

Stay out of Gangs: a Visual Analysis of the Public Service Campaign

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

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Abstract

This visual analysis of the Stay out of Gangs public service announcement (PSA) is a site for social investigations. The investigation follows the question of what kind of work the campaign does, in terms of the social discourses it works within and its broader social impact. More specifically, this paper explores the design of the campaign, focusing on the way it frames and interpellates intended audiences, paying attention to the discourses that are produced. The discourses observed in the campaign both reflect and reference popular representations of the gangster and the stereotypes of ethnic minority groups in our society. This paper concludes that the interpellation of both the marginalized at-risk and the law abiding subject positions is working within the PSA, thereby reinforcing social discourses of social inclusion and exclusion currently working in society.

Acknowledgements

In 2008 I faced the jitters many academic students experience when they contemplate beginning their journey in their Master's program. My passion of cultural criminology led me to continue my career in academia, as I spent hours upon days upon weeks studying for course work and research projects. Choosing this project for my final evaluation in my Master's program was an exciting undertaking. This undertaking is one that needs to be acknowledged as a brilliant idea on behalf of my thesis advisor, Dr. Sonia Bookman. To her I owe my first and greatest debt. Her swift, rigorous responses to every draft and detail of this thesis mark her as a tireless and devoted teacher. In addition, I also want to acknowledge the hard work put in by my committee members, Dr. Andrew Woolford and Dr. Brenda Austin-Smith. Their attentiveness to detail and useful feedback encouraged me to make my paper the best it could be.

My second debt is to my family and close friends who sustained me through my emotional and inquisitive quest to complete this project. Their unstinting love, support, understanding, and especially their humour rescued me countless times from the self-doubt and exhaustion. Special thanks to my parents, Sandy and Dennis Trubyk, without whom I would not have accomplished all I have in such a short period of time (short for me, but the bank would suggest otherwise – right Dad?); my sister Breean Trubyk for her love, support, and quirky personality. I hope I can return all the loving and monetary favours someday; my dear friends, new and old, who have honed the craft of friendship into a high art form. They have counselled and supported me through thorny writing patches, challenged me to be a strong academic student, and offering me breaks away from the writing process to have a laugh and step away from the pressures I put on myself: Kelly Seifert, Meaghen Boiteau, Tannis Jupin, Karla Fisher, Kayla Shuster, Siobhan Stuart, Kerry McKinlay. Finally, but definitely not least of who is my partner and best friend, Jonathon Liewicki. He deserves more gratitude than is seemingly possible, he has given me more support than I could have ever expected. From discussing the materials in my paper, examining images with me, editing grammar, and of course – getting me to calm down in stressful moments of writing and revisions. Your unwavering encouragement is not forgotten. I love you.

I dedicate this thesis, my baby, to my parents. Their high expectations and loving support have allowed me to do whatever I want in life. I guess I can check this off my 'bucket list'! Love you Mom and Dad. xoxo.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In December 2009, the Manitoba Government launched a public service campaign entitled *Stay out of Gangs*. According to a news report, the government provided an amount of \$250,000 in funding for the campaign, as one part of a larger plan to end gang violence (CBC news 1 December 2009). The funding for this project can possibly be linked to Manitoba's high crime rate, for which the New Democratic Party (NDP) government has often been criticized. Reports from Statistics Canada regularly put Manitoba at the top of the list for provincial rates of murder, car theft and other serious crimes, including gang violence (Wallace et al. 2009).

The Manitoba Justice Minister, Andrew Swan, stated that the campaign was created to deter youth who are elicited to join gangs, by sending the message that gang life is violent and has destructive consequences. At the launch of the campaign, Swan indicated that the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign was created using the input from youth who are trying to avoid or escape gang life. According to Swan “young people in the process of leaving gangs and at-risk kids who chose not to be involved [with gangs] told us what made a difference to them. Their expertise and their words formed the foundation of this campaign” (CBC news 1 December 2009). The public service campaign included a TV spot, poster ad and a website.

Public service announcements (PSAs) merit sociological attention because they are a key site for defining the overall goals of society by providing behavioural guidelines for citizens. PSAs both represent cultural expectations for the public and they have the potential to prevent certain unacceptable behaviours in ‘at-risk’ citizens. However, research on PSAs has suggested that the typical style of many PSAs is lacklustre (Chapel,

Peterson & Joseph 1999; Cronin 2004; Leiss et al. 2005; Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977; Rice & Atkin 2001; Wolburg 2001). They are also ineffective on a number of fronts. For example, in many PSAs an individual will be displayed in a campaign to represent a particular social group with a social problem. This permits audience members who do not meet the criterion for the targeted social group to ignore the message, as they do not see themselves having the same risk as the targeted social group. The dilemma at this point is that advertising is given a significant role in socially constructing people's behaviours, even though research has shown a marginal increase in appropriate behaviours for many health and personal safety PSAs (Chapel, Peterson & Joseph 1999; Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977; Rice & Atkin 2001). Nonetheless, producers of public service campaigns continue to attempt to influence public awareness in this format.

In this thesis, I focus on the question of what kind of work the campaign does, in terms of the social discourses it works within and its broader social impact. More specifically, I explore the design of the campaign, focusing on the way it frames and interpellates intended audiences, paying attention to the discourses that are produced. The discourses observed in the campaign both reflect and reference popular representations of the gangster and the stereotypes of ethnic minority groups in our society. Therefore, this thesis examines the interpellation of both the marginalized at-risk and the law abiding subject positions, thereby reinforcing social discourses of social inclusion and exclusion currently working in society.

Furthermore, this thesis looks at the kinds of practices and performances the campaign potentially enables audiences to enact, pointing to the ways in which it operates as a regulatory framework. By unpacking the intended meanings within the campaign,

information is found to suggest that the PSA attempts to regulate at-risk youth and law abiding citizens. I argue that there seems to be a desire, on the government's part, to encourage the public to regulate themselves in line with greater societal values. This is currently happening in PSAs, as one site of regulation, in order to create public awareness and educate citizens. The campaign provides normative behavioural guidelines for individuals by encouraging 'appropriate' behavioural choices in the campaign.

In my analysis of the campaign three key themes emerged. First, a dominant style known as the 'ghetto aesthetic' works within the campaign to provide a definition for the intended subject position (Jagodzinski 2005). This illustrates the stereotypical ethnicity, social class and gender traits that are often used in film and television in representations of gang members. As such, the campaign does not reflect the diversity of gang members and gangs in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Second, gang members are represented in the campaign as the feared and threatening social group, which disengages broader audience attention (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007). If the gang member cannot be recognized as a victim of societal forces, the public will simply ignore or avoid dealing with the social issue at hand. Third, the PSA provides a platform to guide citizens – both at-risk and law abiding – to perform in socially acceptable ways (Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977). This is accomplished by exemplifying the gang member as the 'wrong choice', which then defines the right choice for the public as the choice to be the responsible citizen.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

To illustrate how the *Stay out of Gangs* PSA operates in contemporary society I examined diverse sociological literatures. The emphasis on advertising literature offers the opportunity to see advertising as a form of social communication that provides the public with guidelines on how to behave in society. Advertising's privileged modality of social communication has been adapted by governments to solve social problems, to promote their programs, and to articulate concerns on behalf of interest groups and social advocates. PSAs in the commercial media have increasingly become an important means of attempting to influence the public. Social communication created through advertising can be seen as a site of discursive formation. When PSAs disseminate their message, social discourses are working to represent individuals in particular ways, so audiences can quickly identify what is occurring in the message. Thus, this chapter's emphasis is on analyzing public service advertising's role as a primary form of social communication within contemporary society to regulate citizens to some extent.

2.2 Advertising

Advertising is a major sector in the global economy, bound up in the continuation of high production and consumption rates in our society. Advertising is so pervasive that we see it streaming into all of our media communication systems including television, magazines, and the Internet. Advertising is such a fundamental part of our media system that we usually take it for granted. Large portions of revenue in our media system are often generated from advertising. Newspapers generate seventy-five percent of their revenue from advertising, in commercial broadcast television advertising comprises

almost one hundred percent of revenue, while film media has product placements throughout their films (Leiss et al. 2005).

Since the 1950s, there has been a growing debate about the role that advertising plays in the marketplace and the effects of its messages on consumers (Leiss et al. 2005). Supporters of advertising believe that advertising is economically necessary because it assures media independence from the government and provides 'free' television programs for large numbers of people. Advertising plays an invaluable role in informing people about the products available to them. As a result, advertising contributes to the public's well-being. People are encouraged to increase their standard of living by buying products that benefit them. And when the public buys these products, the advertising industry is able to create more employment opportunities and prosperity for those involved (Cook 2003; Jhally 1990; Leiss et al. 1986)

Critics suggest that advertisers create behaviours in consumers that are not favourable for society. People are encouraged to spend money on products that are unnecessary. Advertisements consequently create false needs in people by peddling ideas such as leisure, hedonism, and luxurious lifestyles to cultivate consumerist attitudes. This leads to unrealistic and unattainable expectations about lifestyle, body image and promotion of dangerous behaviours (i.e. smoking or drinking in excess) (Cronin 2004; Goldman 1992; Packard 1957)

While there are several ways of understanding advertising, I will be using Leiss, Kline, Jhally and Botterills' (2005) approach, which is based on the view that advertising is a form of social communication, with an emphasis on its discursive dimension. The

authors suggest that the persuasive techniques used in advertising construct social behaviours and expectations in society. As Leiss et al. (2005, p. 19) assert:

Over the course of the preceding century, advertisers constructed a vast, diverse, and continually changing library of messages that both schooled consumers in the use of objects and offered guidance about personal maintenance, appropriate values, and correct behaviour for social acceptance. In short, advertising offered models of the good life and insight into how to achieve personal pleasure and social success. We argue that the vast library of commercial fables, fairy tales, and troupes represents something more than salesmanship. It can be understood as a cultural discourse in and through goods.

