and active subjects responsible for enhancing their own well being. This conception of the ‘active society’ can also be linked to a particular politics of self in which we are all encouraged to ‘work on ourselves’ in a range of domains, ... outside the purview of traditional conceptions of the political. (Larner 2000: 13)

This means that while the state now governs-at-a-distance, the indirect influence of its policies is nonetheless real in both their implication and their effect. Creating a distance between the policies of government and those whom it is meant to govern has had the consequence that ineffective policy becomes the responsibility more of those who implement it and less of those

who create the policy. For example, when programs offered by CBOs fail to meet expected goals the blame is often put on those organizations and not on the governing agencies and funders who failed to provide sufficient funding needed to achieve success or who defined success so narrowly as to make its achievement unlikely. Even worse, as notions of individual responsibility become more ubiquitous the people that programs are meant to support are blamed for simply not working hard enough to achieve success even though the resources to do so were not made available. However, as David Garland (1997: 182) notes, “This process always entails activity on the part of the ‘subjects of power’ and it therefore has built into it the probability that outcomes will be shaped by the resistance or private objectives of those acting ‘down the line.’”

While a neo-liberal political rationality has come to dominate, this rationality has become inextricably linked with a neo-conservative rationality (Brown 2006) that is rooted in a functionalist notion of the state. Neo-conservative rationality has, according to Pat O’Malley (1999: 186), “very specific organic overtones.” O’Malley is referring to the conservative notion that society is for the most part orderly and has developed naturally, and that the social structures that exist within society serve the function of maintaining this order. Those who work against this perceived social order are labelled as deviants, marginalized, and often criminalized. From this perspective, those seen as deviating from social norms become subject to harsh discipline designed to reintegrate them into the social order. Garland (2001: 165) notes that social controls are now aimed at the “moral breakdown, incivility, and the decline of the family.” While these conceptions of neo-conservatism are classically conservative, what makes neo-conservatism “neo” is “the open affirmation of moralized state power in the domestic and international sphere.” Moreover, “neoconservatism abandons classic conservative commitments to a modest libertarianism, isolationism, frugality and fiscal tightness, belief in limits and moderation, and

affinity with aristocratic virtues of refinement, rectitude, civility, education, and discipline” (Brown 2006: 697). Therefore, while classic conservatism has traditionally been focused on conserving community and limited government, neo-conservatism has shifted to a state-centered notion of community that has become tasked with upholding morality, both domestically and internationally, with large police and military forces in order to maintain perceived notions of social order (Brown 2006: 697).

The proponents of this neo-conservative rationality view the state as the primary source of order such that the law, police, and the courts maintain equilibrium by arresting and punishing those who commit offences. As such, “the law may not only control contract and crime, but may also regulate family relationships, personal morality and so on. And [in response] the state must possess severe and ultimate sanction and may utilise retributive punishment and social controls” (Hayes 1994: 122). This has resulted in calls to “get tough” on crime and the government imposing lengthy terms of incarceration for what are in some cases minor offences by first time offenders. As O’Malley (1999: 189) says, neo-conservative rationality “matches punishment and penal discipline with support for a unified moral order under the governance of state paternalism.”

The growth of neo-conservatism has resulted in “three-strikes” laws in the United States that impose a sentence of life imprisonment on the conviction of three serious offences (Wacquant 2009: 66). In Canada this rationality has been in evidence with the implementation of the *Safe Streets and Communities Act* that imposes mandatory minimum sentences for certain drug offences and harsher punishment on young offenders, and restricts the use of conditional sentences (CCPA-MB and the John Howard Society of Manitoba 2012: 5). In addition, the federal government has implemented the *Truth in Sentencing Act* that limits the amount of credit

that an individual may receive for time spent in pre-sentencing custody (Casavant and Valiquet 2009: 1). This law was passed to restrict the discretion of judges to count pre-sentence custody at a rate of two-to-one, which had in some cases previously resulted in shorter sentences (p. 2).

Many police departments, led by the federal government, have adopted a “tough on crime,” zero-tolerance approach in accordance with a neo-conservative rationality. Developed from the Broken-Windows theory put forward by James Wilson and George Kelling (1982), this type of policing involves tactics such as suppression and deterrence strategies. The argument advanced is that criminals are drawn to signs of disorder—broken windows, graffiti, homeless people creating a mess on the street—and police attention with “immediate and stern repression of the slightest violations or nuisance on the streets stems the onset of major criminal offences by (re)establishing a healthy climate of order” (Wacquant 2009: 264).

The competing interests of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism may in some ways be contradictory but what has occurred is a coalescing of these seemingly competing rationalities in the creation of a New Right political rationality. While the individually focused, free-market-driven rationality of neo-liberalism that seeks to expand markets and limit the power of nation states through globalization may be at odds with the nationalist community-driven, moralist foundation of neo-conservatism, these political camps have found areas of agreement and issues on which they have negotiated unique compromises (Brown 2006: 699). The most significant point of agreement is that

Like neoliberalism, neoconservatism is not opposed to government even as it draws on this legitimating legacy of an older conservatism in its opposition to taxation and welfare. Neocons oppose state redistribution of wealth, not expensive government as such, just as they selectively favor government intrusion, censorship, and regulation for the under-races and underclasses, for critical intellectuals, and for security and morality issues. (Brown 2006:700)

In particular, neo-liberals and neo-conservatives are able to find agreement in “a shared hostility to regimes of the welfare-interventionist state” (O’Malley 1999: 188). In addition to the limited state intervention of neo-liberalism, the New Right has produced innovative approaches to maintain the paternalism of neo-conservatism. The result is a hybrid state, what Wacquant (2009: 312) has called a “centaur state, liberal at the top and paternalistic at the bottom.” On the one hand, those who require state support and protection, and who are viewed as a threat to the social order, become subject to state paternalism with the removal of social support, workfare, and increased lengths of incarceration. On the other hand, those at the top of the social hierarchy benefit from “the free play of capital, dereliction of labor law and deregulation of employment, [and] retraction or removal of collective protections” (p.43).

The repercussion of the New Right rationality can be seen within the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC). In each of the previous two years the CSC has spent nearly \$3 billion on federal corrections in Canada, which is an increase of over \$600 million from 2010-2011 (CSC 2014: 11). Much of this increase in spending is due to the neo-conservative tough-on-crime agenda of the federal government, which has resulted in a 16.5 percent increase in the federal inmate population (Correctional Investigator 2013: 3-4). Due to calls from neo-liberals within the New Right to decrease spending, the supports that inmates had are being removed (p. 4). While the federal prison system does continue to offer some rehabilitation programs their budgets are not only inadequate but continue to be reduced. For example, according to the Correctional Investigator of Canada (p. 33) “The use of work releases has declined by nearly 39% in the last decade.” The result has been that of the nearly 14,500 people incarcerated in 2011-2012 “only 363 inmates benefited from a Warden-approved work release” (Correctional Investigator 2013: 33; Public Safety Canada 2012a: 35). In addition, and reflective of a neo-

conservative rationality, the majority of training and vocational programming that has been offered to women has been related to “domestic work,” and has resulted in women expressing a desire to be given a wider range of options. Male offenders, while restricted in the amount of programs offered, have access to training that “provides a better foundation for securing employment, earning a living and remaining crime-free in the community after release” (Correctional Investigator 2013: 33). However, even though these programs have shown to be effective at reducing recidivism, due to the neo-liberal rationality of fiscal and individual responsibility, the CSC currently plans on reducing the amount spent on education and training for inmates even further (CSC n.d.: 22).

The shift to a New Right political rationality has therefore resulted in extensive changes in governance both around the world and here in Canada. The most severe effects of this shift have been the reduction of social welfare, a focus on free market solutions where increasingly only those who are able to afford goods and services are able to access them, an increased focus on individual responsibility such that solutions are aimed only at individuals and not systemic inequalities, governance that now works at-a-distance to “responsibilize” citizens, and the increased use of policing and the criminal justice system to impose punitive punishments on those deemed to be unresponsive to these disciplinary techniques. As part of this shift and coupled with expanding populations are the implementation of actuarial techniques of governance that have been adopted and now pervade virtually all aspects of society. Individuals have simply become a level of “risk” to be managed.

Risk

The adoption of risk-based actuarial techniques has been increasing and these techniques are now employed in every part of our lives. Health-based risk reduction has been widely accepted since the 1970s (O'Malley 2010: 2) and includes such practices as using diet and exercise to reduce the chance of getting heart disease and quitting smoking to reduce the chance of getting cancer. Other risk-reduction techniques, such as wearing a helmet while riding a bike or a seat belt while driving, are now so pervasive that those who do not do so are considered foolish. As O'Malley (2010: 3) says, "the model of risk itself—the use of predictive statistical knowledge linked to techniques of harm prevention—overwhelmingly has been regarded as one of the benefits bestowed by science." However, within this risk framework it is impossible to ever completely eliminate one's risk; it is never possible to completely avoid cancer and even if wearing a bike helmet, brain injuries can still occur. This same principle of risk reduction has also pervaded the criminal justice system. In addition to the more neo-conservative, punitive, and paternalistic "tough on crime" stance toward street gangs and crime generally, the government and criminal justice system have implemented neo-liberal policies framed around a risk-management approach.

Risk-based justice is premised on the statistical likelihood of individuals committing offences and of crimes occurring—also referred to as "actuarial justice" (O'Malley 2004: 326). Within this framework the criminal Other has come to be viewed as a foregone conclusion and as something out there to be mitigated and managed. With the adoption of this framework the criminal justice system has moved from a model based on prevention and rehabilitation to one of risk mitigation and management (O'Malley 2010: 1; Garland 1996: 446). This is what Garland (2001) has referred to as "the culture of control." Those viewed as criminals have become a

“risky population to be efficiently and prudently managed by the state, as well as by citizens and a host of non-state agencies” (Hannah-Moffat 2005: 30). In order to deal with criminals as “risks” that require management, the government has implemented approaches that are designed to focus on changing individuals’ behaviour, both those viewed as a threat and those seen as needing protection (O’Malley 2010: 4). The types of interventions adopted have most often been selected because they could be implemented in little time, with low economic cost, and produce relatively quick—most often short-term—results based on previously set timelines (p. 24). Just like other techniques of risk reduction, it becomes impossible to completely eliminate crime and criminals; instead, they simply become problems to be managed.

A common risk-reduction strategy has been to remove those viewed as a risk from society by means of incarceration. As the framework has shifted from one of rehabilitation to that of risk reduction and warehousing of offenders, the supports that were in place to help offenders have been removed to reduce costs (O’Malley 2010: 24). Those deemed as a risk are simply removed and warehoused for a period of time to prevent them from causing harm in the community. When risky individuals do leave prison often they receive curfews and are monitored by the police (O’Malley 2004: 326). Within this framework, high rates of recidivism become justification that the people who were incarcerated deserved to be there, and that terms of incarceration should be increased (O’Malley 2010: 43). These policies that remove supports and hand out harsh penalties for “risky” offenders are consistent with the neo-liberal focus on economic efficiency and personal responsibility as well as the neo-conservative need for community protection and the defence of the moral order. Furthermore, as the increase in prison populations has not brought about the intended reduction of risk, the solution has been to impose longer sentences and increase the cost of crime; for example, as discussed previously, the

implementation of mandatory minimum sentences, reduced credit for pre-trial custody, and “three-strikes” laws that have increased the length of sentences, thus removing people deemed to be a risk from the community for longer periods. In fact, even as the United States—the country with the highest rate of incarceration—has backed away from a tough-on-crime approach (Panetta 2014) and the Supreme Court of Canada has unanimously ruled regarding *The Truth in Sentencing Act* that “offenders can receive extra credit for time spent in custody before they are sentenced” the current federal government’s tough-on-crime agenda has not been contained (The Canadian Press 2014). This is evidenced when “Justice Minister Peter MacKay fired back with a terse statement that affirmed the government’s long-held belief that violent criminals should face hard time for their crimes” (ibid).

Risk-based techniques merge with governmentality to change individuals’ actions to reduce their level of risk. Within neo-liberal rationality, not limiting one’s risk is seen as a personal choice. As O’Malley (2010: 14) says, “We are all supposed to be ‘entrepreneurs’ of our own lives, to take risks on our own behalf.” Those who live in inner-city communities are seen as choosing to live in risky areas and thus become responsible for what happens to them; they are also subject to the increased surveillance of the police. For example, Neighbourhood Watch programs were created out of a risk-based, neo-liberal rationality (p. 27). These programs were designed such that the community, specifically individuals within the community, would be responsible for reducing the community’s crime risk (ibid). Residents were responsible for reporting any risky individuals to the police. This program thereby responsabilized individuals to become accountable for their own safety and their community’s safety. No longer were the police solely responsible for ensuring the safety of communities. As O’Malley (ibid) notes,

Neighbourhood Watch led to other similar programs such as Rural Watch, Small Business Watch, and Police Community Consultation Committees.