Advertising can be seen as a communicative power that uses signs such as images and language to create the cultural meanings associated with consumer products (Leiss et al. 2005). Products are then consumed primarily for their cultural meanings. In this sense, advertising has become a fundamental part of modern culture (Ibid. 2005). Advertisers have constructed messages that both inform consumers of an object's utility, as well as guide consumers towards appropriate personal maintenance, values, beliefs, and behaviours. Therefore, Leiss et al. (2005) argue that the vast majority of advertisements represent something more than selling goods. With consumers taking directions from advertisements in their daily lives, what occurs in the work of advertisements can be understood as the constitution of cultural discourse, in and through goods (Ibid.). By informing consumers of the uses of objects, ads offer guidance about appropriate behaviour and insight into how to obtain greater pleasure in society. With advertising doing the work of what the goods should represent to the consumer, advertising becomes part of the broader system of social transactions within society. The authors suggest that a great deal of an individual's communication with others is mediated by consumer goods, and what these goods can do for the individuals who consume them. Leiss et al. (2005, p. 4) asserts:

Goods-in-use mark honor, prestige, and rank; bind us in affection, love, and friendship; designate moments of celebration; denote safety and trust; and serve as a catalyst for fantasy and reflection.

Social communication now involves much discussion of the use of things, patterns of consumption, preferences of products, and display of objects. Advertising has increased the amount of communication that deals with objects between persons by persuasion. This is due to the advertisers' desire to link the consumer's needs to the characteristics of the products they sell. Where there is an obvious increase in the economic growth of the marketplace, we can also observe a symbolic growth of the associated discourses that deal with consumer products, and consumers (Leiss et al. 2005). Advertisements are able to influence the meaning of how products are used and what they mean for the consumer. Therefore, advertisers' creations appropriate and transform a vast range of symbols and ideas into a communication network that is unsurpassed in cultural modes of address (Ibid.). And as the discourses take shape, the meanings of products, persons, and well-being are unified through the world of advertising.

According to Leiss et al. (2005), the average citizen spends several hours each day engaged in the media's discourse. Specifically, we continually encounter "the mediated representations of posters, television, radio, and newspapers" (Leiss et al. 2005, p. 97), while watching television, walking down the street, sitting on a bus or using the internet as it has become part of everyday life. This has made it impractical to avoid all the messages presented by the media in our society. Television for example, brings together many media formats such as pictures, sound, film, and art. In doing so, television has expanded its audience, by including these various visual media formats. The media savvy

audience engages with the visual formats with ease, due to the continual and pervasive nature of images in our daily lives.

Advertising has the advantage of positioning itself to combine various formats and ideas. Therefore its influence is essential in understanding how communication flows from media producers to audiences. Advertisers are able to condense ideas with skilful assimilation of language and imagery, while including reference to popular beliefs in society (Leiss et al. 2005). This encourages audiences to participate in the messages, and increases the ads' potential to communicate a message to larger groups of people.

Advertising is seen as having such an effective impact on audiences that its influence has expanded into films, art work, and television programming as well as working as a tool for governmental and social institutions. These cultural industries, companies and institutions use advertising as a tool to communicate their preferred ideas to members of society. Thus, social and institutional discourses are produced and reproduced in various media formats.

2.3 Representation

Advertising is a form of media representation, in that it connects meaning and language to culture (Hall 1997). Representation “is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture” (Ibid., p. 15). Advertisements often express complex concepts to audiences through representation, by communicating about objects using language and images. Communication through objects can be done by referring to the object, person or event, whether real or abstract. Audiences are able to understand the reference to objects, people or events due to the ‘mental representations’ we collect through socialization. However, one object may

represent several things. Therefore, a system of representation consists of not only particular ideas, but varying concepts with established complex relations between them (Ibid.).

Producers of advertisements are able to communicate with audiences through ads because the producers share similar cultural codes with their audiences. Cultural codes are “standardised formulae for communicating meaning” (O’Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). People with similar cultural backgrounds will carry a similar set of representations that depict the images they see and the language they use, in order to understand the world around them. This is often an unconscious process, and therefore, can be taken for granted by the people who are a part of the process (Sturken & Cartwright 2009). The systems of representation are accepted as normal, and this shapes how we perceive ourselves. Cultural codes shape the meanings of words, images and concepts. A general term which encompasses all of these terms is ‘sign’. A sign is any object, action, event, or pattern that conveys a meaning. Signs represent words, images, or concepts in relation to objects, persons, or events. Together, signs make up the system of language in a culture group. According to Saussure (1966), the sign is made up of two parts. There is the actual word or image (signifier) and there is the idea/concept (signified), which a person associates the word or image with. The sign is further broken down into three categories to define its forms of expression. There are three main forms of signs: index, symbol and icon (Leiss et al. 2005; Rose 2001). Gillian Rose (2001) defines the terms index, symbol and icon as follows: indexical signs have an inherent relationship between the signified and signifier (a photo of a gang member in the newspaper); symbolic signs refer to an assumed meaning, but clearly arbitrary relationship (a red bandana infers association with

a particular gang); iconic signs refer to the object as having a likeness to the person (an image of a Hell's Angels leather jacket is an iconic sign of a gang member) (Rose 2001). For indexical and iconic signs, the meaning can persist over extended periods of time, however symbolic signs are never fixed, therefore a great deal of interpretation and active processing is needed in order to read the symbolic signs offered to us from advertising as one site.

2.4 Discourse

Within sociology, discourse is generally understood as a system of representations that involves language and social interactions (Foucault 2002; Sturken & Cartwright 2009). The use of language and social interactions allows for an exchange of ideas between groups of people. These ideas become part of a body of knowledge that is shared amongst large groups of people, hence discourse relies on a collective understanding (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). As humans, we need discourse to communicate with each other, and thus "discourse is a social process of constructing meaning within a mutually understood set of rules" (Ibid., p. 150). Presenting discourse in this way suggests that it is a neutral term. However, no discourse or knowledge is value-free (Lupton 1995), so it is important to analyze discourse to understand where meaning comes from and how it is constructed.

Discourses are bound up in the relations of power, inferring that they influence how ideas, circulating around a particular subject, are put into practice. These ideas, disseminated throughout institutions, such as the media, ultimately regulate social conduct. For instance, the rules and practices that are in place in society are reproduced

within PSAs, as one site of regulation. PSAs reproduce socially acceptable forms of knowledge that construct how citizens should behave.

At any given historical point in time, a particular idea will appear across various sites to imply the proper conduct for citizens in society. When certain texts, films or institutions refer to the same idea, then they are understood to contribute to a discursive formation (Hall 1997). Discourses are historically constituted social constructions in organizing and circulating knowledge (Lupton 1995). Media is an increasingly important site for the production and circulation of a body of knowledge that defines many of the practices and social identities expected of citizens. Media discourses influence and represent people's attitudes regarding socially acceptable behaviours. Therefore, the media influences citizens by conveying social meanings and stereotypes that are projected through language and communication. Discourse is never fixed and will change over time (Hall 1997). In other words, the chosen discourse delivers the vocabulary, expressions and perhaps also the style needed to communicate the expectations of society at a given time. For instance, media messages surrounding hip-hop lifestyle convey two competing discourses, describing it as a "commitment to Black nationalism" (Alim 2006) or an expression of "urban rebellious youth" (Mukherjee 2006). Each discourse shapes the social meanings associated with hip-hop lifestyle in a distinctive way.

2.5 Governmentality

Recent years have witnessed a change in state power, whereby new and varying forms of governance have been enacted to prevent individuals from becoming involved with institutions such as the justice system (Smandych 1999). The government, once comprised of a centralized authority, now uses various control techniques that individuals

enact upon themselves (Banks 2007; Smandych 1999). In order to characterize what is occurring in modern society, scholars refer to these activities as forms of governmentality (Foucault 2002; Garland 1999). An essential feature of governmentality is the circulation of messages, through discourses, that provide society members with a constructed view of what it is to be a good citizen (Banks 2007; Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977). The control techniques are often derived from non-state or extra-state governing bodies such as social agencies and not for profit organizations.

Technologies of discipline resort to physically imposed punishments to regulate the individual. This type of government technology is provided for those individuals who cannot be governed; they are irredeemable (Garland 1999). In contrast, governmentality avoids the use of punishment by using technologies of self, which allows the at-risk individual to self-regulate and appropriately conduct themselves. This assumes that the individual can be responsabilized, and has the potential to be transformed into a law-abiding citizen. The subject is encouraged to work upon themselves to be a law-abiding citizen (Hannah-Moffatt 2005; Garland 1999). This is done through communication regarding the promotion of acceptable behaviours. Whether or not this is explicit in an advertisement, an advertisement provides guidelines for individuals in how to behave according to government rules and regulations. This allows the government to remain at a distance, while still imposing the laws of the society on the public. Hence, governmentality refers to the formation of the self-regulating citizen, whereby tactics and strategies of responsabilization are utilized, rather than punishment, to control citizens (Garland 1999).

Notions of governance and technologies of the self are often used in strategies of crime-control for individuals who have not yet been introduced to crime, such as the category of 'at-risk' youth. Social concerns related to at-risk youth are often made known by government and social agencies, and are communicated to the public through PSAs. The manipulation of individuals to conform to the norms of society could occur to some degree through the representations constructed in PSAs. These representations are more than mere ideas thought up by the producers of campaign advertisements. Rather, the producers utilize concepts already present in society and reflect these ideas back to society members viewing the campaign. This includes the idea that youth introduced to gang life can be governed by aligning their objectives with those of the authorities (Garland 1999). Through representations of 'ideal citizenship' and the 'irredeemable criminal' in advertising, the government provides citizens with regulatory guidelines in order to understand the acceptable behaviours of society. The goal here is to prevent illegal activity from occurring. Through such discourses of citizenship, which are re-circulated in PSAs, individuals are able to take direction from media messages and transform themselves into 'ideal' citizens.

2.6 The Transformative Risk Subject

Illegal activities associated with gangs are seen as 'governable risks' (Hannah-Moffat 2005; Garland 1999). The individuals involved in gangs are seen as a risky population that needs to be managed by the government (Hannah-Moffat 2005). Unlike offenders already involved in gang activity, youth prior to their introduction to gang life are perceived as a minor risk. Youth at-risk are seen as a potential offender population. In other words, there is a chance to curb their introduction to illegal activities. Strategic

approaches and crime-control tactics have been created to ‘do something’ for at-risk individuals (Ibid.), to meet the needs of those individuals who are likely to be introduced to illegal activities and assess the risk of acting on the illegal actions desired by gangs. Part of the plan for such programming is to deliver the information in a stylized mode of address that suits the target audience (Hannah-Moffat 2005; Leiss et al. 2005).

The central goal of such programming is to reduce the risk of the individual to commit future crimes. ‘Technologies of the self’ programming has been used in various crime-control tactics to prevent further criminal justice encounters for the at-risk individual (Garland 1999). Techniques such as intermittent supervision and reporting, electronic monitoring, tracking, drug-testing and attendance for work are used (Ibid.). The attempt here is to build an environment conducive to self-control and the practice of a responsabilized freedom. Hannah-Moffat (2005) refers to this as constituting the ‘transformative risk subject’, whereby the risky subject has been changed into a law-abiding citizen, who can manage their own choices due to the programming they are involved in (Ibid., p. 34). An effort to assimilate at-risk youth has become a high priority in contemporary society. Assimilation is based upon the terms defined by authority institutions and by means of the new ‘technologies of the self’. Social agencies, providing programming, circulate ideas of what the ideal citizen is, which constitutes a regulatory framework that guides the actions and behaviours of the disciplined and ‘good citizen’ (Foucault 2002).

This framework can be linked to the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign. The objective of the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign is similar, in that the ad is designed to deter youth from gang life by providing an example of the difficulties the gang member has endured.

Youth at-risk are offered social programming as a way to prevent them from becoming involved with illegal activities. This also enhances their ability to self-govern and make rational choices, to reduce the potential for future offences (Hannah-Moffat 2005).

Therefore, the transformative style of programming is bound up with the practices of governmentality. Any project that focuses on intervention to reduce risk involves an individual who is willing to be transformed and, additionally can identify risky situations, access helpful resources, and avoid illegal situations.

2.7 Public Service Announcements

The need to encourage the public to conform to societal values is not a new desire on behalf of greater society. Various techniques, such as town criers have been used in previous decades to steer individuals in socially accepted directions (O’ Barr n.d.).

Advertisements have been used to promote socially accepted norms and behaviours as early as the 1900s (Ibid.). The ads were often depicted on poster boards, flyers, pamphlets, and heard on the radio. In contemporary society, PSAs can be found in the same formats, as well as in commercials, documentary films, websites, and billboard ads (Rice & Atkin 2001). According to Advertising Standards Canada (2010, definitions), a PSA is defined as:

Any message (the content of which is controlled directly or indirectly by the advertiser) expressed in any language and communicated in any medium (except those listed under Exclusions) to Canadians with the intent to influence their choice, opinion or behaviour” and specifically Advocacy advertising is defined as “advertising” which presents information or a point-of-view bearing on a publicly recognized controversial issue.

The most common topics of PSAs are usually health and safety (Rice & Atkin 2001). A typical PSA is part of a public awareness campaign to inform or educate the public about an issue such as smoking or compulsive gambling.

Critics suggest that PSAs first and foremost, are a set of political attitudes that are designed to be conveyed to the public as a social concern (Cronin 2004). As Paletz, Pearson and Willis (1977, p. 74) indicate: “Although for the most part they appear to lack obvious political content, they transmit messages from ... the elite and their institutions to the members of society”. As a result, governments use PSAs as a site of intervention and regulation for their citizens to abide by (Ibid.). PSAs can provide direction for people’s predispositions early on in their development and reinforce existing behaviours (Ibid.) Socialization plays a key role in the behaviours of our citizens. PSAs, as part of the media, contribute to the socialization process. Hence, they are significant for their explicit content and the social and political demands they make for their citizens.

PSAs are similar to consumer advertisements since they promote a particular lifestyle. However, PSAs differ from consumer advertisements since PSAs are not trying to sell a product, but rather are trying to deter the intended audience from illegal behaviours. PSAs thus aim to deter those individuals who have not yet experienced the serious consequences associated with the public concern. In this sense, PSAs promote normative behaviour for their law-abiding citizens and at-risk individuals, by making an example of ‘the other’ or irredeemable individual who practices illegal activities. Advertisers claim to have great power in influencing consumer’s choices in consumption. Therefore, instinctively it would be assumed that the same influence used for consumer products could be used to motivate people to stop doing other things (Wolburg 2001). However, previous advertising research has shown that promotion of social causes through PSAs are not entirely effective (Chapel, Peterson & Joseph 1999; Cronin 2004; Leiss et al. 2005; Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977; Rice & Atkin 2001; Wolburg 2001).

Ineffectiveness has often been associated with campaign producer's heavy reliance on assigning advertising the primary, if not exclusive, role in accomplishing their social objectives (Chapel, Peterson & Joseph 1999). Campaigns are often created to function as a public relations tool, whereby the government or equivalent social institution uses advertising as a highly visible strategy to convince the public that work is being done to address the issue at hand (Lupton 1995). PSAs are used as a site for highlighting politically charged issues such as driving while under the influence of alcohol, and illegal gang activity. Thus, while public service campaigns such as *Stay out of Gangs* appears to be a straightforward attempt to influence a positive behaviour in at-risk youth, it has a dual role in utilizing the campaign's message as a public statement that work is being done to prevent future gang activities.

PSAs encompass a particular kind of social communication, which is often distinct from dominant forms of commercial advertising, therefore affecting audience involvement. In particular, the common format and delivery of a PSA message typically lacks creativity and is limited in the technology used to produce the ads (Rice & Atkin 2001; Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977). Audience members can often become lost in the message response. The message could be regarded as 'offensive..., boring..., irrelevant..., unbelievable or un-motivating' (Rice & Atkin 2001, p. 51). Consumer advertisements are designed to promote the encouragement of consumption, such as shampoo, clothing, or car advertisements. Consumer advertisements displayed in magazines, radio, and television are designed for personal enjoyment and escapism. These media formats are generally not thought to be an environment in which to discuss negative social issues affecting citizens. In contrast, when social institutions promote the discouragement of

consumption practices such as smoking or drinking, audience members are not inclined to actively pay attention to these messages, particularly if they do not see themselves as 'at-risk' (Wolburg 2001).

Another issue often associated with PSAs and their potential to impact audience members is that many people perceive PSAs as intended for others, but not themselves (Rice & Atkin 2001; Weinstein 1980; 1984). According to popular belief, people tend to think they are invulnerable to negative occurrences in life. Weinstein (1980; 1984) refers to this invulnerability as an 'unrealistic optimism', claiming that people expect others to be victims of negative events, but not themselves. People tend to believe they have more control over their bodies than is realistic. In fact, among negative events, the more undesirable the event, the stronger the tendency to believe that one's own chances of experiencing this event are less than average (Weinstein 1980).

Lastly, public service campaigns may generate counterproductive boomerang effects. This happens when portions of the audience are influenced to act in the opposite direction from that which the campaign has suggested (Rice & Atkin 2001). In some situations, this effect may be caused by an inadvertent social norm due to depictions of the proscribed behaviour as being fun, or by creating a sense of curiosity in the audience (Ibid.). In other situations, where highly threatening fear appeals are used, the message may 'boomerang' by producing desensitization in the audience, who then become accustomed to the harmful outcome (i.e. smoking) and ignore the message. Campaigns for the discouragement of dangerous consumption practices thus, may actually positively reinforce dangerous behaviours that lead to disease or death. Indeed, Michel Foucault (2002, p. 171) has argued that the conception of death has shifted since the nineteenth

century, where death is now seen as detached from nature and is something that can be controlled in the living body of individuals:

Now, on the contrary, it is constitutive of singularity; it is in that perception of death that the individual finds himself, escaping from a monotonous, average life; in the slow, half-subterranean, but already visible approach of death, the dull, common life becomes an individuality at last; a black border isolates it and gives it the style of its own truth.

Foucault suggests that our awareness and acknowledgement of an inevitable death functions to motivate us to be unique and individualistic in our lifestyle and living environments. We do this by using hazardous substances or by being involved in dangerous situations (Cronin 2004). Therefore, instead of viewing the messages of PSAs as intended, we may view ourselves as individuated by practicing risky or dangerous activities. The very risky behaviours we are warned about in fact create a sense of individuality for us. As Cronin (2004, p. 93) asserts:

The choice to... risk the dangers clearly indicated by health warnings, feeds into cultural understandings that our unique death marks our life as unique: our 'dangerous' consumption choices articulate the black border that delimits our life-span and hence produces a sense of ourselves as individual.

In summary, a PSA's objective is to provide information and act as a form of socialization for citizens. Citizens can be guided to uphold appropriate attitudes and social behaviours by viewing these messages. In general however, PSAs only positively impact those viewers who already have a predisposition to agree with the social concern as presented (Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977). In this way, PSAs act as a tool for public awareness that work is being done to help 'the other' in society, which calms the public concern. Therefore, those individuals 'at-risk' are not provided with the appropriate intervention strategies when PSAs are used as the major technique to prevent future

illegal activities. Despite the relative ineffectiveness of such campaigns, advertising remains a crucial site for intervention and regulation.