As individuals continued to be responsabilized, other risk reduction techniques were supported by government and law enforcement. In what O'Malley (2010: 27) refers to as a notorious example, women were urged to avoid being out in public alone after dark. Women who went out alone at night were viewed as simply making an individual choice to be at risk. However, this risk reduction technique failed to address many of the risks women face and only removed the burden of safety from the police and the state; instead blaming women for any victimization they faced (p. 28). It did nothing to address the violence from male friends and relatives or domestic violence that can have long term consequences and poses much larger risks for women (ibid). Since effectively addressing domestic violence and violence against women is viewed as not fiscally responsible, removes the onus of safety from the individual, and would require more state intervention than simply telling women to stay home, these risks were not addressed.

Within the neo-liberal risk-based society emerges the notion of “deserving” and “undeserving” citizens. The proliferation of individualized notions of personal responsibility and risk-based technologies has resulted in an Us versus Them mentality. Those who “play by the rules,” own a business (referred to as “job creators”), or are wage earners—more recently only high-wage earners—are viewed as deserving of social welfare; for example, sick benefits, unemployment, and retirement benefits (Wacquant 2009: 46). However, more recently these benefits have begun to shift from the state’s responsibility to the responsibility of individuals and their families. “Deserving” individuals are increasingly expected to be responsible for taking care of aging parents and grandparents, and to save and invest for their own retirement.

While benefits provided for “deserving” individuals have been decreasing, there has also been a shift in who is considered as “deserving.” As the neo-liberal calls for increased fiscal responsibility have grown, those who in the past were considered “deserving,” such as single parents and persons with disabilities, are now defined as “undeserving” (Mosher 2014: 204). In the past, those who “would inevitably be temporarily or permanently cast off by a market economy” (p. 202) were considered deserving of social support, whereas today only through paid work can someone become deserving of state support. Requiring assistance, as Wacquant (2009: 46) points out, “effectively makes them second-class citizens, on the grounds that the support they receive is granted without an offsetting contribution on their part, and thus threatens to undermine their ‘work ethic.’” Those who rely on support are viewed as undeserving and lazy and become subject to “draconian conditions” (ibid). In an effort to ensure an “offsetting contribution,” policies such as workfare have been introduced and support from the government becomes contingent on proving their commitment to society through hard work and labour. For individuals and families to receive support they must show commitment to “make-work and workfare programmes that ostensibly will (re)turn participants to the labour force” (Chunn and Gavigan 2004: 232).

As a result of the continuing processes of colonization Indigenous peoples often find themselves deemed “undeserving.” As has been discussed, Indigenous peoples continue to suffer from structural barriers only to be told that the repercussions are to be dealt with on an individual basis. As Janine Brodie (2008:41) notes:

Responsibility for social crises that find their genesis in such macro processes such as structural unemployment, racism, or unequal gender orders is shifted onto the shoulders of individuals. Living your own life thus includes taking personal responsibility for ‘your own failures,’ especially dependency on public provision. As a result of this governing strategy, structurally disadvantaged groups are ‘collectively individualized’ in popular cultural representations ... and in public policy.

Therefore, as Indigenous peoples continue to be marginalized from lasting structural inequalities the shift to the New Right has meant that any solutions must now come in the form of individually-based, economically efficient strategies—even though the problems may be rooted in the structural barriers created in the past.

In order to responsabilize citizens social welfare has been turned into a litmus test for deservingness. Just like the carrot on the stick, however, reaching the status of “deserving,” for many people, has become almost impossible. Social programs are increasingly focused on providing education and training in order for participants to transition to the world of paid work. For the most part, however, these programs are not able to address the structural barriers that prevent the most marginalized citizens from accessing stable, long-term employment.

Another result of the risk-based approach to crime prevention has been the creation of what O’Malley (2010: 28) has referred to as “vicious circles”:

Crime Statistics reflect past police and court assumptions and practices, as well as actual offending patterns. Consequently, it is quite possible that the rules of thumb developed by police, often shared by community stereotypes, heighten the chances of racially and ethnically distinct youth being disproportionately targeted as suspects. To the degree this results in a disproportionate rate of convictions, the originating assumptions are seemingly confirmed by hard data. In turn, when these seemingly validated data are transformed into risk profiles, they translate into further police targeting.

With the current criminal justice system—along with Canadian culture more generally—having developed from a colonial history, the result of these vicious circles is that Indigenous peoples, who represent 12 percent of the Manitoba population, now make up 70 percent of those admitted to provincial correctional custody (Government of Manitoba 2010: 94; Statistics Canada 2010). The over-representation of Indigenous youth is even more severe. Comprising 23 percent of the youth population of Manitoba, Indigenous youth represent “86 per cent of all admissions to sentenced custody, 79 per cent of all admissions to remand (pre-trial detention) and 63 per cent of all admissions to probation” (Government of Manitoba 2010: 95).

Furthermore, defining what is meant by “at risk” so far has been rooted within an actuarial framework of large-scale governance. This is problematic because most often what is considered risky is based on “objective” definitions that most often do not take into account the local context (O’Malley 2010: 51). What are considered risks for policy makers and government funders may not reflect the same types or levels of risk for those living in inner-city communities. For example, “Indigenous offenders and communities may have yet other assessments of risk, relating to ... their traditional practices and beliefs or to the risks that police represent to their young people” (ibid). Community residents may have street gang members who are friends and family and thus view the risk, and also solutions to the gang problem, differently than those who only view street gang members as dangerous offenders who should simply be locked away.

Within the political rationality of the New Right, solutions must be low cost and fiscally responsible, individually and free-market focused, produce immediate—though not necessarily long-term—results, and have a punitive response to disorder. The government has generally chosen risk-reduction strategies based on situational crime prevention that makes offending less attractive and more risky for offenders (O’Malley 2010: 29). However, O’Malley (p. 39) suggests that within the risk-based framework of the New Right, programs can act as a form of resistance and may even be regarded as the basis of “alternative practices and politics of risk.” Thus, it is important “to pay attention to potential and existing sources of change, rather than automatically adopting a demoralizing focus on the inevitability of risk as a key technology of an exclusionary polity” (ibid). In this sense, the risk-based terminology adopted by neo-liberalism does not preclude the creation of programs rooted in strong social welfare policies or suggest that programs created within a risk-based framework are only capable of serving or promoting this

rationality. Nor is it certain that these programs have the capacity to resist the New Right political rationality. Instead, “rather than imagining risk as ‘hegemonic’ or as capable of only one reading, we need to take more seriously the idea that risk itself is a domain of struggle and also that its implications are not fixed or always foreseeable” (O’Malley 2010: 41).

Street Gang Prevention

As a result of the changing global economy and political rationality the prevalence of street gangs both around the world and in Canada has increased. In an effort to deal with this growing problem various strategies have been implemented. These have included historical, punitive “tough on crime,” risk reduction, and community-based approaches.

Irving Spergel (2007: 17) has noted that police gang units in North America, rather than focusing on prevention, instead spend a majority of their time collecting intelligence, investigating, and suppressing street gang activity. In contrast, while European police utilize suppression as a tool they also work with youth, their families, schools, and communities in response to street gang activity (ibid). As was discussed in the previous chapter, police departments and specialized gang units often limit their criteria for identifying street gang members to only two attributes, thus the likelihood of overestimating the prevalence of street gangs increases. Overestimating the prevalence of street gangs in a community can increase the fear of street gangs (Wortley 2010: 10). This fear results in increased support for more police funding as well as more punitive actions on the part of the police and criminal justice system, especially in marginalized inner-city communities where the prevalence of street gangs is greatest. However, simply putting street gang members in jail for lengthy periods of incarceration has not reduced the levels of violence and other street gang activities. In fact, for

many street gang members going to jail becomes a badge of honour and a means of garnering status within the gang (Comack et al. 2013: 93; Comack et al. 2009: 3). Within jails and prisons street gang members recruit new members. As violence in jails is common (Comack et al. 2009: 3) often youth join gangs in prison for safety and security. Lacking adequate supports when they leave jail, they continue to be involved in the street gang.

Historical Responses

The Chicago Area Project had its beginning in the 1930s and 1940s. This project was implemented in low-income communities and was designed as a systematic neighbourhood-development approach that “stressed the autonomy of local residents in planning and operating programs focused on neighborhood improvement, along with delinquency control and youth socialization” (Spergel 2007: 5). According to Spergel (ibid), “The important feature that distinguished the Chicago Area Project from established social-agency approaches ... was its emphasis on street outreach, and high levels of commitment and activity from [local] residents and local groups ... rather than on professional social-agency workers.” The Chicago Area Project was the first to try and mobilize local area residents to solve the street gang problem. However, at that time some of those who worked on the project did not believe that it adequately addressed the underlying factors that were leading to the creation of the street gangs and placed too much emphasis on delinquency (i.e. social disorganization and individual youth) as responsible for the reason youth were joining the street gangs (p. 6).

Taking their lead from the Chicago Area Project several street gang prevention programs were implemented in various cities throughout the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s. However, many of these programs suffered from poor design and/or poor implementation and were found to be

ineffective (Spergel 2007: 10; Spergel 1995: 248). As a result, by the mid-1960s the youth outreach model was no longer extensively used (Spergel 2007: 11). In the mid-1970s the Crisis Intervention Network (CIN) was created in Philadelphia. It brought together a network of various organizations and agencies in order to reduce rival gang disputes, counsel youth and families, and strengthen community organizations (p. 14). The adult probations unit, and to a lesser extent the police and local schools, worked with CIN to help reduce street gang violence (ibid). While street gang related homicides decreased it is unclear whether CIN was responsible as a formal evaluation of the network was never conducted (p. 15).

One of the most well-known street gang prevention initiatives was Boston's Operation Ceasefire that began in the mid-1990s. It is also the project on which many other gang prevention programs have been modelled. One of the important features of Operation Ceasefire was known as the "pulling levers" deterrence strategy (Braga et al. 2001: 199). The police sent messages to the street gangs that violence would not be tolerated and in response to any violence the criminal justice system would "pull every lever" legally available to "evoke an immediate and intense response" (ibid). While Operation Ceasefire was primarily a zero-tolerance suppression strategy it also mobilized various agencies and community-based groups (Spergel 2007: 18).

Boston's Operation Ceasefire was intended to create a pause in the violence in the hopes that this would lead to long-term reductions in overall street gang violence (Braga et al. 2001: 200). Shortly after the implementation of Operation Ceasefire a reduction in gang violence was observed in Boston. Evaluators found that the success of the project could not be attributed to only one of the groups involved but that success came from the various agencies and groups working together at a community level (Spergel 2007: 18, 19). However, because the underlying

structural problems that had led to the increase in gang violence were never adequately addressed, soon after the project was ended the street gang violence returned. In fact, from 2000 to 2006 youth homicide in Boston increased by 160 percent (Braga, Hureau, and Winship 2008: 148-149).

Local Responses of the New Right

In 2007, the province of Manitoba implemented Project Gang Proof. This risk-based initiative focuses on giving youth the opportunity to make “smart choices” and stay out of gangs (Manitoba Justice 2007: 33). The project involved a set of written resources to provide youth and their families information to help keep youth from joining street gangs (Manitoba Justice 2014). According to the government’s website, “The provincial government has developed a comprehensive coordinated response that focuses on dealing with gang issues and creating positive alternatives for Manitoba youth.” Information provided in the handbook suggests that, “Communities can do their part to prevent children and youth from being lured into gangs by creating a focused gang-prevention strategy. The more focused a strategy, the more successful it is likely to be” (Manitoba Justice 2007: 46). In addition, the Project Gang Proof handbook says that, “Community partners should be involved in creating a strategy,” and “long-term preventive approaches” are needed (p. 46-47). However, the resources to adequately support community partners in addressing the broader structural problems that exist beyond individuals and their communities have not been made available. Therefore, Project Gang Proof, like previous risk-reduction initiatives, has the goal of reducing “risks,” but has attempted to accomplish this goal by creating a low-cost initiative that does not adequately address the underlying problems.