2.8 Audiences

According to Leiss, Kline, Jhally and Botterill (2005), there is an effective way to communicate meaningful messages to audiences. Not only do advertisements need to be entertaining to grab audience attention, but many social factors need to be considered in order for an advertisement to have a successful impact on the audience of interest. The social factors include, but are not limited to, social class, educational background, ethnicity, age, gender and political view. In other words, audiences are important and audience interaction should be taken into consideration when analyzing advertisements and PSAs.

Passive Audiences

In the early stages of audience studies, the media were seen as being capable of directly affecting people's views about social issues (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). For instance, Adorno (1991) maintained that audiences absorb messages without hesitation. Therefore, Adorno (1991) conceptualized audience members as passive, lost souls in a sea of mass culture they cannot resist. Audience members are simply blinded to the reality of media messages. The masses convince themselves that they are individuals, creating their own paths in life; however, Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) suggest that this is pseudo-individuality and nothing more. Furthermore, they argued that the consciousness of the consumers is in fact supplied by the 'culture industry' (Ibid.).

Different versions of the passive audience have been elaborated from Adorno and Horkheimer's original work (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1964; Merton 2003). However, these theorists' notions of the mass audience as passive 'dupes' is problematic at best. To

assume that audience members are no more than simplified drones denies individual agency. Though mass culture is produced in society, not all members of society use the messages in the same way. These theorists deny the critical and interpretative capacity of the audience. The use of media messages by an individual is affected by social factors such as social class, educational background, ethnicity, age, gender and political view. These social factors can affect audience member's perceptions of a media text, how the individual sees various events, and the way they interpret the meaning of an advertisement (Gillespie 1995; Leiss et al. 2005; Morley & Brundson 1999).

Active Audiences

In contemporary society, the concept of the audience as 'active' is a more accurate depiction of viewers of media culture. It is not necessary to assume that audiences have changed from previous eras, but that they are understood differently now. The active audience model has been shaped by a very different viewpoint, compared to the previous authors discussed. Instead of supposing the audience is easily influenced by media presentations, the following authors suggest there can be resistance or a negotiation occurring between the audiences and the text. Therefore, active audiences are viewed as creating their own meanings from media messages.

Stuart Hall (1980) is a key theorist in the development of reception theory. Hall confirms that the producers of media have encoded the messages with dominant meanings from society. The messages produced by mass media need to be encoded to present a 'neutral' message to the viewers. This strategy is used in order to obtain the largest audience possible. By neutralizing the message through coding mechanisms, viewers are thought to be less aware of the intended message from the producers. Hall suggests that these messages are then decoded by audience members in three potential

ways (1980): the hegemonic decode; the negotiated decode; or the oppositional decode. The hegemonic decode, or the 'inscribed decode' suggests that the individual accepts the intended message presented as correct and acceptable. The negotiated decode allows the viewer to accept segments of the message, and oppose other segments. An oppositional decode suggests that the viewer denies or resists the message completely (Ibid.).

Recent studies (Gillespie 1995; Morley & Brundson 1999) note that more often than not, people will negotiate the messages presented to them and therefore it is unlikely that individuals ever fully accept or deny a message. Social factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, social class and political views will shape the interpretation of a text. Many studies have been conducted to further this argument (Jhally & Lewis 1992; Gillespie 1995; Radway 1991). They indicate the significance of defining the social affiliations of the audience in order to understand the interpretation of the text. By analyzing how media is consumed by differing social groups we will better understand why they consume the images.

Youth Audiences

Many scholars have examined the youth consumer market (Gillespie 1995; Leiss et al. 2005; Livingstone 1998). Two analyses discussed here are Gillespie (1995) and Leiss, Kline, Jhally and Botterill (2005). In the past few generations, youth have typically been disaffected by the traditional persuasive advertising strategies. Youth culture is deeply embedded in media. With the amount of time spent engaged with media materials, youth are experts at dissecting them, demanding that advertising producers use higher levels of irony and symbolic meanings in ads. For example, new ads allow youth audiences to engage in their cynicism of advertisements by focusing on the cynicism. The new message positions itself with youth audience attitudes by agreeing with the cynical

judgements, thereby rewarding youth audiences' media savviness. Leiss et al. (2005, p. 492) suggest that when addressing youth audiences advertisers must break down "the once sacred industrial age advertising strategies and [reveal] the jaded edges and persuasion strategies... in self-mocking narratives". This means presenting the advertisement as an ad, to give audiences the straight pitch, and with a satirical twist or a parody of the tools of the trade, which youth intimately understand.

Contemporary youth are not amenable to segmented and stereotypical representations of a prototypical member of a particular lifestyle category (Leiss et al. 2005). This is because "[youth today] are the most ethnically and culturally diverse cohort" (Ibid., p. 472) to date in North America. With a rich cultural experience, youth have become increasingly 'tolerant' of difference. Youth expect imaginative and diverse concepts in advertisements. This has made it difficult for advertising producers to sell products to them. As Sonia Livingstone (1998, p. 63) presents this issue:

Audiences become less predictable, more fragmented or more variable in their engagement with media, understanding the audience is even more important for theories of social shaping, design markets and diffusion than perhaps was true of older media.

Marketers are expected to address the diversity of social class, gender and ethnicity in order to grab the youths' attention. The youth "focus on and celebrate the differences among themselves" (Ibid., p. 473). They no longer look for a lifestyle to be designed for them through advertising campaigns. Rather they desire an ad to reflect their own lifestyles and subcultures.

Adapting to these changes, advertising producers present ads that differ from previous advertising techniques by explicitly challenging traditional views of society. More diverse groups of people are represented in ads; females are given agency in ads;

ethnically diverse characters are presented in ads; and ads are increasingly honest in their attempts to persuade viewers (Leiss et al. 2005). Advertisers have also begun increasing the entertainment value of the advertisements. They have found that it is important to produce messages that exemplify ideas of freedom, liberation, diversity and hedonism. Advertisers have thus appropriated and altered marketing practices for contemporary youth audiences.

For example, Gillespie's 1995 study of young people of Punjabi family background (14-18 years old) living in Southall, West London, shows that youth in are astute at decoding messages in advertising and are able to make judgments about the images depicted. The youth are predominantly of Punjabi Sikh background with cross-cutting social classes, religions, and linguistics (Gillespie 1995). This implies that there is no neat equation here to determine the culture and community characteristics of Southall. The youth are essentially working within two distinct identities: their cosmopolitanism through their involvement in media culture, and their traditional practices of the Punjabi (Ibid.). The youth are interested in ads that correctly represent them as diverse and allow them the freedom to experience all the forms of hedonistic and aesthetically pleasing lifestyles they choose. The young people critique advertisements that misrepresent them, suggesting a stereotype of their cultural identity (whether of Punjabi background or as a youth in London) (Ibid.). Youth exhibit a clear sense of entitlement by stating that the ads should be directed to them by representing their identity and values in the ads.

Youth are a model example of active audiences because they are constantly surrounded by media presentations and searching for meanings in the media which reflect their lifestyles. The youth of contemporary society are resistive in their consumption and

viewing of products (Leiss et al. 2005). The youth market desires advertisements that are full of entertainment, diversification and emotions. Youth cohorts increasingly use media texts as a platform for socialization. When youth audiences are analyzed for their interactions and interpretation of the media products displayed, researchers are able to explore the meanings of the products for the individuals. Youth are likely to deny ads that are not seen as authentic and in addition, expect ads to illustrate the values of their generation (Ibid.). This suggests that youth consumers care less about the ad's end goals of persuasion, as long as the ad is up front about its intentions.

2.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a foundation for the analysis of the *Stay out of Gangs* public service campaign. Linking the *Stay out of Gangs* public service campaign to social discourse creates a framework for the analysis of the campaign, with regards to the potential influence that the campaign possesses to transform at-risk citizens and maintain obedience in law abiding citizens. Based upon the fact that public service advertising is given a primary role in informing citizens, understanding public service advertising's role requires attention to the context of the production of its message, the intentions of the message, and the changing beliefs and values of the viewers.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In order to consider the question of what kind of work the campaign does in terms of the social discourses it produces, it was necessary to choose research methods that would facilitate an exploration of the texts in the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign. The analysis conducted for the thesis has been grounded in empirical research. This chapter will discuss the overall research strategy, with a particular focus on the methods used to conduct the primary research, including semiology and discourse analysis, as addressed by Michael O'Shaughnessy and Jane Stadler (2005), and Gillian Rose (2001). The methods chosen to conduct the research will be defined, with justification for their use, as well as consideration for the limits that are entailed in each method. In addition to the use of the methods and the specific analytic processes, this chapter also outlines the research data that forms the basis of my analysis.

3.2 Research Data

The data obtained for this study comes from the Department of Manitoba Justice's 2009-2010 Project Gangs Proof anti-gang campaign, *Stay out of Gangs*. The campaign consists of a commercial TV spot, a poster ad and a website (www.stayoutofgangs.ca). The campaign's advertisements (TV spot and poster ad) ran from November 30th 2009 to December 23rd 2009. The website is intended to run for the entire calendar year of 2010. The TV spot depicts a tough talking 'hoodlum', who uses slang terminology to present himself as an authoritative person on the experiences of gang life. The gang member from the *Stay out of Gangs* TV spot (2009) addresses the audience with a monologue:

There's a lot of gangs out there that want a piece of you. Get you when you're young, say you'll live the good life, you'll find out fast that you're only there

to make them rich. You steal for them, you deal their drugs, they own you. What do you get? You get shanked, you get shot, you get locked up and lose your freedom. You put the people you care about in danger. So find out how to stay out of gangs... before you get beat in.

According to a recent report, the television spot appeared on the television networks CBC, CTV, Global, City-TV and CNWFT French (Winnipeg Free Press 11 February 2010, p. B1), and ran as a thirty-one second video clip. It ran more than seven hundred times on two hundred television programs during the month of December 2009 (Ibid.). The television programs included professional hockey games, The Simpsons, Survivor, Heroes, Family Guy, and The Ghost Whisperer, as an attempt to not only target the youth at-risk of gang recruitment, but their parents and adults in the community. According to Owen (2010), Figure 3.1 illustrates the diversity in genre of television shows in which the anti-gang ad appeared most frequently:

Table 3.1
Diversity in Genre of Television Shows

<i>Television Series</i>	<i>Times TV Spot Aired</i>
Ghost Whisperer	18
The OC	18
Breakfast Television	17
Jay Leno	17
The National news	15
Judge Judy	14
Electric Play/Reviews Run	13
CBC Evening News	12
Fashion File	12
Entertainment Tonight	11
The Price is Right	11
Friends	11
Canadian Comedy Strip	10
Til Debt Do Us Part	10
CTV News at 11:30	9
Le Telejournal	8

The poster ad for the campaign features the statement *Stay out of Gangs*, strung across the headline in yellow graffiti font. It depicts a young male with his head resting on his right hand, a hood over his head, as he looks out a window. The poster is mainly black and white, with the statement “Don’t get beat in” as the anchorage, located at the bottom of the poster (see Figure 3.2). I observed the poster ad in several public spaces around Winnipeg, Manitoba. These included Kildonan Place Shopping Centre, various Winnipeg Transit bus interiors, and convenience corner stores along Talbot Avenue in the Elmwood neighbourhood, among others (see Figures 3.3, 3.4, 3.5).

Figure 3.2
The Poster Advertisement Seen in
Winnipeg Public Spaces.

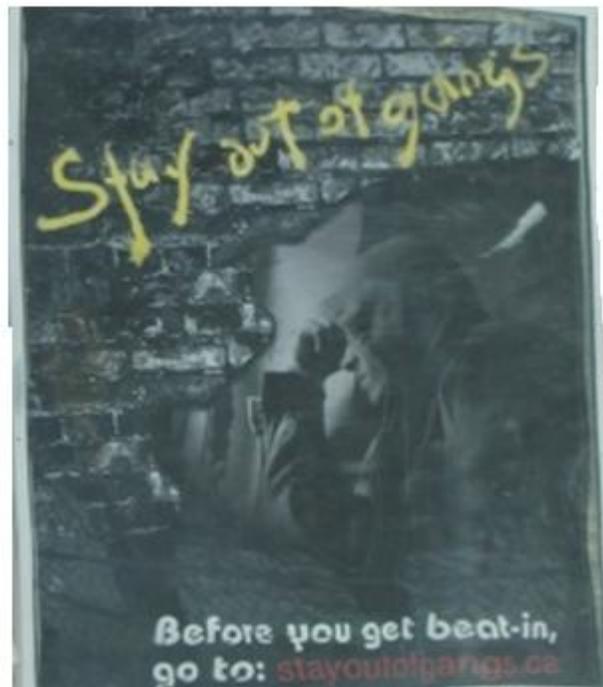


Figure 3.3
Talbot Avenue (East)



Figure 3.4
Talbot Avenue (West)



Figure 3.5
Henderson Highway @ Hespeller Avenue



Photos taken January 2010 by the author

Additionally, the campaign provides a website (www.stayoutofgangs.ca), where further resources can be found, listed under the category titles 'Real Stories', 'Gangs Exposed', 'Getting Help', 'Let's Talk', and 'How Adults Can Help'. Each section deals with a topic that is common for gang members to experience. The objective of the website is to increase awareness of the seriousness of gang life for youth who are being

recruited to gangs. Plain language is used on the website to reach a larger audience with varying educational backgrounds.

3.3 Research Methods

Semiotic Analysis

In order to understand the signs and symbols that were part of the campaign in the website, poster, and TV spot, I used the semiological tools provided by O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005), based on the theories developed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1966), Charles Peirce (1977) and Roland Barthes (1973). Semiology is the scientific study of signs and sign systems. Signs and sign systems are the basic units of all forms of communication in our society. Language and words are the most fundamental and dominant forms of sign systems. However, signs can be found everywhere in other formats, such as clothing, hand signals, and hairstyles. Signs are able to communicate meaning by representing the actual thing or idea (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). We make meaning of the material world by understanding the signs seen in images and objects within their specific cultural context. Thus, human culture is made up of signs (Leiss et al. 2005; Rose, 2001). Semiology allows us to trace the meanings of signs within their particular cultural context and define the intended meaning of those signs.

Within semiotic analysis, there can be a range of possible meanings for any one sign. Therefore, it is essential to reduce the possible meanings by focusing on the cultural knowledge and context surrounding the campaign, and in order to address this I used intertextuality in the process of interpretation. Here, intertextuality refers to the way any single text or image is understood, and is dependent upon other meanings of texts and images presented elsewhere (Rose 2001). I began analyzing how each element of the campaign's image relates to the overall message of the campaign. This means that the

content and context of the PSA needed to be denaturalised in order to begin to understand the power relations working within the campaign. I began this process by considering the target audience and the context of the image's location. PSAs often use character examples for their intended audience, therefore if gangs are often populated by males then it seems reasonable to place a male in the images for the campaign (Lupton 1995). This led to my conclusions that the PSA frames gang members and gang activity in a negative context. The *Stay out of Gangs* target audience is isolated young men. The PSA interpellates the viewer into a masculine, heterosexual subject position. This interpretation was derived from my own viewing of the poster ad and the TV spot. The signifier of style of clothing for instance, illustrates a rebellious masculine youth.

In my semiotic analysis of the campaign, I considered the meanings, or cultural connotations, of the symbolic and iconic signs employed in the campaign. For instance, the photograph in the poster ad is an iconic sign because the markings on the poster ad resemble a young male in an isolated location. The semiotic analysis involved paying attention to what the symbols referred to as they were used in the campaign. For example, the hooded sweatshirt worn by the young male represents ambiguity and toughness within this particular context. This understanding was concluded due to my own cultural knowledge and shared codes of North American popular culture. The codes and conventions seen in the campaign can be seen in popular culture, thus reflecting on many film representations of gangs.

In order for visual images in the campaign to take on particular meanings for the readers of the campaign, the signs must be part of a system of difference: they only take on meaning in relation to other words or images (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). In

order to establish how systems of difference worked in the research process to convey meaning, I constructed an outline of the denotative meanings for all the signs in the campaign, and then explored other media texts that illustrated similar denotative signs. The signs often reflected upon similar connotative meanings, such as marginalized individuals involved in illegal activities. The texts analyzed that illustrated similar connotative meanings included popular films, clothing styles from popular brand names, use of language, and the familiar setting in the campaign. Understanding the contextual meaning of the signs illustrates the configuration and representation of gang membership. In order to do so I paid particular attention to the way such representations are constructed in relation to ideologies of gender, social class and ethnicity.

Accordingly, semiology is a very productive way of thinking about images and texts, providing insight into the intended meaning of a text, and potential meanings derived by audiences. Semiology demands a detailed account of the images viewed. This method takes images seriously by considering the meaning that is derived from the reader. However, semiology alone is not enough. Its demand for detailed interpretative readings raises issues of representativeness and replicability for analysis. This is a concern raised by scholars in media studies (Leiss et al. 1986; Rose 2001). My focus in this research process is to provide the potential for replicability and less with representativeness. I am not attempting to offer empirical generalizations, but to analyze the process of meaning-making in PSAs.

Another criticism of semiology has been voiced by Gillian Rose (2001). Rose's concern lies with semiology's trend to invent new terminology. This is often done in semiology to help define processes that are not easily described otherwise. Though the

terms can be useful to readers who are immersed in semiotic analysis, readers from other backgrounds may find it difficult to understand what the significance of the findings are. In fact, Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1986) state that oftentimes the terminology can be confusing and unnecessary, leading to a veneer of sophistication about something that is not interesting. This means that the terminology can fall prey to simply stating the obvious in very complex terms. Thus, it is important to avoid this use of jargon for potential readers (Rose 2001).

In addition, this approach does not shed light on other reader's interpretations. More readings of this text using a semiotic approach would be useful in understanding all potential readings/interpretations of such a text. This would provide various interpretations including both 'oppositional' and 'negotiated' decodes of the PSA message. The empirical testing of my semiotic claims in this project requires other methods to provide further information.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis extends the research process of semiotic analysis by examining the ways in which power and knowledge are communicated through texts, language systems, and systems of thought (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). The *Stay out of Gangs* campaign is a significant site for analysis of the production of social discourses. Discourses find expression in the campaigns texts, such as written and spoken words, as well as visual images. The ideas circulating in popular culture around this subject of gang recruitment and gang association collectively communicate with each other and communicate to audiences very specific ideologies of who is a gang member and who is not. First, I draw on the guidelines set out by Gillian Rose (2001) in her text *Visual Methodologies*. According to Rose, discourse analysis pays close attention to discourse

by focusing on visual images and verbal language which communicate particular ideas to the audience. By re-examining the findings from semiotics I will link the ideologies articulated in the signs to the production of specific discourses working in the campaign. This leads me to consider how the signs and language work to define gang members in more specific ways. For instance, a close look at the images and text from the campaign's TV spot reveals a number of significant ideological and discursive aspects. The first point to make is that the PSA presents one male youth – the gang member – as the isolated, tough hoodlum. This presents a discourse concerning the alienation regarding rebellious youth who do not meet the expectations of greater societal values. Upon further investigation, ideologies of social class, ethnicity and gender play a large role in defining this individual as a gang member.