In an effort to deal with the growing street gang problem and to reduce increasing rates of violence, the Winnipeg Police Service has implemented suppression and deterrence strategies in Winnipeg's inner-city. In November 2005 the Winnipeg Police Service created the Street Crime Unit when they implemented a tough-on-crime, military style intervention, called Operation Clean Sweep. Clean Sweep was initiated after the shooting death of a 17-year-old bystander in Winnipeg's West End during a clash between members of rival street gangs (Comack and Silver 2006: 16). During Operation Clean Sweep 45 police officers were added in the West End, resulting in 873 arrests, 73 apprehensions, 5,555 spot checks, 42 search warrants executed, 897 offence notices issued, and nearly \$1 million worth of illegal drugs and firearms seized (ibid). During this operation, however, the police were frequently stopping and questioning anyone that fit the description of being a street gang member or gang-related person who could provide information. Unfortunately, this resulted in many young Indigenous men being questioned by police who were not street gang members and had no affiliation with street gangs. Furthermore, Clean Sweep did nothing to address the poverty, racism, and social exclusion experienced by many inner-city residents.

In 2010 the Manitoba Department of Justice implemented the Gang Response and Suppression Plan (GRASP) to address the growing street gang problem in Winnipeg (Levin 2013: 2). The program is designed to closely monitor up to 100 street gang members who have prior histories of violent offending and who are on probation. The aim is to take a "zero-tolerance and immediate response to offending as well as to breaches of probation" (p. 3). The rationale of the program is that through intensive monitoring of street gang members on probation, interventions can take place prior to any re-offending. The program involves the coordination of probation personnel, Crown prosecutors, and the Winnipeg police in the

intensive monitoring of the street gang members. Street gang members on GRASP are to receive two curfew checks each week at their homes by the police and when a breach of probation occurs there is an expedited process to have warrants issued. This process has resulted in much faster arrests of those found in violation of their probation, with nearly two-thirds arrested in the first week as compared to 10 percent prior to having being put on GRASP (p. 25).

The evaluation of GRASP (p. 21) found that “Many of the offenders on GRASP not only have histories of violence but also have histories of anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol addictions, limited education and training, a lack of stable employment, as well as unstable family and living environments.” It is important to note that in addition to the intensive surveillance and supervision, those on GRASP were able to access a significant number of programs both with their probation supervisor and with CBOs operating outside of probations. As the majority of the street gang members on GRASP are Indigenous some of the programs that have been developed are centred on providing cultural teaching and culturally relevant programs (p. 23). Stemming from the lasting effects of colonialism the evaluation noted that the majority of the Indigenous street gang members on GRASP “had not been introduced to their culture or cultural heritage prior to being in custody. Many of the offenders did not know where they could go to learn about Aboriginal culture or what resources were available to them” (p. 23). The evaluation also noted that one of the problems with GRASP is that the supports and programming that are made available to the street gang members while they are on probation become difficult to access or unavailable after they are no longer on probation (p. 24). Therefore, support is only available while the street gang members are involved with the criminal justice system and under intensive supervision and surveillance.

Community-Based Approaches

The Canadian federal government has made available, through the National Crime Prevention Centre's (NCPC) Youth Gang Prevention Fund (YGPF), \$7.5 million per year for CBOs offering street gang prevention programs (NCPC 2013). The YGPF is designed to provide programs and organizations working in “high-need communities that target youth at risk of violent behaviour and of joining gangs, or youth who need support to exit gangs ... time-limited grant and contribution funding for selected, evidence-based initiatives” (NCPC 2013). Furthermore, these programs must address specific risk and protective factors as well as promote evidence-based programs that provide alternatives to joining street gangs (ibid). According to Public Safety Canada’s website the NCPC funds programs that target “those most at-risk, especially: Children, youth and young adults who show multiple risk factors known to be related to offending behaviour; High risk offenders in communities; and Aboriginal and northern communities, especially those with high crime rates and persistent crime problems” (Public Safety Canada 2014b).

While the current implementation of the YGPF began in 2012 the fund was set up in 2007 and began by funding seventeen programs across Canada (Smith-Moncrieffe 2013: 1). The goal of the YGPF was to fund CBOs that were working to address one or more of the following groups:

Children 6–11 who demonstrate early risk factors such as premature police contact, systematic difficulties adapting to school or high levels of impulsiveness and aggression; youth 12–17 who demonstrate multiple risk factors such as substance abuse, school drop-out or contact with the youth criminal justice system; young adults who have a known history of offending and incarceration; Aboriginal peoples because of their significant over-representation as offenders and victims; and gang-involved youth. (Smith-Moncrieffe 2013: 1)

Five Winnipeg programs received this funding: Circle of Courage run by Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc.; Just TV run by Broadway Neighbourhood Centre; Project OASIS run by New Directions; Turning the Tides run by Ndinawnmaaganag Endaawaad Inc.; and West Central Youth Outreach run by the Spence Neighbourhood Association.

Circle of Courage was designed to provide male Indigenous youth between 12 to 17 years of age the “opportunities and social interventions to develop skills and resiliency, and to become leaders in their families and communities” (Public Safety Canada 2012b: 1). This was accomplished through: cultural programming and ceremonies that involved both youth and their families to instill pride in being Indigenous; education and pre-employment training that helped youth to complete homework as well as write resumes and apply for jobs; counselling and support that included providing resources related to housing and food; and recreation activities (Proactive Information Services 2011: 3). As such the program was designed to, as much as possible, address many of the challenges or “risks” that youth face.

Just TV was originally designed as a program that targeted youth who are 16 to 24 years of age living in the West Broadway area of Winnipeg (Public Safety Canada 2012b: 2). The program was designed such that through the creative self-expression of creating music videos youth could be given a voice in dealing with issues such as drugs, gangs, and violence (Broadway Neighbourhood Centre 2014; Public Safety Canada 2012b: 2). The program also helps to give youth resources and support with other problems they face. For example, staff help youth write resumes and apply for jobs, assist youth in finding stable and affordable housing, as well as connect youth with substance abuse support when needed (Public Safety Canada 2012b: 2). While continuing to address the problems youth face within the context of creative self-

expression, the program now offers youth the ability to participate in all aspects of video production, both in front of and behind the camera (Broadway Neighbourhood Centre 2014).

Project OASIS was designed based on a wrap-around approach that focused on newcomer youth aged 12 to 19 who are in contact with the criminal justice system and are members of, or at risk of joining, street gangs (Department of Justice 2013; Public Safety Canada 2012: 2). The program created individualized case plans with the participants and their families to address the issues they face. The resources provided included access to: “academic support to improve school performance and attendance; family support; mental-health assessment and treatment (through both in-house and community resources); training in literacy, numeracy, computer skills and English; recreational activities; life-skills training; and employment resources and assistance with job placements” (Department of Justice 2013).

Turning the Tides was a mentorship program that focused on youth living in Winnipeg’s North End to prevent youth from joining street gangs and was implemented in two parts (Public Safety Canada 2012b: 2). In the first part “youth built skills and a sense of belonging by engaging in community service at the Ndinawe Youth Resource Centre” (ibid). The second part of the program involved finding some of the youth paid employment for ten hours per week (ibid). The second part also involved matching members of the community “who had healed from a history of criminal behavior, to be mentors for youth leaving Correctional Services” (ibid).

The West Central Youth Outreach program was designed to provide intensive intervention in the lives of youth living in Winnipeg’s West End (Public Safety Canada 2012b: 2). Some of the youth involved in the program worked one-on-one with mentors to address the specific challenges in the youth’s life. Most often this involved addressing challenges around

school and education, finding recreational opportunities, as well as crisis intervention as needed (ibid). Although the focus of the program was on youth, often the youth's family was also involved.

All five of these programs worked with youth living in Winnipeg's inner-city communities to address the growing street gang problem. As such, all five programs worked with youth to address challenges related to housing, food security, education, drug and alcohol abuse, unstable family environments, well as provide affordable recreation, and to different degrees address issues related to racism and colonization. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter five, due to the current funding restrictions of the NCPC of these five programs only Just TV is still currently in operation. However, all the organizations continue to offer some form of programming around youth gang prevention.

Concluding Remarks

The changing political rationality along with the expanding use of a risk-based framework has had a profound effect on society in general and on street gang prevention in particular.

Increasingly, there has been a reduction in all social spending and a withdrawal of the welfare state; however, the effects have most profoundly affected those deemed to be "undeserving" of state resources. Within the New Right political rationality solutions are expected to be economically efficient, rooted in individualized notions of personal responsibility, and focused on having individuals make "smart choices." Those found to be unresponsive to strategies of governmentality have increasingly come to find themselves subject to paternalistic neo-conservative strategies aimed at restoring the social order. Street gang prevention has most often focused on military style police interventions, intensive supervision, or having youth make

“smart choices.” The result has been solutions that for the most part do not address the issues of poverty, inequality, and racism present in society. While there has been some government financial support for CBOs working with marginalized youth, compared to what is spent on incarceration, this amount is very small.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which community-based youth gang prevention programs developed within a risk-based framework and operating in Winnipeg's inner-city are able to successfully address the street gang problem, resisting the New Right rationality of government funders and policy makers, and effecting large scale changes to structural inequalities present in society. In order to determine the extent that CBOs are able to accomplish these goals interviews were conducted with workers from CBOs in Winnipeg's inner-city.

Interviews were conducted with workers from those Winnipeg organizations that had received funding from the YGPF from 2007 to 2012, specifically, Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc., Broadway Neighbourhood Centre, New Directions, and the Spence Neighbourhood Association. Unfortunately, representatives from Ndinawnmaaganag Endaawaad Inc. declined requests for interviews. In total, eight interviews were conducted with six women and two men. Of the eight interview participants three are front-line workers, three are administrative staff, and two individuals work as both front-line and administrative staff. While two of the participants had only worked for the programs for short periods of time, the majority of those interviewed have extensive experience working with street gang members and marginalized people in general. Due to the small size of the organizations, limited number of organizations, and along with the goal of selecting participants who have knowledge of creating and implementing youth gang prevention programming, funding restrictions, and working with youth, the participants for this study were selected as a convenience sample. While the sample of workers interviewed may not represent a

random selection of CBO workers in Winnipeg, the majority of participants have significant experience and knowledge in working in CBOs and in youth gang prevention.

In-person interviews were conducted with all eight participants. The interviews took place between October 2013 and January 2014. The participants selected the locations of the interview, with six choosing to be interviewed at the organization with which they work and two choosing to be interviewed at local coffee shops, as these locations were more convenient. The in-depth, semi-structured interviews ranged from 30 to 80 minutes, with most interviews taking approximately one hour (see: Appendix A for the Interview Schedule). Consent was obtained in writing at the beginning of each interview (see: Appendix B) and the interviews were digitally recorded. The interviews were later transcribed to facilitate data analysis.

In order to examine the general themes of the study, specific questions relating to “risk,” “success,” and overall structural changes were posed to the participants. In order to understand the ways in which workers define “success” questions such as “What indicators does your organization use to determine ‘success’?” and “Do you think these indicators align with what your funders consider ‘success’?” were asked. To uncover the ways in which workers used the term “at risk” one question respondents were asked is, “What is meant by ‘at risk’ and what does it mean for youth to be considered ‘at risk’?” In order to examine the extent to which workers feel they are able to make larger structural changes and work within the current New Right political rationality, they were, for example, asked “To what extent do you feel that your program has the ability to be successful, either in the short term or long term, at reducing street gang involvement within the current risk reduction framework and short term program based funding?” and “How successful do you think the program has been?” The data collected during the interviews were analysed using a critical discourse analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse refers to “a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. Thus the term refers both to the production of knowledge through language and representations and the way that knowledge is institutionalized, shaping social practices and setting new practices into play” (du Gay 1996: 43). Attending to discourse is important for two reasons. First, the language or terminology employed in the production of knowledge is the means through which that subject is understood. In this respect, to the extent that the language of the New Right, especially “at risk” terminology, has become ubiquitous it has also become institutionalized such that in order for organizations to work with government funders and apply for funding, they must adopt this language. Second, through interaction with the youth it becomes possible for this language to be altered, redefined, and used in unanticipated ways by program workers. Within this context, critical discourse analysis becomes useful for examining the influence that the New Right political rationality, especially the “at risk” language, has over the creation and implementation of community-based programs.

According to Teun van Dijk (1993: 254) critical discourse analysis “needs to focus on the discursive strategies that legitimate control, or otherwise ‘naturalize’ the social order, and especially relations of inequality.” As van Dijk (p. 257) notes, power is exercised through the ability to control discourse, meaning power becomes the ability to control both discursive frameworks (i.e. how discourse is framed) and the means to access that discourse (e.g. access to the media, creating reports, writing public documents, etc.). Norman Fairclough (1995: 97) makes the point that discourse and discursive practice exist as a language text, discourse practice (or text production and interpretation), and as sociocultural practice. The result is that “discourse is embedded within sociocultural practice at a number of levels; in the immediate situation, in the

wider institution or organization, and at a society level” (ibid). This means that through critical discourse analysis, various levels of analysis can take place. At the level of individual interactions between program workers and the participants, how “success” comes to be defined for individual youth can be examined. At the organizational level the effects of the discursive frameworks of government funders on the creation and implementation of programs can be examined. Moreover, the effect that organizations can have in changing the broader social context can also be examined. This follows the notion that discourse is not only a result of social structures but that it “contributes to shaping and reshaping them, to producing and transforming them” (p. 73) and, as such, can be examined through a critical discourse analysis. Therefore, this type of analysis is useful for examining the extent to which the discursive frameworks of the New Right political rationality has an impact on, and in turn is affected by, the implementation of community-based street gang prevention programs.