By asking the question posed by O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005, p. 156); "what are the values, beliefs and feelings that inform the way this text makes sense of the world?", I was able to analyze particular discourses that are working within the campaign, such as legal, moral and alienation discourses. I examined groups of statements in the PSAs website and TV spot that adequately reflect the respective discourses. The groups of statements were further analyzed to find key themes, such as threat, fear, and responsabilization. The groups of statements analyzed included spoken and written words, and images found in the campaign. With regards to the statements used in the analysis, personifications and the mode of the statements were examined to find their intended meaning and potential to work within broader discourses in society.

Representations of individuals are a significant site of knowledge. If this knowledge is not dissected for its potential impact the meaning and the cultural

knowledge surrounding the representation can become naturalised. Therefore, it is important to analyze the findings of the campaign with other texts to unveil any significant associations. Intertextuality is a key aspect in considering discourse. In my analysis, I will consider statements and themes that elicit intertextuality between the campaign text and similar texts. For instance, examples of celebrity rap music artists, popular clothing brands and the ghetto genre of films are used to reflect the similarities between the *Stay out of Gangs* advertisement and other media texts depicting gang members. Therefore, the images and texts presented in the campaign can be understood as part of the broader discourses that work to define the framework of gangs and gang life in contemporary society.

However, there are some difficulties in the method. Firstly, the approach can be criticized for being too reflexive in nature. The findings throughout my research are heavily reliant upon my own cultural context and perceptions of society. Since no claim is made for the ‘absolute truth’ in discourse analysis, any other claim can be said to be a ‘truth’. This leaves ample room for other readers to interpret the message from the campaign in very different ways. Other readers are unlikely to examine the campaign in the same detailed, critical way I am approaching it. Furthermore, our perceptions of society and the discourses chosen to frame our viewpoint of society may change over time, thus the message from the campaign can change over time as well. Secondly, the approach can be critiqued as lacking methodological rigor and generalizability. There is a great deal of flexibility in the design of a research study when using the method of discourse analysis. Thus, the results of this discourse analysis cannot be generalized for any other PSA campaigns. This limits the findings of this research to this thesis solely.

However, I will continue with this methodological approach to ensure at least one reading is being made, in order to offer ideas on the kind of discursive work that is being done in the campaign.

Additionally, discourse analysis only accounts for how things happen, rather than why things happen. This form of discourse analysis has concerned itself with images and texts and less with the social institutions that produce and display the campaign. As a result, there is much information left untouched. Thus, future research could involve analyzing the articulation of discourses through institutional bodies (Rose 2001).

3.4 Research Strategy and Design

In the case of the anti-gang campaign, *Stay out of Gangs*, visual materials form the utmost important aspect of the framing of a gang member. I was concerned with both the signs and texts of the campaign. I collected all the materials that were offered through the campaign, such as photos of the posters ads in public spaces, print screens of each website page, a recording of the TV spot, and the text found in the website. The campaign presented a limited number of visual materials, and as such, all visual materials were considered and analyzed. While these materials are descriptively referred to in this chapter, a more detailed visual analysis was applied to certain materials with the aim of discerning the way in which the campaign worked to frame youth and gang life in particular ways. It is through a visual analysis that precise details of the anti-gang ad can be looked into. During the period in which I conducted the visual analysis, the campaign's TV spot had already been taken off the air and the poster ads were no longer in any public spaces.

Using the methods of semiotics and discourse analysis outlined above, in conducting a visual analysis of the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign, I was mainly concerned with revealing some of the major themes that were used throughout the campaign. To begin the analysis, I identified the key symbolic and iconic signs using the tools of semiology, such as the setting and the gang member's personal features and characteristics. By analyzing each sign independently, such as the gang member's hood, pants, and posture, I was able to link their importance to the overall construction of who is defined as a gang member (See Appendix A). By recognizing the signifiers in the campaign and then linking them to other media texts, such as film, television, and music videos, the basis for the use of discourse analysis was decided. This made the ghetto genre of film a site for analysis due to the similarities the signs have within the setting of the campaign. The popular ghetto genre of film is reflected in the campaign through the use of established visual and textual tropes, which include gang violence, drugs, and clothing style (Quinn 1996). Working with established visual imagery allowed me to decode some of the meanings of the image by linking the campaign's codes to the broader structures of ideology, mythology and referent systems (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005; Rose 2001).

One of the central themes that was derived from the analysis was the 'ghetto aesthetic', used to frame the gang member. To elaborate on this, I drew upon the theory of advertising, as presented by Leiss, Kline, Jhally and Botterill (2005), the ghetto genre of film, and readings of hip-hop lifestyle and aesthetic. The symbolic signs of clothing, scenery, language style (i.e. graffiti font), and body posture found in the campaign were easily identified in other texts. The ghetto style found in popular culture encapsulates

aesthetic signifiers such as baggy clothing and hooded sweatshirts. By comparing popular culture signs with those of the campaign, a description for the cultural background of the gang member could be defined.

I also drew upon the cinematic conventions of the noir film genre to understand the codes that I was viewing while examining the campaign's TV spot. Film noir is a genre of film that has been used since the 1930s (Dixon 1999) to illustrate grisly mysteries and inject anxiety and paranoia into the viewers. The camera is able to present the audience with various systems of meaning, dependent upon the style of the cinematography (Barsam 2004). By breaking down each relevant point of cinematography (film stock, lighting, and camera angles), I was able to identify the techniques used and understand how it becomes expressive material in the campaign. In Appendix B, the camera angles in the TV spot from the anti-gang ad have been broken down shot by shot. In addition, the function for each shot was written down as a sort of 'rough map' of the TV spot. The 'map' provided an overview of the commercial, and an outline of how the story was organized. The camera convention information helped to validate my interpretative reading of the campaign. By acknowledging the details of the commercial, it was helpful to sift out the signs which connote specific ideas regarding gang members and gang lifestyle.

In the course of research design and preliminary analysis, a second theme of 'threat' emerged in the campaign. This portion of the analysis was largely drawn upon by the theory presented on PSAs in the literature review. By identifying the common techniques used by other public service advertisements, the shape of the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign began to look very similar. The similarities were defined by the way in

which the message was presented. By acknowledging that fear and threat of violence plays a pivotal role in deterring citizens from acting in illegal ways, the PSA cultivates law-abiding citizens in society. In conducting the visual analysis, this approach required attention to images of the campaign, but also to the language, spoken and written, found within the campaigns TV spot, and website. By teasing out images and language, such as the gang member's ambiguous identity and threatening language of violence, I was able to provide clear examples of fear and threat of harm being expressed in the campaign as natural occurrences for gangs. Furthermore, the language throughout the campaign illustrates how threat is intended to translate as an avoidance strategy for law abiding citizens.

Following this theme, a third theme was prevalent in the analysis. The theme of 'responsibilization' of the individual was evident. In this analysis, I drew upon the notion of governmentality and the transformative risk subject (Banks 2007; Garland 1999; Hannah-Moffat 2005). A large focus of the analysis here was concerned with the text and language presented. I focused on the 'style' and mode of address in the language used in both the TV spot and the websites excerpts. The distinctive use of language reflects an attempt to reveal the negative social impact that occurs to individuals who are involved in gangs, as well as address the immediacy of the issue for law abiding citizens to maintain their regulation as 'good citizens'. This concentrates on the contextual information in the campaign, which suggests that the audience should choose the 'good life' to avoid their recruitment to gangs. Hence, the mechanisms of self-governance can be identified through the mode of address. The techniques of discourse analysis here emphasize the

different aspects of the language used to refer to the gang member versus the transformative youth.

In conclusion, this research study attempts to organise the message's images and texts from the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign in order to reveal the broader social discourses working within the text. By examining the images independently at first, it helps to interpret their meaning and therefore, connects them back to their referent structures in popular culture and social discourses. The various images and texts in the PSA draw on cultural codes and conventions, which combine to present a message that reflects particular naturalised meanings in society about gang members. These ideas and beliefs about gang members are attempted to be denaturalised in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 – Analysis of the Stay out of Gangs Campaign

4.1 Introduction

The campaign *Stay out of Gangs* displays a stereotypical view of gang members and gang life. The *Stay out of Gangs* poster ad, TV spot and website attempt to construct an association between the negative social impact of being recruited by a gang and the undesirable lifestyle associated with gangs. Signifiers such as clothing, scenery, and language have provided very specific details in the construction of who is a gang member, as well as who is not. This analysis focuses on the question of what kind of work the campaign does, in terms of the social discourses it (re)produces. More specifically, I will explore the design of the campaign, focusing on the way it frames and represents gang members, paying attention to the signs and discourses that are produced in such representations. I will also consider how the campaign frames and interpellates intended audiences, considering what kinds of subject positions are constituted in this process, and how these are refracted through notions of social class, ethnicity, and gender. Of particular interest here are the kinds of practices the campaign is encouraging audiences to enact, pointing to the ways in which it operates as a ‘framework of action’. Finally, considering issues of design, representation and discourse, I will consider the potential impact the campaign has for engaging the intended audience of ‘at-risk’ youth, the modes of statements which cultivate the transformative individual, and the producer’s acquiescence to discourses that continue the production of stereotypical depictions of the good/bad citizen.

4.2 Target Audience in the Campaign

The campaign organizes the signs displayed by using particular cultural codes to allow audience members to interpret the signs and the signs specific connotations. In brief, the *Stay out of Gangs*' target audience are young, heterosexual males with ethnic minority status, specifically Aboriginal. To begin, the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign reveals a particular social class position. The images in the campaign reflect stereotypical images of the 'ghetto'. Audiences are able to view the signs used by the campaign and associate them with other media depictions of the ghetto. These references to the ghetto ultimately reflect a specific socioeconomic status awarded to the people who live in inner city areas and consequently those individuals involved in gangs.

Popular media representations of gang members are often set in urban spaces such as the ghetto: a dense urban area often associated with poor and non-white populations (Hannerz 2004). The 'ghetto' in various media forms is often depicted as a place infested with gangs, with buildings in disrepair, and where graffiti defaces public property. The ghetto neighbourhood is constituted as culturally different from the normative habitation of greater society. In films depicting a ghetto, the area is typically in the inner city and extremely violent (John 1999). Much as in film and television, the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign images depict the gang member in a ghetto by placing him in an abandoned building that is run-down and dishevelled with broken windows. A key visual trope in popular media depicting ghetto style buildings is the state of the windows (Hannerz 2004). Buildings that have the windows boarded up, sheets hanging as curtains or paint chipping from the wood frame often connote low income properties.

Not only does the public service campaign direct attention to a specific class position, but the campaign works to project images of a distinct ethnicity. In popular media, the minority group most commonly depicted as gang members are African-American (Kubrin 2005; Quinn 2006). In ghetto stylized films, also known as ‘hood’ films (John 1999), such as *Boyz N the Hood* (1991) and *Menace II Society* (1993), black male youth in particular have occupied the roles of the ‘underclass’ who are involved in gang violence, hanging out in the hood, drugs, sex with multiple partners, substance abuse and dysfunctional families (Quinn 1996) – all of which are markers used to define inner city social life (Kubrin 2005). The campaign *Stay out of Gangs* changes the requirements for inner-city inhabitants in the sense that the ethnicity represented within this campaign is Aboriginal rather than African-American.

Stereotypes depicting Aboriginal people as the ‘savage’, ‘evil’ or as an ‘animal’ date back to the early twentieth century (O’Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). The negative representations of Aboriginal people invariably demonstrate a fundamental difference from whites, who are “shown to be heroic, more intelligent, and more in control of their emotions, more rational” (Ibid., p. 390). Though the stereotypes have varied in more recent years, variations of the ‘dangerous savage’ stereotype still persist in Canadian culture (Ibid.). According to O’Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005), these stereotypes are constructed through a Eurocentric perspective, where white social groups project their own beliefs and values on to other cultures. Hence ‘other’ cultural groups are only understood through the perception of the white civilian. Such stereotypes are limiting since they ignore the differences in Aboriginal cultures and ‘fix’ them as essentially

different in relation to the white, mainstream norm (Ibid.). Mainstream media continues to produce images of Aboriginal people in need of white control and authority.

In Winnipeg specifically, Aboriginal people are stereotypically depicted as living in poverty. Though some Aboriginal people do live in low income areas in Winnipeg's urban centre, or on reserves in Manitoba, this is not the case for all. Due to the low income position some Aboriginal people have, their perceived risk for criminal activity is higher than any other ethnic group in Canada (Grekul & LaBoucane-Benson 2008). Perceived high risk of criminal activity also increases Aboriginal people's chances of imprisonment. This association, according to Grekul and LaBoucane-Benson (2008) warrants consideration, since Aboriginal people make up approximately 3% of the general population, yet represent 17% of the federal prison population in Canada. This is of concern because many Aboriginal prisoners are at extreme risk of recruitment to prison gangs while in prison, as a means to receive protection from other offenders. Prison gangs have a direct link to street gangs, where the criminal activity will continue.

The ethnicity established in the campaign is Aboriginal. The colours used in the campaign for all font styles and images are red, yellow, white and black. These colours used together are the basic colours used by many Aboriginal artists in art work. In fact, Aboriginal art galleries in Winnipeg use these colours for store signage and window exhibits, potentially to identify the space as Aboriginal. The photo below (see Figure 4.1) is of a local store in Winnipeg that showcases Aboriginal art work for sale. The signage and the window display invokes Aboriginal heritage for this reason.



Figure 4.1
Winnipeg Trading Post

In addition to the use of ‘traditional’ Aboriginal colours, it is evident that the campaign specifically targets Aboriginal youth, since the anti-gang resources offered by the campaign are largely directed towards Aboriginal youth. For instance, two programs offered, for outside resource services, on the *Stay out of Gangs* website utilize Aboriginal language for the titles of the programs: “Ndinawe – Turning the Tides” and “Circle of Courage by Ka Ni Kanichihk”. The program Ka Ni Kanichihk specifically “works with Aboriginal youth 12 to 17 years old”. Thus viewers of the website could infer that particular subject positions are being interpellated by the campaign.

In spite of evidence that the campaign is speaking to Aboriginal youth, the ethnicity of the individual in the campaign is obscure. The advertisements place the gang member in body positions that conceal facial characteristics that would otherwise reveal racialized identity. The use of shadow and lighting effects has been employed in the cinematography to ensure that the gang member’s racial identity is ambiguous. Since ethnicity is assumed in the campaign, it raises the question why the gang member’s identity is hidden from the camera. This is possibly explained by the racialized

preferences of the majority class. Studies have shown that white, middle-class citizens are sensitive to skin color (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007). For instance, a study conducted by Iyengar (1991) revealed that whites are more sympathetic to causes and issues when it is in direct association to their own 'race' (Ibid). To ensure an issue is being dealt with, producers of media representations may make the ethnic identity of an individual ambiguous. In many instances however, visual images will still convey distinctive cultural features of racialized persons through attire or spoken words, therefore referring to particular ethnic backgrounds or social groups. So, while 'race' or ethnicity is not mentioned in a text explicitly, images and other cues may still provide this information (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007).

Furthermore, the content of the TV spot and the image in the poster ad interpellates the viewer into a hegemonic masculine subject position. The gang member's use of slang terminology, such as "you get shanked, you get shot" are the 'realities' for male gang members, as represented by the campaign. However, the 'reality' for females is different in forms of recruitment and punishments. The audience viewing the campaign can assume the gender specific role of a gang member based upon the testimonials from the ex-gang members who share their experiences in the campaign's website. The website largely focuses on stories that are masculine in content. Consequently, in analyzing the text of the website with regard to gang recruitment, the male and female requirements differ significantly. A quote which exemplifies the requirement for male initiation is as follows: "you start by being beat-in. A bunch of them just beating the shit out of you. They want to make sure you're tough enough and that you won't squeal" (Stay out of Gangs 2009). In contrast, only one page of the website specifically discusses females; the

webpage titled “girls and gangs”. The first sentence on this page immediately confirms that females are subordinate by stating “you join a gang and you become the gang’s property” (Stay out of Gangs 2009). Females are therefore not seen as equal, but rather as an object to be used: “you’re going to take the same risks the guys do – the crime, drugs and dirty money – but you’ll never be like they are. In a gang, you have no power. And you never will” (Stay out of Gangs 2009). In summation, the subject position for the intended audience is a young, Aboriginal male.

4.3 ‘Ghetto Style Aesthetic’ in Popular Culture and in the Campaign

Gang life and gang members are framed in a stereotypical manner through the use of the ‘ghetto aesthetic’, or what also could be referred to as ‘ghetto style’. The ‘ghetto aesthetic’ performs specifically racial work, positioning minority groups, such as Aboriginal people, as the source of the problem and not the social forces affecting these cultural groups. ‘Ghetto style’ encapsulates key aesthetic symbolic signifiers such as baggy pants and hooded sweatshirts, which are associated with popular representations of ghetto life (Holman 1997, p. 487). ‘Ghetto’ style and culture has made its way into conspicuous commodity consumption in the last two decades (Mukherjee 2006). The profusion of this aesthetic style can be seen in films, music videos, and television shows as the ultimate in ‘cool’. The ‘ghetto style’ has prompted debate about the cultural meanings of social class and ethnicity, as the signifiers of poverty and hard life are markers of economic underachievement, and yet still represent a style people strive to emulate. In an attempt to market the style to the middle classes, these signifiers have been commodified as indicative of the ‘authentic’ and ‘real’ urban ‘gangsta’ (Leiss et al. 2005). The use of such signifiers has allowed the production of the ‘gangsta’ stereotype

to be interpreted as the 'authentic reality' of ghetto life to audiences who view these images through entertainment media (Mukherjee 2006).

Hip-hop style and rap aesthetics are intricately bound up with representations of the ghetto lifestyle. For instance, rappers such as Eminem (Marshall Mathers) and 50 Cent (Curtis James Jackson) routinely make stylized proclamations of their 'gangsta' lifestyle through signifiers such as their clothing, accessories, shoes and other products that together represent the urban experience often associated with gang life and violence. In fact, these rappers have capitalised on their cultural production by making and starring in films based on their 'real life' experiences in the ghetto. The film *8 Mile* (2002) is premised upon Eminem's young rapping career and urban experience growing up in poverty-stricken Detroit. *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* (2005) depicts the story of Curtis James Jackson who turned away from a life of drug dealing to pursue his passion: rap music. These films are not only produced to promote the careers of the artists, but also to enhance product brands and to elevate the minority urban experience as the definition of 'cool' (Mukherjee 2006). What becomes increasingly apparent is that young non-white youth adopt the 'ghetto style' in order to differentiate themselves from mainstream culture, which many minorities see as foreign, hostile and emasculating (Marriott 1995). Paradoxically however, the 'ghetto style' has become progressively more popular in the mainstream since it has been defined as the ultimate 'cool' in media entertainment (Mukherjee 2006).

The clothing of hip-hop has been adopted into mainstream culture and has been appropriated by youth who want to share the expression of the hip-hop lifestyle and fashion themselves as 'cool' (Leiss et al. 2005; Mukherjee 2006). It has been well

documented that hip-hop culture in the 1980s and 1990s in North America was driven by an ideological commitment to Black nationalism, and various forms of Islam and Afrocentrism (Alim 2006), which raised ‘race-consciousness’ and pushed these minority groups to the forefront. Hip-hop music discusses issues of urban life and violence that the music artists have experienced (Alim 2006). Clothing has been used as a signifier of origins and identity in hip-hop and rap culture. As Quinn (1996, p. 86) asserts, clothing is a ‘uniform’ to be worn in the ghetto to define how powerful, or ‘gangsta’, the individual is: “Within rap, style becomes a marker of visual power, not only the guns and bottles, but the “uniform” of rap becomes crucial for this visual power”. Originally reflecting a counter-culture practice, ‘ghetto’ fashion has been commodified and widely circulated in contemporary consumer culture. Fashion labels like *ECKO*, *PHAT FARM*, and *ROCA WEAR* are clothing lines that have been designed by rappers and music artists to play on their urban street credibility. For example, Russell Simmons, the father of hip-hop (Jagodzinski 2005), established *PHAT FARM* in 1992, a clothing line that interpreted the lifestyle of hip-hop. In the words of Russell Simmons: “I envisioned a collection that would allow us to finally realize that we deserved to be the American dream. A [clothing] line that said we could actually buy into ourselves. A line that would allow us to get over our self-hate” (Simmons 2007, p.18).