The process of critical discourse analysis within the context of this study involves attending to the various ways that language and discursive practice are employed by program workers surrounding “at risk” youth; specifically, within the context of the delivery of street gang prevention programs operating in Winnipeg’s inner-city. This includes examining how workers construct youth as “at risk,” interact with the youth who participate in their programs in building individual case plans and defining what “success” means for individual youth, and how the organizations relate themselves and the youth to the community, social, and cultural contexts in which they live. In addition, because government funders have situated street gang prevention within the context of having youth make “smart choices,” attention was paid to how this discursive framework is used within the context of creating and implementing the programs. As the broader political rationality of the New Right affects funding (for example, limited, short-

term program funding), attending to the various methods that workers and program administrators employ in dealing with these limitations and the strategies utilized in addressing broader issues of marginalization and poverty are also carefully examined.

Data Analysis

The data collected during the interviews were coded in order to facilitate the process of discourse analysis. This type of coding is what Amanda Coffey and Paul Atkinson (1996: 29) refer to as “coding as an analytic strategy.” The coding process was used to make the data more manageable while at the same time allowing for an in-depth analysis (p. 30). As Coffey and Atkinson (p. 29) note, coding is helpful for “identifying and reordering data, allowing the data to be thought about in new and different ways.” The general themes and categories were developed based on the research questions; however, as the data collection and analysis took place, the themes and codes were modified based on the data gathered.

During the coding of the interview responses, the creation of additional codes became necessary to adequately account for the various ways in which themes were discussed. These codes were then organized based on similarities in the responses. In examining how respondents discuss “at risk” youth, attention was paid to the various ways workers use this term. Codes were then developed to adequately capture these uses. With regard to the discussions of the ability of organizations to make large scale changes, themes were organized around the extent to which respondents felt they had the ability to affect these changes but also in the types of changes that organizations could make. General themes were framed by the questions that were posed but during in-depth readings of the responses codes were created to account for the various ways in which respondents viewed their limitations. This in turn facilitated the creation of codes around

various definitions of “success” within the context of street gang prevention. In regards to funding, codes emerged with respect to the limitations of the funding structures that exist as a result of the political rationality of government funders. The extent to which these funding restrictions affected program delivery resulted in additional codes beyond the general themes that attend to the variety of ways in which these limitations were discussed.

Concluding Remarks

Interviewing front-line workers and administrative staff is important in understanding the ways in which current political and economic rationalities have affected both the creation of community-based programs and how these programs are implemented within the context of the New Right political rationality of government funders. Employing a critical discourse analysis has three benefits. First, it allows for understanding how the broader socio-political and economic rationalities of the New Right affect notions of marginalized youth as “at risk” and frame solutions to the problem of street gangs. Second, it enables a deconstruction of the various ways in which the at-risk discursive framework is used in implementing the programs and the creation, design, and limitations imposed on street gang programs. Third, it is useful for examining the effect the of the New Right discursive frameworks on the interactions workers have with youth.

Chapter four examines the various ways in which the CBOs operating street gang prevention programs resist the New Right discursive framework of “at risk” youth, and use the term differently than government funders and policy makers intend. How “success” comes to be defined within the context of youth gang prevention is also examined. Chapter five examines the extent to which street gang prevention programs are able to counter the New Right political

rationality and effect larger changes while working within the confines of limited, short-term funding. The role Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations have to play within the context of youth gang prevention is also examined.

Chapter Four

“Smart Choices,” “Success,” and Resistance

According to Michel Foucault (1977: 27), knowledge is formed, not by those in power dictating what constitutes objective knowledge or “truth,” but instead through the micro interactions of “power-knowledge-relations.” Rather than conceptualizing power as a “thing” that is owned, Foucault called attention to the mechanics of power and its disbursement throughout society. Moreover, “where there is power there is resistance” (Foucault 1978: 95). As such, while certain discourses—and their corresponding discursive practices—come to dominate in society at particular points in history, there is always the potential for alternative discourses that work against what is considered as “truth” (Pavlich 2011: 140).

In these terms, community-based approaches have the capacity for resistance to the New Right, risk-based framework. By operating at-a-distance youth gang prevention programs have the ability to utilize the “at risk” terminology in unanticipated ways, and redefine what it means to be “at risk.” While government policy makers simply tell youth to make “smart choices,” workers can help youth to learn how to make these choices and support them along the way. Therefore, this chapter examines the various ways in which workers use the “at risk” terminology, redefine what it means for youth to be “at risk,” examine what is involved in making “smart choices,” and how workers and program participants resist government policy makers’ definition of “success.”

“At Risk” Terminology

As was discussed in chapter two, risk-based terminology has pervaded virtually every part of our lives. Not only has this terminology become ubiquitous, it currently exists within the context of the New Right rationality, meaning that it is inextricably tied to notions of personal responsibility. More specifically, decisions are viewed as a matter of choice that individuals make between equally possible alternatives and not as the result of structural inequalities beyond their control. Furthermore, the increased use of actuarial techniques of large scale governance has meant that people have become statistics and that some level of risk is a foregone conclusion. Within this context, risk involves individuals assuming their own personal liability and solutions to social problems must be economically efficient (i.e. low cost).

The risk-based framework is evident in the funding requirements of the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC). Only programs that focus on “risk” and protective factors receive funding. In order to be eligible for funding, programs must be designed and framed around this framework. According to Public Safety Canada (2014b) , “Projects supported by the NCPC must have the potential to demonstrate the extent to which risk factors are addressed, how the approach chosen is based on evidence of what works and whether these are efficient means to reduce crime.” Referring to this constraint, one participant noted, “We live in the confines of funding worlds and reality so we have to use that language.” An important question then is whether or not those working in community-based youth gang prevention programs view designating youth as “at risk” is an effective strategy and to what extent is there resistance to this designation?

Using “At Risk” Language

Constrained by the NCPC funding frameworks and the use of the “at risk” language some organizations use this terminology in positive ways to build plans with youth, others try to avoid this terminology, whereas some organizations use different terms when dealing with youth. In the implementation of their programming one organization uses the term “resiliency” instead of “at risk.”

We don’t do a lot of strong risk assessments here. We do more resiliency. What can we pull on, where is their strength, where do we find it? To try and find those protective factors to help lift them up, instead of focusing on how we mitigate risk.

This conceptualization resists the at-risk framework by turning it on its head. In this sense, the goal is not to reduce risk but to generate resiliency by building on individual strengths. Several of the respondents suggested that the adoption of the “at risk” terminology could be useful on an individual basis to build a plan that the youth can be engaged in. For example, one respondent said:

Because I think [the risks the youth face] also identifies a case plan for those youth and how you can support them and you can move forward with that.

Creating individual plans and working with the youth to accomplish their goals results in building relationships with the youth. Expanding on this idea, one person said:

I think there’s a lot of different ways people use the term [“at risk”] and I think it’s used a lot. I think we’re more specific when we talk about individual youth.... I think maybe sometimes people have to use or do use the term “at risk” but I also think the people that I see working in programming are really striving to make relationships with youth and recognize them as individual people.

Not only is the use of the term “at risk” questioned or avoided, it is important to note that in this context avoiding its use also resists the dehumanizing actuarial framework of the New Right rationality. The actuarial framework of large scale governance works to “collectively individualize” disadvantaged groups (Brodie 2008:41) and individuals are blamed for any risks

in which they engage. However, through the implementation of youth gang prevention programs and in working directly with youth they can become re-humanized.

In addition to trying to avoid the “at risk” language one respondent, previously a program participant who now works as a mentor, suggests that using this terminology may not be the best way of defining youth:

That’s one thing I hated, [labelling] myself “at risk,” which I was but I just don’t like the way that sounds because it makes you sound less, I don’t know, or bad or something. But we’re not. It’s just the way we’ve been brought up or stuff we couldn’t avoid. I think there could be, there should be a better term but that’s what it is.

In this sense labelling youth as “at risk” further marginalizes already marginalized youth. As many of the youth involved in street gangs and street gang prevention programs are Indigenous, labelling them as “at risk” furthers the perception that Indigenous youth are more of a risk than non-Indigenous youth.

Defining marginalized youth as “at risk” has been used by the government and the criminal justice system to justify their tough-on-crime agenda. The effect of this strategy has been the increased use of criminal justice interventions and police surveillance that results in marginalized youth’s over representation in the criminal justice system, which in turn is used to justify the “at risk” label. As Amelia Curran (2010: 45) suggests, this justifies the use of “higher levels of surveillance, curfews, zero-tolerance policing, and electronic tagging—all of which is likely supported by a public who fears for its safety.” As this fear grows and marginalized youth come to be labelled as an even greater threat, there is then increased support for further criminal justice interventions that result in even harsher punishments and thus contributes to “vicious circles” (O’Malley 2010: 28). Resisting this terminology then may work to reverse these “vicious

circles,” increase public support for alternative solutions, and redefine what it means to be considered “at risk.”

Redefining “At Risk”

Even though some CBOs work to avoid using risk-based language, doing so is often unavoidable. When using this language, however, many CBOs mean something very different than government policy makers and funders. The New Right discourse renders invisible the structural barriers which are implicit in their definition, whereas many CBOs take the same term to render those barriers visible.

Many CBOs that work within marginalized communities define risk as the result of structural inequalities within society such that risks are not choices but barriers that exist beyond the control of individuals. Instead of a result of personal choices, risk becomes reflective of marginality: the more marginalized an individual or a community, the greater the level of risk. Therefore, increased levels of risk reflect the barriers and lack of support in an individual’s life and not the choices they make. In her study of CBOs that work with “at risk” youth, Curran (2010: 56/57) found that, “many youth-serving agency workers recognize the risks youth face as stemming from socially systemic conditions and believe that youth should be offered more from society to address the needs these conditions create.” This finding was echoed by many of the workers I interviewed. For these workers, “at risk” youth are not young people making bad choices; rather, they are young people who face many barriers. One respondent said referring to “at risk” youth:

They get up in the morning and there’s no food, they go to school and there’s a bully, there’s intimidation, there’s the lure of gangs, and people beating them up for not joining. Then there’s not having any breakfast in the morning so you’re falling asleep in class and you’re behind by two lessons and then you get

intimidated because ... they're already calling you names so you don't want to put your hand up to ask questions. Then you go back to this house where there's drinking and fighting and, you know, you're hiding under your bed because there's parties and stuff and you're afraid of things happening. That goes on all the time.... You get further behind and further behind then you're out on the street.

Instead of being defined as a set of choices, "risk" is framed in terms of barriers that exist at home, at school, and in the community.

The idea that risk is reflective of marginality was also noted by another respondent:

I think our youth are "at risk" by a lot of things. I think that what we see when we're working with "at risk" youth or when we're looking at the youth that we're bringing in we want to support youth who are more likely to get involved in the criminal justice system, maybe have been involved with a gang, have been in Child and Family Services, don't have the foundation and the support around them that they could have.

This respondent is clearly framing risk as a lack of support and difficult family environments and not as a result of poor choices.

Yet another respondent made it clear that:

In my eyes pretty much every kid in our neighbourhood is "at risk" and it really depends on what supports they have in their life to determine how "at risk" they are.... I think most kids are "at risk" of something but if they have proper supports and positive adults and good peer groups the risk factors are limited.

Risk, in this sense, is the result of living in a marginalized community and thus reducing risks means building multiple supports, providing resources, and reducing marginality—not just making different choices. As another respondent said referring to youth:

You need structure, you need boundaries, you need hope, you need somebody saying you can do it. You need somebody helping you to build self-esteem, self-image. All this stuff in your life, you need that to happen.

In the context of implementing programs, therefore, CBOs transform the language of "at risk" from meaning individualized choices to problems to be worked on, not just by individuals making choices but by communities who require resources and support. Solutions then must be

focused on reducing marginality and providing more equitable distribution of resources, instead of telling youth to make “smart choices.”

Making “Smart Choices”

As MP Shelly Glover explained when announcing the 2012 NCPC funding allocation, the aim of the Youth Gang Prevention Fund is to provide “youth in gangs, or those at risk of joining gangs, with life skills to help them make smart choices and stay away from gangs and crime” (Public Safety Canada 2012c). While most respondents agreed that youth need to make positive choices, they also agreed that the funding and resources needed to accomplish this goal are not sufficient. When asked if simply telling youth to make “smarter choices” would be an effective strategy one respondent said:

I think that if I was working with the youth for a year and they were in this program and they were doing really well and maybe they were making some poor choices, I think based on my relationship ... with them I think that yes you could say “You know what, you need to make smarter choices, here’s how you do it, we’ll walk beside you when you fall, we’ll help you get back up.” That kind of thing. But you have to give them something to start off with.... And self-esteem is so key, right, because many youth—I mean, it’s a teenage issue and has been since the beginning of time—don’t have self-esteem. And self-esteem, the way you build self-esteem, is giving them opportunities and building them up and then doing it again and practicing and practicing and the self-esteem grows and you gain momentum. But that doesn’t come out of nowhere.

While the goal is to have youth make “smart choices,” the way of arriving at that choice becomes very different for CBOs than it does for government funders who only support programs for short periods.

Furthermore, making “smart choices” involves more than simply telling youth to do so; it also requires time, resources, and building relationships. Another respondent made it clear that solutions involve more than just individual youth making “smart choices”:

Because what we want to do is we want to walk hand-in-hand with our youth ...right up until they are in their early twenties or so or in their second year of university or whatever they decide to do. And if we've kept them healthy, making whatever their interpretation of right choices are, then we've done our job.

Colonialism and other structured inequalities have long-term effects on the lives of many Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in marginalized communities. As the following respondents makes clear, there needs to be more resources made available, the solutions must also be long term, and it is important that the burden of street gang prevention not be put on the shoulders of individual youth..

Oh there's gotta be way more, especially with our kids. And it doesn't matter what colour our kids are, you can't just go and say "smarten up" because the words are there but that first "smarten up" goes in one ear and out the other. So it's a lot of repetitive work, a lot of repetitive counselling, a lot of understanding that youth. And there's so so so much more to that youth than just saying "smarten up." There's a lot of issues. It's like opening up a can of worms.

This point was reiterated by another respondent when asked about youth making "smart choices":

No, that won't work. They've been bullied, and harassed, and beaten down, and picked on, and learned how to fight back all their lives. So having some authority try to tell them how to live will never work. ... These kids have learned, their trust in adults has been violated so many times that why on earth would they listen to an adult? You have to—we have to—prove our trustworthiness. We have to show that we're on their side. We have to show that we care about them and want the best for them a lot before they'll ask or take heed [of our] advice.

This point was echoed again by another respondent:

You have to have people putting in work to help these youth because these youth need that place to go to escape from all the bad things that they see every single day that are around them. Whether that be their home life of school or whatever it is, it takes a community to help a child, it takes a whole community to help one child. It's not just that family, it should be the whole community working towards that.

Government funders and policy makers regard youth as responsible for any and all choices they may make and put the repercussions of these choices on the shoulders of the youth. However, those who work within CBOs have not taken this perspective. While the youth are bombarded with calls to make “smart choices,” through their interactions with program workers this potentially harmful discourse can be mediated such that youth are not made to feel responsible for factors beyond their control.

Redefining “Success”

According to the NCPC (2013: 1), due to limited resources it is important to determine “what works in crime prevention” so that the most effective programs are able to access these resources. To determine the effectiveness of the YGPF not only are individual programs evaluated but two general evaluations of the YGPF have been conducted; an overall evaluation in 2011 and a general summary of project outcomes in 2013. The YGPF general evaluation conducted in 2011 said that “The overall objective for the YGPF projects is to encourage youth to either disengage from their gangs or to prevent youth from entering gangs” (Public Safety Canada 2011: 23). Specifically, the 2011 evaluation noted that the YGPF is to “provide youth with knowledge and skills needed to resist joining gangs; address risk factors associated with youth gang involvement (change in behaviour against these risk factors); [and] help youth disengage from gangs and avoid returning to gangs” (p. 21). Similar to the 2011 evaluation, the 2013 evaluation focused on changes in knowledge (e.g. knowledge of crime associated risks and knowledge of gang associated risks), attitudes (e.g. pro-social attitudes), risk and protective factors (e.g. associations with negative peers and parental support), and behaviours (e.g. selling drugs, gang involvement, violent offending, etc.) (Smith-Moncrieffe 2013:7-10).

All of these outcomes were noted when the five YGPF programs in Winnipeg were evaluated. The evaluations found that the youth—after being in the programs for only one year—had increased their involvement in the community and in pro-social activities (Public Safety Canada 2012b: 4-5). Nevertheless, there were mixed results in reducing drug and alcohol use, no increase in family support, and no significant change in gang affiliation (ibid). The evaluation did, however, acknowledge that the programs were in operation for only a short period of time and that many of these youth face complex and difficult problems (p. 6). In addition, the 2013 general evaluation noted similar findings to the evaluations of the Winnipeg programs saying,

The favourable changes in risk factors and behaviours were demonstrated with outcomes related to: self-esteem; reduced gang membership; attachment to the workforce; impulsive risk taking behaviour; reduced police contacts; and non-violent offending. The table also demonstrates that outcomes related to: substance abuse, healthy family relationships, attachment to school, and violent offending were less likely to show favourable changes. (Smith-Moncrieffe 2013: 18)

While it is clear that the primary focus of the YGPF is to provide youth with information so that they make the “smart choice” to leave street gangs or avoid joining in the first place, this is not their only goal. The YGPF, while rooted in the New Right rationality of individual responsibility, also acknowledges addressing challenges in the lives of individual youth as an important component in street gang prevention programs. However, while evaluators have found that the YGPF funded programs have resulted in positive changes in the lives of the participants, according to a report by CBC News Manitoba (2012), federal government policy makers determined that because there had not been a significant change in street gang affiliation the programs had not been successful.

As a result of the shift to a New Right rationality, government policy makers now govern-at-a-distance and are no longer involved directly in the creation of community-based programs. This means that while success for government policy makers and funders may be

limited to youth “stay[ing] away from gangs and crime,” it becomes possible for CBOs operating street gang prevention programs to take broader approaches. This is important because of the diversity of communities, backgrounds, and barriers that pertain to each youth—contrary to the way in which the New Right rationality “collectively individualizes” marginalized groups (Brodie 2008:41). Within the context of youth gang prevention, defining “success” only in terms of youth leaving gangs or making “smart choices” to not join gangs and stay away from crime may overlook many of the positive gains that do occur within youth gang prevention programs.

Many of the youth who participate in street gang prevention programs in Winnipeg have numerous challenges. For some of these youth, making small steps in a positive direction can mean success.

If you can take one youth who is going the wrong direction and, you know, push them in the other direction then that’s success. Even if it’s just a little bit. Just to keep them from joining that gang or from doing those drugs or whatever it may be. To pull them away from that then that’s where the success is.

CBO workers maintain that paying attention to the specific circumstances in a youth’s life is important when building plans and determining their level of success. Discussing what success means for their program, one respondent said:

Some kids it is easier. Some kids it’s just a matter of giving them the right thing, plugging them into the right outlet, maybe getting them on a basketball team, getting a good peer group around them, getting them a mentor or a volunteer person around them, and then that’s all those kids need to avoid turning to the streets and stuff like that. Other kids who are more, whose families are street entrenched, you know, stuff like that, it’s a lot more difficult to say, “Oh just stop hanging out with your whole family.” So it depends on where the kids are at versus where the success is. If you look at success as the kid is no longer engaging in high risk or gang activity then [for] some kids we get that success pretty easy and they’re engaged in programming. Other kids, they’re not doing crack anymore, and they’re not selling drugs but they’re still in that environment. They are still sometimes [drug] runners but they’ve chosen not to be street dealers.

Moreover, respondents were also aware that success was not an either/or proposition but more of a journey. Once a youth reaches a certain point or realizes a small success, it is a start and not an end. Instead, over time they work with youth to continue to build multiple successes. This means that success needs to be defined according to the particular circumstances in a youth's life so that each youth has small steps that they can work toward but that they also can work toward larger, harder-to-reach goals.

So that's the thing we're stuck with. So some youth [say] "I want to stop using" but others say "I want to smoke pot every weekend because that's what my friends do." So it's like are we going to push that? No, we're going to work on the things they want to work on and slowly build that up to a point where maybe a year from now we have enough trust where we can say, you know, "Let's start phasing it out" or "Let's start figuring out other options."

This respondent continued:

So we see success if we can get a kid going to school, working a job, and not engaging in street life.

In order for organizations to be successful it is important that they build strong relationships with youth. Often realizing successes is based on case plans that are worked on by the workers and the youth in the programs. As one respondent notes:

As they work in the program more, then you start building that relationship and you start building on a sense of self. Who are they, what's important to them, what are their value systems, things like that.... I think we've been pretty successful. I mean it's kind of relative depending who you talk to what success is. For us I think we've done a really good job of building strong relationships and helping kids make positive choices.

As part of building the relationships with youth and in order to create success in their lives they need to be engaged in whichever program they are participating; if the youth are not engaged it is not possible to work on building relationships, which is key in building success. All youth need the opportunity to access different recreational and educational resources in order to

grow as people and to discover what it is that interests them. However, many of the youth who attend programs often do not have many of these opportunities. As one respondent said, “They’re so gung ho to be in the program, finally you’ve identified something, that turns something on inside of them and now they want to participate.” As another respondent notes, programs need to be an attractive alternative to street gangs and be able to provide those things that lead them to join street gangs.

I really think we need to find something that works for them, something that they’re interested in, something that they feel they’re getting something out of, and I think that community organizations in general need to have the funds and capacity to use all of the tricks that the gangs use to get youth into their programs in a positive way.

Realizing successes and positive changes in the lives of youth can also have an effect on what a successful youth can look like. As one respondent who was a program participant and now works as a mentor said:

You know, we’re changing and we’re learning these things and we’re going out into the community, such as myself and other youth. We go to other organizations and we share what we’ve learned. So technically that is spreading to others and that’s changing into a bigger change.... I love when we go out to different community events and there will be a group of us, or we go perform.... If you were to see the same group of us on the street ... and we’re just these kids, we look like street kids, we’re wearing baggy clothes... but when we go into places ... and they are able to see us perform and publicly speak and just show who we truly are in front of them, it just blows their mind. I think they’re really amazed by it, by our presentation of how we really are.

The ability to publically demonstrate their achievements and offer an alternative discourse of what success can mean has the potential to redefine “success” for these youth. Through engagement with the media, community members, and government funders and policy makers, youth who would have been labelled “at risk” and as a threat may come to be viewed as successful. Furthermore, youth gang prevention programs have the potential to demonstrate that

success does not take place only by youth making a “smart choice” but by a journey of small successes.

Concluding Remarks

Through the implementation of programs, CBOs have the capacity to offer alternative discourses. Youth gang prevention programs are able, at least to some extent, to expand the definition of “success” and change what a “successful” youth can look like. While these programs continue to work within an at-risk framework they offer an alternative definition that relocates the onus of responsibility from the individual to something to be worked on by everyone. “Smart choices” within this context, while still made by individual youth, become part of a process with multiple supports and stakeholders. Workers build relationships with youth so that decisions and choices are no longer made alone or without resources. Instead, youth work together with workers and organizations to grow successes together through programs that they find engaging. This is similar to the finding by Curran (2010: 63) that showed workers constructed “at risk” youth in two ways: “first, by understanding youth as in need of basic necessities within the context that structural conditions create these needs, not poor choices; and, second, in the understanding of youth as people who, like all people, benefit from activities that address needs unrelated to risk at all, such as the need for fun, creative expression, and recreation.”

Nevertheless, even though there is some space in which youth gang prevention programs are able to construct these alternative discourses and make positive changes in the lives of individual youth, the question remains whether these programs are able to produce large-scale changes. This question is considered in the following chapter.

Chapter Five

Youth Gang Prevention: Limits to Change

Street gang prevention programs require external, most often government funding to operate, meaning they become subject to the particular political rationality adopted by government funders. In the present context of the New Right rationality programs are often designed—due to funding restrictions—to be limited in scope and address individual risk factors, thus limiting their capacity to support individuals and families. Furthermore, New Right policy makers view the problems facing youth and families as a product of personal choices and not the result of structural inequalities. Therefore, programs that work with “at risk” youth, in order to receive funding, must address risk factors affecting individual youth but are constrained to the extent they are able to effect larger structural changes. As Andrew Woolford and Amelia Curran (2012: 49) discuss, “individualized programming, and individualizing outcome measurement and accountability criteria set through the ‘partnership’ between nonprofit social service providers and government, mean that the capacity of service users to assume the responsibilities of neoliberal citizenship are of utmost concern.”

The previous chapter discussed the ability of youth gang prevention programs to offer alternative discourses and definitions of “success.” This chapter examines the limitation of current funding frameworks on the ability of CBOs running street gang prevention programs to effect large-scale changes in Winnipeg’s inner-city communities. Specific attention is paid to the effects of limited short-term funding, the efficiency of this funding, as well as the importance of the local community context in which the programs operate. In addition, the role of non-Indigenous led organizations working to solve the street gang problem is examined.

Funding Limitations

Federal funding for youth gang prevention programs is limited in both time as well as the amount that is available. The federal government does not provide long-term, continuous funding to street gang prevention programs but instead only offers short-term, program-based funding that requires each agency to reapply for funding on an ongoing basis. The NCPC has adopted several criteria to determine who may receive funding and under which conditions they will fund programs directed at youth gang prevention, including:

The NCPC will not provide funding for core or ongoing operational expenses of programs, services and/or interventions being funded by other levels of government or the replication of a program, service or intervention that has been previously supported by the NCPC in the same community and/or reaching the same target population using the same intervention model....The NCPC will not be the sole funder for any specific project under the YGPF. The maximum NCPC contribution to the total costs of the project cannot exceed 85%. Therefore, it is expected that organizations and community partners will contribute to the cost of the project, financially or in-kind through donations of materials, supplies or services. In addition, total government contributions to the project from all sources (federal, provincial and territorial) cannot exceed 95% of total costs of the project. (Public Safety Canada 2014a)

Many of the study respondents discussed the current framework of federal government funding as one of the most significant barriers to long-term and large-scale changes in inner-city communities. The limitations that were cited most frequently by respondents during the interviews and were seen to create the largest barriers for CBOs include: the focus on short-term, program-based funding as opposed to continuous funding; the emphasis on efficiency and cost effectiveness; the lack of resources provided; and the insufficient attention to the local context in which street gangs form.

Short-term Funding

The policy of short-term, limited funding provided by federal funders is premised on two mutually supporting rationales. First, the goal of the NCPC is not to continuously fund effective programs but only to determine which program models are effective in order to “increase understanding and knowledge of how to effectively address the issues related to youth gangs” (Public Safety Canada 2014a, 2014b, 2011). One reason for this is explained by the YGPF evaluators: “Based on the program theory, it was expected that in the short term (i.e., one to three years) the YGPF funded projects would have successfully engaged youth that were in gangs; those at greatest risk of joining gangs; or those who wished to exit gangs by providing them with activities that responded to their needs” (Public Safety Canada 2011: 3). Therefore, the NCPC will provide initial funding for programs in order to determine which programs are most effective. However, even if deemed to be successful, the burden of securing ongoing funding to maintain the program falls to the program’s administrative staff and the community in which they operate. The result of this policy has been that of the five programs in Winnipeg that originally received NCPC funding in 2007, only Just TV is currently still operating. The Spence Neighbourhood Association, for example, created the Cultural Integration & Youth Outreach (CIYO) program in order to apply for funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. This program is very similar to their previous program, West Central Youth Outreach, that ended due to the termination of funding from the YGPF.

Second, with the increasing prevalence of the New Right political rationality and the withdrawal of the state from the provision of social benefits, it has become the responsibility of CBOs and other non-governmental agencies to fill the gap in services. Furthermore, with the free market viewed as a panacea and the optimal method through which private organizations deliver

public goods (Wacquant 2009: 301), it is not surprising that the current NCPC funding model is based around the same design as business start-up funding. While federal government funders provide start-up capital they require the organization to become self-sufficient. After a short-term funding period organizations must find private investors or other levels of government if they wish to continue to offer the program. While this may be an effective strategy for business investment and may promote efficiency, it seems unlikely to succeed for organizations that, by their very designation as non-profit, are not meant to earn profits. Therefore, a funding model designed to fund a for-profit industry cannot be effective in the not-for-profit sector.

None of the respondents in this study believe that short-term funding can be effective at making large-scale changes. As one respondent simply put it, “No, you need long-term funding.” Another respondent said, referring to youth who participate in short-term funded programs:

They find something that is real and belongs to them for one year, two years, three years, you know, they wake up, it’s still there. Then it’s gone. Think about living like that.

This respondent went on to say:

You come to a [program] that says if you make the right choices and decisions we’ll be there for you and your life is going to get better. Then [the funders] pull the rug out from that program.... It puts them in dire circumstances.

Another respondent also discussed how funding can be removed quickly.

You pick up the phone and they just tell you one day “Oh we’re not giving you any more money.” ...So that the rug gets pulled out often.

Referring to the time limited funding of the YGPF one respondent not only discussed the need for long-term, sustained funding but that the expectation of federal government funders in producing quick results is not realistic.

They didn’t leave enough time, they didn’t, you come and you throw a bunch of money at a place and expect miracles within three years. These kids are 16, 17

[years old] when we meet them, you know. There's years of work to get them safe and get them okay and there's going to be the ups and downs on the route too.

Another respondent noted that not only is it not possible to have quick results but with the resources available it is not possible with short-term funding and limited programs to reach a level of success that government funders require.

But with the resources we have we can't pull kids fully entrenched out of gangs. So we're realistic with our capacity and within that capacity we have a lot of success. But I don't think it is what a lot of people would consider, like, we're not taking kids from being gang involved to being perfect model citizens in the lens of the program.

As discussed in the previous chapter, building success requires time and resources. This is difficult, however, with short program funding.

You have to hire your staff, and you have to train them, and you have to recruit your youth, and do all of that. So the first year when you're running a program is just trying to get it off the ground and then you gain momentum. And then in year two, you know, you've kinda figured out what you're doing, you're doing it more smoothly.... When you cut funding after three or four years ... and then even if you find the funding again six months or a year later what happens is you're starting from scratch again and you've lost a lot of that momentum you've made.

This statement is supported by the NCPC's own evaluation conducted 2011 that found the programs were more efficient in 2008-2010 than in the first two years the programs were in operation (Public Safety Canada 2011: 32). This finding is echoed by another respondent who said:

And that's exactly it. I think longer term funding and I think to give any program a real shot they need a minimum of two to three years to get started. Like, one year, it's just you're trying to get it started and you're trying to find funding for the next year, too. So it's chaos. And you're almost caught so much in the paper work and the logistics of it that you're missing the youth care element.

When asked if they could be successful with program funding one respondent said:

It would just have to be long-term program funding. That's the thing, programs work. It's just programs have to end. Usually that's the problem. They usually have start and end dates. We've seen successes so we know what works, what doesn't work. But when we can't keep good staff on because they know their jobs

are up in a year or stuff like that, it's hard to continue that success and grow it. We could if we had a lot more program funding. But the bottom line is the funds and the resources aren't out there to do that broader change piece that we want to achieve. But sometimes it's about making sure kids aren't dying.

When discussing the ability of programs to be effective at making broader changes with the current resources that are available, one respondent remarked:

No. There's not enough, well, we can't make real change. I think we can make changes in individual youth's lives, which is important. I don't want to diminish the meaning of changing a kid's life. But in terms of looking at overall big picture societal change there is not enough money and there is not enough investment to make the real change that needs to happen to seriously address the gang problem and the street crime issues. That's why we look at individual success and individual youth. But to say that we can take a kid from being fully gang entrenched to being a regular kid going to school. We can't do, we can't solve poverty, we can't solve a lot of the addictions issues. We can't solve a lot of that stuff.

Another respondent said:

Give us the money to do our work. They need to figure out who can work with the kids, who wants to work with the kids.... They need to figure out who is doing that work and support them with stable, ongoing funding.

The 2011 YGPF evaluation noted that "The theory behind the YGPF is that addressing modifiable risk factors for gang involvement is the mechanism by which the ultimate outcome of decreased gang violence is achieved" (Public Safety Canada 2011: 3). However, the consensus of the respondents is that the current short-term funding framework of the federal government is not sufficient to make the changes needed to seriously affect the street gang problem in Winnipeg. The one exception noted, however, was programs that provide food to youth and families.

It's [short term funding periods] detrimental, it's not efficient, and it's detrimental in the long term. They really are. Unless they're specifically related to food because then you're feeding the kids for a year, you're teaching them how to cook for a year. That's something they can walk away with.

Efficiency

The short-term economic efficiency and paternalistic punitive tough-on-crime approach heralded by the New Right has led to policies that in the long run have been shown to be inefficient. In the context of street gang prevention, short-term program funding is not only inefficient but in the long term can cost more than continuous funding. In order to run a program there are start-up costs and often organizations must buy computers and other equipment. When a program is not in operation, that equipment can sit unused.

If it's one year it takes you one or two months to develop the program, to make the contacts to get it going. Then it takes you a month or so to get the kids, then just as it starts to roll there's two months left in the program and then it's over and [the kids] say "What?!" And you're left with a bunch of computers and things and nobody to run anything. And the kids—they're standing around with nothing to do.

There are not only costs in starting a program that has secured funding but in order to get the funding requires staff to design programs, apply for the funding, and then reapply for funding as funding terms end. This means resources that could have been put into operating and improving already successful programs are instead being spent working to find new funding. As discussed above, it often takes several years for CBOs to become efficient at implementing programs. When an effective program is closed due to an end in funding, the process begins again. For example, in order to reapply for funding New Directions simply changed the name of Project OASIS to Project OASIS 2. In fact, OASIS 2 is virtually identical to Project OASIS and their website even says "Project OASIS is On!" (New Directions 2010) when referring to OASIS 2.

Another significant problem associated with short-term funding is the gaps that are created in programming between the periods when one program ends and another is created to take its place. The result is the youth who rely on these programs are often left with nowhere to

go other than to return to the situations that required them to attend the programs in the first place. Some of the youth will turn to street gangs for support.

One of the things with the last project we had, when the project ended we had a six month period when the project ended. We had no staff and in that six months, like, twelve of the kids got locked up. So the success of the program was while it was running you can build that relationship, you have constantly positive adults in the kid's lives telling, helping them make positive decisions.

During the periods when CBOs are not able to offer programs the police become the primary organization used to deal with youth who are considered "at risk." While police may be able to address individual incidents of crime they are not able to address problems in the youth's lives or provide positive support. Police services are also much more expensive than running a youth gang prevention program. Unfortunately, however, while running youth prevention programs are more cost effective than incarcerating youth, because of the neo-conservative tough-on-crime agenda of the federal government, CBOs are finding a cost-effective argument to be un-persuasive.

So depending on who you talk to it costs \$100,000 to \$130,000 to incarcerate a youth. So we often use that saying if you can fund, for \$130,000 you can fund three outreach workers for a year and keep twenty kids out of jail. Wouldn't that be the better cost benefit to fund outreach workers? They don't do it for some reason....So if they looked at switching that you could make a huge impact if you switch that. But they aren't going to because they are the crime and safety government.

Maintaining staffing is yet another problem that CBOs face in working within the current funding restrictions. When programs end the budgets to pay the workers also run out and those working on the programs have to find other work. This means that if the organization running the program is not able to secure funding elsewhere the workers who had gained valuable experience may be lost. As one participant notes, "When you cut funding after three or four years and you can't pay people you lose the staff who have learned what they're doing." Often workers have little job security.

This is the world we're now entering into with, and cutting staff positions. We're not filling staff positions.... If you're employing a casual staff at 40 hours per week for three years at casual this stuck in our, like, it just wasn't okay because they have no benefits, they have no security.

One respondent discussed the precarious nature of their own position.

I mean, I've always been a frontline worker, and I've always been working contracts. So for me am I going to have a job in March? ... I mean, when you work contract to contract from funding to funding, I mean, we could lose a lot of good people and good workers.

In addition to retaining staff, paying a living wage was also noted as becoming increasingly difficult.

So we have a lot of staff who work more than one job. They work here full time and then they go work somewhere else to make [money]. They love what they do but in order to afford to work here they have to have another job and that's really too frequent. And if our staff start to go that's, we're only as good as our staff. You'll hear that from a lot of service providers. We are only as good as our staff.

As a result, instead of providing youth with effective programs run by trained and seasoned staff, CBOs are caught in a bind of offering programming that is trying to work out the kinks with new staff who are gaining experience.

In order to continue to be effective, operate within the current funding restrictions, and with less funding being made available to CBOs, some organizations have started social enterprises. One reason for this is that finding job opportunities for youth who participate in their programs can sometimes be difficult. As one respondent said, "Getting kids with a gang past a job is a lot harder than I think they are actually funding." Another respondent discussed the difficulties with finding Indigenous youth stable jobs in a local business.

I've had the experience of calling an employer and saying "I have a young man who's interested in doing this would you be interested?" and they say "Yes, as a matter of fact we have an opening".... [When we arrive they see] the kid is First Nations and all of a sudden the job doesn't exist.

Social enterprises run by CBOs are meant to combat some of these difficulties. The programs work to provide youth employment and skills training while at the same time allowing the CBOs to becoming more financially self-sufficient. For example, New Directions and the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre have both created social enterprises. Since Just TV is a program that teaches youth the skills needed to produce multimedia videos, through their social enterprise they have been able to acquire contracts in which the youth are hired to create videos and commercials. This not only provides the youth with paid work experience but allows the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre to increase the number of programs they are able to offer (Broadway Neighbourhood Centre 2013: 3). New Directions created Genesis Enterprises, which “has ongoing contracts with Manitoba Housing to provide cleaning services as well as property services” (SEED Winnipeg n.d.). The youth who work for Genesis Enterprises are paid for their work, learn skills and job training, and as they gain experience are able to become mentors (ibid). As one respondent said in discussing their social enterprise,

The social enterprise model allows us to tender jobs now because our equipment and our expertise is so great.... I subcontract my [employees] and in that contract they have to hire between two and four, depending on the size of the job, the youth from our program. And they pay them a competitive rate.... So we actually start to generate our own money. There’s too many agencies.... Everybody should be, you know, making it on your own. There are people thinking more of it should go into jails and things like that. So you need to look out, and say “Well, what can we do, what model can I establish so that I can move on, that will make this place sustainable and stay here for a long time?”

Another respondent discussed their own social enterprise.

I’ve started the social enterprise ... that’s allowed us to pay wages for a whole bunch of kids. So I believe that even social service organizations have a responsibility to find ways to offload our dependence on government. Government can’t be all things to all people so there is that position. But I also think the federal government in particular does not have the necessary commitment to or understanding of the extreme need at this level.... Our dollars don’t go up, our costs increase so we’ve had to become resourceful.

Exclusion from the mainstream economy and the lack of well-paying jobs are significant factors contributing to street gang formation. As such, social enterprises that provide youth with skills, education, and access to the mainstream economy are important in preventing youth from joining street gangs. In addition, social enterprises provide the opportunity for youth to gain valuable work experience without having to battle against the racism they may encounter. However, the burden on CBOs is increasing and they are continually expected to do more with less. As funding is reduced there is the potential for increased pressure to pay youth less while retaining more funds for running and maintaining ongoing programs. Furthermore, this strategy does not address the lasting effects of colonialism and racism present in society.

Local Context and Alternative Funding

The NCPC has been clear that their goal is not to provide long-term funding for street gang prevention but instead to test street gang prevention programs—most often developed in the United States—within a Canadian context (Public Safety Canada 2011: 3). According to the NCPC they are focused on “supporting targeted interventions and building and sharing practical knowledge” (Public Safety Canada 2014b). This is accomplished through restricted funding models and program evaluations. The NCPC through the YGPF will announce program models they wish to test and it becomes the responsibility of the CBOs to create a program around this model and apply for funding. The funding restrictions of the NCPC do not allow CBOs to develop programs based on past experience; instead, they must try to fit their past experience into sometimes unfamiliar models. The models are therefore not community driven but selected based on which model the NCPC wishes to test. As one respondent commented:

The way the NPC and the Youth Gang Prevention Fund work is they say “these are the promising models we’ve identified.” ...There’s the six or seven models

they have, and so then they're like "Now submit a letter of intent" and they'll pick who they think is best situated to implement those programs and then we work with them on developing and using this model.... We are saying "How do we adapt it to fit our community?" rather than, say, working with the community and saying "What needs to be done?" and working to create a model that works for them.

In fact, the NCPC recognizes this issue. In their own evaluations they found that "through the implementation of these projects, it became clear that the same model could not be implemented in exactly the same way in different communities.... In addition, we learned that while it is important to respect the evidence-based elements of the models, it is also necessary to develop tools, language and partnerships that are relevant for the community and the targeted youth" (Smith-Moncrieffe 2013:19/20).

In response to both funding restrictions and the unavailability of funding at the federal level several of the respondents discussed the need to find alternative sources of funding. One respondent was clear that while funding from the province may be limited in some ways, it is less restrictive than the federal government funding.

The province is more wedded to the welfare of Manitobans and to addressing long standing Manitoban problems, I would say. There's more commitment to a longer view, very definitely there's more commitment to a longer view. I mean, I could quibble with the current government in terms of "Could you guys stop being reactive" but by in large they are way less reactive than the [federal government].

At the end of the YGPF funding one organization was able to secure long-term funding from the City of Winnipeg. In discussing this funding one respondent said:

Well, with the city it's a little bit different because they're more in the trenches, they understand community services, some of the stuff that's going on.

Another respondent, in discussing their partnership with the city's Aboriginal Youth Strategy said:

The Aboriginal Youth Strategy does gap funding for us. They have been phenomenal, best funder I've ever worked with. And not to say that I don't appreciate the money or the people at the other places but the Aboriginal Youth

Strategy, what is really unique about them is that they actually will say to you “What’s working, what’s not working, what can we do, how can we change what we’re offering to you, and what’s going on with your kids?” So they actually are changing their partnership with us to suit the needs of the kids and it’s really grassroots and it’s really forward thinking.

The 2011 YGPF evaluation (Public Safety Canada 2011: 38) found that “there is strong support of the government’s involvement because it is the only organization that can provide long-term funding for such projects.” This evaluation also noted that “many projects may not continue in full without on-going federal support” (p. 31). Regardless, the NCPC chose to ignore these recommendations and instead continues to only offer limited short-term funding for program models they wish to test. This policy has resulted in both inefficient use of resources and an over use of the criminal justice system. The result is that while successful programs can have a positive impact on the lives of some individuals and their families, a majority of those who can benefit from these programs do not have access to them. As one respondent said:

I think that [the government] need[s] to listen to the community and what they’re saying and then advocate to put more programs in and more funding. And I know there is this perception of “Oh programs, programs, programs, fluffy, fluffy, whatever” but they’re sending a message to our youth and if we’re investing more into our criminal justice system and we’re not investing in our programming the message we’re sending to our youth is “You know what? You’re going to end up in jail here and so why would we put the money [in the community] when we know [jail] where you’re going to go?” Because youth will live up to your expectation of them. So [the government] needs to take more responsibility and invest more and show the youth that they believe in them and the youth, more of the youth will live up to those expectations.

One of the goals of the YGPF is “developing and disseminating knowledge in order to encourage other communities to adopt effective methods to prevent youth violence and youth gang activity in Canada” (Public Safety Canada 2014a). In addition, the 2011 YGPF evaluation (2011: 3, 20) said, “The knowledge development work within NCPC was expected to have resulted in the dissemination of information on gangs and gang prevention that would add to the Canadian knowledge base.” The evaluation went on to say that “At the community level, the

cascading effects of the YGPF Program were expected to translate to a more effective, evidence-based response to gangs within the wider local community.” However, the YGPF evaluators found that, “It cannot be determined whether there have been wider community impacts outside of the YGPF projects in terms of the community response to gangs” (p. 31).

The responsibility for making change, consistent with the New Right rationality, has been put on those communities in which the programs operate. The expectation by federal government funders is that communities will continue to fund successful programs identified by the YGPF. However, as street gangs form as a result of economic and social marginalization, it is unclear where inner-city communities should find the resources to fund street gang prevention programs. The result of this funding strategy, therefore, is the responsabilization of communities to deal with the street gang problem on their own. Thus, like other techniques of governmentality that provide for the reduction of risks (e.g. wearing a bike helmet or a seat belt), not addressing the street gang problem is viewed as a choice. However, it is not that inner-city communities do not know what is needed to address this problem, that they have chosen to not deal with the street gang problem, or that there is a lack of knowledge of the harm street gangs cause. The problem with the federal government funding strategy is that the resources to adequately address the underlying structural inequalities that result in the formation of street gangs are not available.

One strategy adopted by CBOs in response to government funding constraints has been to seek out partnerships and share resources. Of the four programs that are part of this study, three belong to the Youth Agencies Alliance (YAA). According to the YAA website (YAA n.d.), “By being involved in the alliance, these various agencies unite to create a strong partnership to benefit the people that they serve YAA is stronger and more influential as a group than

individual agencies would be.” The benefits of creating partnerships came across in the interviews with the participants. For example, one respondent said:

I think that our staff and our partnerships allow us in certain cases to be a wraparound and more holistic because of our partnerships. ... We’re partnered with everybody.

Another respondent noted:

We also have a lot of strong relationships with other community-based organizations and we refer youth and families to people who can provide the best services.

Furthermore, one respondent discussed how making partnerships, not only with organizations but with members of the community—including the street gangs—can have positive consequences.

What we did was instead of having a mob or posse [say] “Get out of here!” we’ve said you know what, this makes up our community, and the neighbourhood, and you’re part of the community. Once you do that to people and they feel involved ... there’s a partnership, they have ownership of something. And you see [the older gang members], they’ll lecture other kids. They’ll say “Hey, don’t end up like me. I’m stuck like this” or “Hey you need to respect this place” and they become part of the greater community. That’s how you deal with, you know, at our level.

The federal government funding limitations have therefore had several profound effects on CBOs operating street gang prevention programs within the inner-city. With only short-term, program funding the process of creating and implementing youth gang prevention programs is inefficient. Resources that should be going to youth are instead spent on reapplying for funding, creating “new” programs that often are very similar to those already being offered, and hiring and training new staff. In addition, marginalized communities are responsabilized and blamed for not doing enough to address the street gang problem.

Indigenous Organizations

As the majority of youth involved in street gangs in Winnipeg are Indigenous, the question of whether Indigenous organizations should be leading youth gang prevention efforts and have access to the most resources is an important one. Unfortunately, for the organizations involved in this study there was not a clear consensus on what should be done. As one respondent from a non-Indigenous organization said:

I know looking at the cultural-based programming allows us some leeway in there. It allows us to really support and encourage more traditional-based approaches and identity and self. And it's really important for us that that happens. It's really important that youth have access to their culture. That they understand that whether they've had no connection their whole life, that they do have a connection, and what that is and what has happened. Understanding colonization for us is really important, that kids understand it, that our staff understand it, that they're trained in it.

As a non-Indigenous organization they are working toward addressing the effects of colonization and believe they have a role to play. However, another respondent working within a non-Indigenous organization was less certain what role they should play in working toward changing the effects of colonization.

There is ongoing colonization without a doubt and on our best days we are good allies in working alongside of other communities to figure out what it is they wish for their people, what their people themselves wish for.... That becomes a little trickier for us 'cause we are Western in our bias so we struggle to work with that and that's an ongoing struggle.

Non-Indigenous people clearly have a role to play in working to solve the street gang problem, although what that role should be is unclear. The majority of the respondents in this study expressed the need to have Indigenous people creating and leading cultural programs within their organizations. Most organizations also employ Elders who work to teach youth traditional cultural practices. In addition, Indigenous people are employed at all the organizations who participated in this study. Some workers believe that they are able to effect positive changes

within the context of culturally-based programs and realize larger positive changes to the effects of colonization through non-Indigenous organizations.

Concluding Remarks

While the majority of street gang members in Winnipeg are Indigenous, there is debate about where and to whom resources should be allocated. As allies, non-Indigenous people have a role to play in supporting and working with Indigenous organizations and communities to solve the street gang problem, although, the extent to which non-Indigenous people and organizations should be in leadership positions is up for question. However, there is no debate that the current funding provided by the federal government for street gang prevention is inadequate to address the current street gang problem in Winnipeg. The resources provided to CBOs for street gang prevention have so far been distributed inefficiently, have been insufficient in both the duration and amount, most often do not take into account the local community context, and marginalized communities are blamed for not doing enough to solve this problem. Because street gangs proliferate in marginalized communities, attending to the larger issues of poverty and marginalization is necessary to adequately address the street gang problem. Without long-term, continuous funding frontline workers do not believe that they are able to affect large-scale community changes.

Conclusion

The colonial project on which Canada was founded continues to negatively affect Indigenous peoples. Discourses that cast Indigenous peoples as inferior proliferate throughout contemporary Canadian society and, as a result of the ongoing effects of colonization, Indigenous peoples continue to be marginalized. The spread of globalization has resulted in middle-class jobs that previously provided a living wage moving overseas, leaving low-skilled jobs that do not offer adequate wages and highly technical jobs that have high barriers for entry. In addition, the majority of Canadians have seen their share of total earnings decrease while those in the top 10 percent have seen their incomes increase. The result of these processes has been the exclusion of Indigenous peoples from the mainstream economy, low high school graduation rates, and high rates of poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, family instability, racism, violence, and victimization compared to the national average. This marginalization is a significant factor in accounting for the over-representation of Indigenous youth in street gangs.

Mainstream criminological theories that seek to explain street gang formation have most often focused on the local community context in which street gangs form. Within this context street gangs are viewed as a result of “disorganized” communities and a lack of assimilation into mainstream culture. This means that not only is the Indigenous street gang problem blamed on marginalized Indigenous communities but the harmful effects that colonialism and assimilation have already caused are ignored. In contrast, critical gang studies researchers argue that the structural inequalities present in society are the most significant contributor to the proliferation of street gangs, and therefore solutions to this problem involve attending to these inequalities. Although, by suggesting the solution is greater inclusion without questioning the settler colonial

bias, these theories also fail to take into account the colonial process and how it has worked to marginalize Indigenous peoples.

Also significant in understanding the trajectory of efforts to respond to street gangs is the shift in the political rationality from policies rooted in social welfare to the actuarial, risk-based framework of the New Right. This New Right rationality works to responsabilize citizens and, through techniques of governmentality, shift the responsibility of public safety and security from the state onto individuals. Within this framework everyone has become a level of risk to be managed in some way. This has meant an increase in police presence and “vicious circles” (O’Malley 2010: 28) and has resulted in the over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system. Within this framework marginalized groups are “collectively individualized” and are held to personally account for “choices” that are made as a result of structural inequalities beyond their control (Brodie 2008:41). Increasingly this has resulted in longer terms of incarceration and the reduction of social services for those deemed “undeserving” of state support.

In the context of youth gang prevention, the federal government has defined success as youth making “smart choices” to stay away from street gangs and crime. To deter youth from becoming gang involved, and in accordance with their New Right political rationality, the federal government has implemented a tough-on-crime agenda that involves lengthy terms of incarceration. In addition, government policy makers have implemented limited, short-term, actuarial-based program funding frameworks to deal with the growing street gang problem. While this funding has resulted in the creation of youth gang prevention programs offered by CBOs in Winnipeg’s inner-city, compared to what is spent on incarceration, the amount CBOs receive is very small.

This study, therefore, has examined the question: *to what extent can community-based organizations operating within an “at risk” framework act as sites of resistance to the New Right political rationality, and effect long-term changes to the street gang problem by addressing underlying structures that have led to the inequality and marginalization of Indigenous peoples in Canada today?* Interviews conducted with workers at CBOs determined that as of a result of the NCPC’s current policies, the needs of the community and local knowledge must often come second to fitting program design into funding models. Contrary to the neo-liberal emphasis on efficiency, the current framework of short-term program funding is actually inefficient. It requires resources to go to creating new programs and reapplying for funding. It results in organizations losing trained staff and having to train new workers when programs begin again. It does not provide organizations time to make changes and improve their programming. And it puts the onus on marginalized communities for not adequately addressing the problem of street gangs—even though the resources to do so have not been made available.

In response to the constraints imposed by government funders, several community-based organizations have taken the initiative by creating social enterprises that provide education, training, and employment to their participants. Social enterprises provide CBOs the ability to find youth employment when the resources provided by the government to do so are not made available. As many youth involved in street gang prevention programs are Indigenous they often face racism when looking for a job. Therefore, social enterprises provide the opportunity for youth to gain valuable work experience without having to battle against the racism they may encounter when seeking job opportunities on their own. In addition, social enterprises allow CBOs the ability to become more self-sufficient, which has the potential to provide programming for longer periods or fill gaps in programming as a result of short-term funding periods.

For the most part, CBOs have only been able to offer discursive resistance to the New Right rationality. As discussed in Chapter Four, this includes such strategies as redefining what success means within the context of program delivery, avoiding or redefining risk-based terminology, and changing what it means for youth to make “smart choices.” However, the goal of many CBOs working in inner-city communities is to make broader changes to the structural inequalities present in society. In an effort to accomplish this goal several CBOs have forged alliances with other organizations. This strategy gives CBOs the opportunity to share resources more efficiently, provide more services to support the people who need them, provide more effective support, and make accessing resources easier. Forming alliances enhances the potential for agencies to create broader strategies and to lobby the government in order to change policies and funding structures. As CBOs work within inner-city communities they have the possibility to change perceptions of what it means for youth, families, and communities to be successful. Therefore, the potential exists for CBOs to demonstrate not only how, but why funding is necessary, that resources spent on CBOs are being used effectively, as well as slowly change the perceptions within society of what it means to be “deserving” and “undeserving.” Through building alliances CBOs have the potential to not only resist the New Right rationality but as alliances grow, gaining resources and momentum, making broader transformations—rather than just creating small pockets of resistance—becomes possible.

Non-Indigenous organizations and people have a role to play in street gang prevention and working to solve the structural inequalities in society. However, as Indigenous peoples in Canada continue to be marginalized and disproportionately affected by poverty and inequality as a result of the continued effects of colonization, and as Indigenous youth turn to street gangs at

far higher rates than their non-Indigenous counterparts, determining the role non-Indigenous organizations should play in street gang prevention, as well as decolonization, is important.

Within Canadian society the expectation has been, and often continues to be, that Indigenous peoples should assimilate into the dominant society (Comack et al. 2013: 145). Decolonization, therefore, must involve challenging the assimilationist structures and discourses that perpetuate the continued process of colonization. However, as Paulette Regan (2010: 215) suggests, “Real socio-political change will not come from hegemonic institutional and bureaucratic structures within these societies.” Instead, it is through challenging and changing systems, policies, and practice that perpetuate colonialism and working with Indigenous peoples in ways that “shift binary colonizer/colonized identities” (p. 218) that decolonization can take place. For non-Indigenous people, this process begins by challenging and changing the interactions and relationships they have with Indigenous peoples and the taken-for-granted privilege and settler worldview. Decolonization also involves supporting and working with Indigenous peoples to decolonize spaces and move forward as equals in a shared understanding. In addition, “decolonization involves rebuilding Aboriginal communities, strengthening Aboriginal families and kinship ties, and instilling hope for a better future in Aboriginal children and youth” (Comack et al. 2013: 146). While Indigenous people have a leading role to play, by working together with non-Indigenous people as strong allies, steps can be taken toward decolonization.

CBOs operating in Winnipeg’s inner-city are aware of the need to address the impacts of colonization and globalization at the local level. Making change, for these workers, involves the endeavour to positively affect the lives of inner-city youth and their families in a variety of concrete ways, including finding youth and their families affordable stable housing, supporting

youth to complete high school and attend university, and helping youth gain work skills and experience. Moreover, by building relationships with youth, providing support and guidance, and developing plans for success that take into account the specific situations of individual youth, workers are able to help youth make positive choices that can ultimately result in youth staying away from gangs and crime.

To the extent that the state endeavours to govern “at-a-distance,” a space is created for CBOs to re-conceptualize and resist what it means for youth to be considered “at risk.” Furthermore, instead of simply telling youth to make “smart choices,” through building relationships, CBOs are able to more fully address the barriers facing youth, offer more effective support, and provide youth the resources they need to have long-term successes in their lives. In these terms, while CBOs are limited by the New Right political rationality of government funders, they are nonetheless able to create success through alliances and program delivery that have the potential to resist individualized notions of personal responsibility that work to “collectively individualize” marginalized communities. As O’Malley (2010: 98) says,

If residents are given opportunities and resources with which to define and act upon their perceptions and local knowledges ... then unanticipated opportunities for productive interventions may open up. These do not have to confront the ranks of law and order enforcers and technocrats but instead can work in the spaces they leave vacant.... Rather than despairing, we need to attend to finding the gaps[,] ... fault lines[, and] the sites of resistance.

CBOs offering youth gang prevention programs, therefore, have the potential to slowly reverse the “vicious circles,” resist the New Right political rationality, and offer alternative definitions of success that work toward alleviating the structural inequalities in society.

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Canadian Criminal Code, RSC 1985, c C-46

Safe Streets and Communities Act

Truth in Sentencing Act

Appendix A

“Street Gangs in Winnipeg: Inner-City Youth Prevention Programs as Sites of Resistance?”

Interview Schedule

For my Master’s thesis I am examining how community-based organizations (CBOs) view street gangs and work to address this problem. I am especially interested in how effective CBOs can be within the government’s risk-based framework. I’m interested in finding out about the programs your organization offers to address youth involvement in street gangs, including the approach you take in addressing the issue of street gangs, how the government’s risk-based framework has affected your program development, and the kinds of successes and challenges you’ve encountered.

1. What is the overall mandate or mission of your organization?

- In Canada Indigenous people (and new immigrants) disproportionately face many challenges. How does your organization both see its role and work to address these larger problems of racial inequality and poverty?

2. I understand that one of your programs [name of program] pertains to youth involvement in street gangs. Can you tell me about it?

- How long has it been running?
- How many staff are involved in the program?
- What is the main focus or purpose of the program?
- How is the issue of street gangs understood?
- Who are the youth that are targeted for this program?
- How many youth has the program attracted?

3. How successful do you think the program has been?

- What indicators does your organization use to determine ‘success’?
- Do you think these indicators align with what your funders consider ‘success’?

4. I understand that your organization receives government funding through the National Crime Prevention Centre's (NCPC) Youth Gang Prevention Fund (YGPF) to operate your program. According to the YGPF they only fund evidence-based programs that focus on reducing the risk of youth joining street gangs.

- What is meant by ‘at risk’ and what does it mean for youth to be considered ‘at risk’?

- When required to work within a risk-based framework is how the government defines ‘at risk’ similar to or different from how you would define being ‘at risk’?
 - Do you feel there is a more appropriate way other than as a level of ‘risk’ to describe youth?
 - Has framing the problem in terms of ‘risk’ imposed any restrictions on how your program operates? If so, how does your organization work with these restrictions?
 - To what extent do you feel that your program has the ability to be successful, either in the short term or long term, at reducing street gang involvement within the current risk reduction framework and short term program based funding?
 - If you do not feel the current approach can be effective, do you feel that any risk-based approach could be successful?
 - The government says they want to provide youth with the ability to make “smart choices” to stay out of gangs. Do feel this is an effective strategy? If not why not?
 - What do you see as the role of government in working with inner-city communities and organizations to prevent street gang violence?
 - Do you feel that your organization has the ability to change the way street gang prevention is approached by the government?
5. What other kinds of challenges has your organization encountered in offering this program?
- How has your organization responded to these challenges?
6. What more do you think needs to be done to address the issue of street gangs in Winnipeg—as well as the other challenges that inner-city youth confront?
7. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel might be important?

Thank you very much for your time and speaking with me!

Appendix B



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Research Project Title: *“Street Gangs in Winnipeg: Inner-City Youth Prevention Programs as Sites of Resistance?”*

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Sponsor:

Manitoba Research Alliance through a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Project Description:

For my Master’s thesis I am examining how community-based organizations (CBO) view street gangs and work to address this problem. I am especially interested in how effective CBOs can be within the government’s risk-based framework. I’m interested in finding out about the programs your organization offers to address youth involvement in street gangs, including the approach you take in addressing the issue of street gangs, how the government’s risk-based framework has affected your program development, and the kinds of successes and challenges you have encountered.

Time Requirement:

Participation will require approximately one hour of your time. I will request that you permit me to digitally audio record our conversation; otherwise, I will take notes. Participation in this project is voluntary and you may decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study (even after the interview begins) without any negative consequences.

Types of Questions:

During the interview you will be asked questions regarding: how your organization frames the “problem” of street gangs; how your organization defines “success”; the extent to which your organization frames the problem in terms of “risk” and “choices”; to what extent your organization addresses larger issues of colonization and racialized poverty; the benefits and challenges of the programs that are offered; and what role the government should have in working with inner-city communities to prevent street gang violence.

Risks and Benefits:

There is no risk to you from participating in this research. There is unlikely to be any direct personal benefit to you. However, there may be potential benefits if the findings of this research help persuade government officials and other policy-makers to change in a positive direction policies that directly affect your organization and/or the community you work with.

Confidentiality:

I will keep any information gathered during the interviews for this study strictly confidential. All data (interview transcripts and notes, consent forms) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in my University office. Only the researcher will have access to the data. You will not be named or identifiable in any reports of this study. If any statement you made during this interview is used in a research report it will be attributed to an anonymous source. Information containing personal identifiers (e.g., this consent form) will be destroyed as soon as it is no longer necessary for scientific purposes (approximately December, 2014). Interview transcripts including any audio recordings and audiotapes will be deleted and/or destroyed by shredding once the project reaches its conclusion (approximately December, 2014).

Dissemination of Findings:

Results from this research will be disseminated in aggregate (group) form as part of my Master’s Thesis project and presented at academic workshops or conferences. If you would like a summary of the results they will be provided to you (approximately August, 2014). Please indicate below if and how you would prefer to receive a summary of my findings:

Please initial here if you would like to receive a copy of the summary _____

Please provide an address (email or mail) where you would like the summary sent:

Consent:

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the above-named person or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 474-7122 or e-mail margaret.bowman@ad.umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____