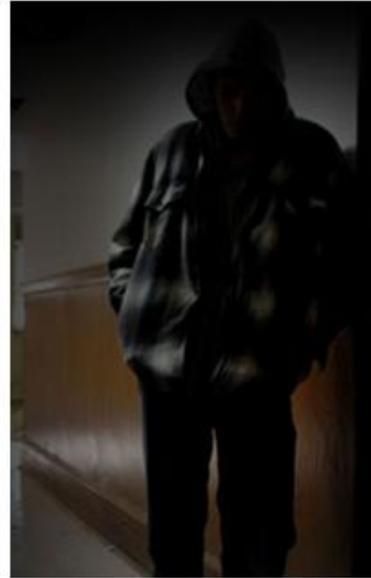
The music of hip-hop and rap, according to Quinn (1996), is used to sell products, particularly to groups who have traditionally been left out of mainstream capitalist culture; minority male youth. The hip-hop lifestyle, which is intricately bound up with representations of the ‘gangsta’, is commodified in order to sell the same lifestyle experience to youth. Authentic hip-hop and rap lifestyles have been groomed into

signifiers of male youth rebellion. Evidence of rebelliousness itself has transformed into a formulaic and profitable market commodity for youth to purchase (Mukherjee 2006; Quinn 1996). Upon viewing advertisements from *ECKO*, *PHAT FARM*, and *ROCA WEAR*, one encounters a continual flow of images of the hetero-normative male wearing baggy jeans and oversized t-shirts. The purchase of such commodities as street wear clothing allows the individual to buy ‘authenticity’ in the sense that it defines who they are. The identity of the consumer is established through commodities. By transforming ‘authentic’ street wear into a commodity, the consumer can emulate the urban ‘gangsta’ and thereby ‘be like the cool gangsta’.

The advertisement campaign frames the gang member using the familiar codes of ‘ghetto style’ developed in popular culture. The physical appearance of the gang member is constructed through stereotypical representations of the ghetto lifestyle and the ‘gangsta’ as the embodiment of ghetto life (see Figure 4.2). The gang member’s pants on a denotative level are heavy, baggy, and are made from a dark material. On a connotative level, the pants appear to be denim jeans. Denim is associated with a casual form of dress wear. The loose fitting style of the jeans has often been associated with youth style and rebellion (Holman 1997; Kubrin 2005; Quinn 1996). The jacket worn by the male is oversized, which hides the real size of his body. This is a common visual trope of ‘ghetto style’ in the hood genre, in which clothes are used to represent oneself as a larger and more powerful entity, based on body shape (Henry 2002). The individual is identifiable as a ‘gangsta’ because of the oversized clothing. The clothing represents hetero-masculinity for urban youth, which reflects upon the aesthetic it was developed from – rap and hip-hop music (Ibid.).

Figure 4.2

Photo of the 'Dark Figure'
Displaying signs of the 'Ghetto Aesthetic'



*Photo taken from Stay out of Gangs
Campaign website: www.stayoutofgangs.ca*

The hood worn by the gang member throughout all the still frames and TV spot is grey, but often covered in shadow. The hood connotes symbolic images of a 'tough hoodlum'. Hip hop culture adopted the hood as a form of 'instant anonymity' (Holman 1997). In the 'gangsta' genre of hip-hop music videos, individuals are typically dressed all in black, wearing sweaters with their hoods over their heads. The hood in this context suggests that the individual is wearing the hood to symbolize fear and evoke anxiety in the audience. When an individual does not reveal their identity it invokes a sense of suspicion on the part of the observer. When the gang member in the *Stay out of Gangs* ad wears his hood over his head it can be seen as invoking the social identity of a ghetto 'gangsta'. Therefore, by simply wearing a hood in a public space, the gang member defines himself as different. The hood contextualizes his presence as someone who is unapproachable.

In addition to the use of clothing, other symbolic signs that reference a ghetto aesthetic include the text in the ad. The words "stay out of gangs" are strung across the top left-hand corner of each website page, the print ad, and in shot 10 of the TV spot (see

Figure 4.3). Being the most important text of the media campaign, it is depicted using spray-paint font.

Figure 4.3
The Title for the Campaign,
presented in spray paint font



The spray paint font is of the utmost significance to the ad because the “typeface is chosen according to a code of priority and prominence” (O’Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005, p. 114). Font is a conventional way to organize the information and ideas the producers have for the campaign, in order to make the message salient to their audiences. Without hesitation, audiences can view the ad and the font style becomes unnoticeable, which means that the audiences are able to decode the underlying message provided by the spray paint font (Ibid.). According to cultural codes and conventions, the use of spray paint is associated with graffiti art; and graffiti art is often associated with the ghetto, gang logos to mark territory, and male rebellious youth (Adams & Winter 1997). Therefore, the spray paint font further invokes ‘ghetto style’ and provides a stereotype of the gang member.

Framing the ‘gangsta’ as an individual who defaces public property and wears ghetto style clothing only reminds law abiding audience members of the negative attributes of an individual trapped in gang life. This could increase the division between law abiding citizens and gang members, by reminding both gang members and law abiding viewers of the differences, instead of the similarities between the two groups.

This subtle association contains information loaded with implications on how gangs spend their days. Thus, for law abiding audience members the PSA will persuade them to understand that the youth in a gang can make the rational decision to become responsible. Therefore, an indirect conclusion can be made from the ad, that crime is an outcome of poor decisions (Hannah-Moffat 2005).

Body Language in the Campaign

The discourse working in the anti-gang PSAs represents gang members as a 'problem' and gang life as a 'risky activity' that must be fought against in the interest of the law abiding citizen. Those individuals who are deemed to be involved with gangs are represented as weak and easily susceptible to external pressures. They are portrayed as uncontrolled, as lacking rationality: indeed as 'uncivilised'. In the case of individuals who have been 'sucked' into gang life (Stay out of Gangs 2009), suggested reasons for their recruitment include individual indulgence, rather than the social context. The gang member's weakness is expressed and communicated through body language. The body language refers to the configuration of the gang member's body in the photo images and TV spot in the campaign. Specific connotations of how gang members must 'feel' emotionally are presented through these body positions. Though the gang member does not express his emotions verbally, which reaffirms his masculinity, the audience can read his emotions through his body language.

The website shows the gang member in four body configurations throughout the web pages, framing the gang member in distress and emotional discomfort. The positioning of the body results in audience conclusions of a subordinate and weak individual. When the body language is examined throughout the website, as well as the

TV spot, the advertisement's images reflect specific characteristics that the gang member feels; regret, alienation, insecurity, and anxiety.

The campaign places the gang member in at least four body positions. Figure 4.4.1 is referred to as the "child position", sitting on the floor with his upper torso leaning into his bent knees. Figure 4.4.2 is termed the "leaning position", where the gang member leans against a wall with his head tilted down, shoulders shrugged and hands in his pockets. The leaning position has two variations of the pose, one with the gang member facing the camera covered in shadow and Figure 4.4.3 features the gang member's side silhouette. Figure 4.4.4 is the "window position", which shows the gang member's right arm leaning on a window sill, as he looks out towards the source of light, with his forehead resting on his hand. In all of the images the gang member either turns his face away from the camera or is obscured by large shadows, so that his identity is never revealed.

Figure 4.4
The Body Positions displayed in the Campaign

Figure 4.4.1



Fig. 4.4.2



Fig. 4.4.3



Fig. 4.4.4



The small variation in the gang member's emotions expressed through his body positions articulates very specific connotations to the audience. First, it assumes the male 'gangsta' is alone. He is left to deal with the consequences of joining a gang by himself. This is constructed by presenting him as a withdrawn figure, which isolates him from society. All four body positions maintain this unapproachable presence by distancing himself from the camera and avoiding eye contact with the audience. These positions contribute to the construction of the gang member as an alienated member of society (Frymer 2009). Some key signifiers that exhibit the gang member's 'true' feelings include the gang member's hands in his pocket, which often signals nervousness, confusion, or distress. For instance, the child position, as mentioned previously, reflects dependence, fear or anxiety (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). The child position is commonly seen in films depicting an individual who is going through severe physical or psychological pain. By representing gang members in such a way, audiences are taught that all gang members are to be pitied since they are presented as unequal societal members, rather than equal members who would otherwise be sympathised with. This is

reflected in the discourse of citizenship where societal views about individuals differ depending who is in need of help. The discourse of citizenship is shaped by elite interests and particular visions of what society should be; ideal citizenship emphasizes personal responsibility, behaving in a civil manner and being fiscally responsible (Knight Abowitz & Harnish 2006). In contrast the gang member in the PSA is presented as neglecting to contribute to society in any positive way. As a result, the law abiding citizen is then incidentally the successful member of society. The objective here for the anti-gang campaign may be to provide the audience with connotations of the gang member as a failed citizen. Thus, the campaign challenges the audience to see the gang member in anguish over his choice to be recruited to a gang. In turn, the body positions in these photos will work within the larger discourse about ‘gangstas’ as they are viewed by law abiding citizens.

Setting of the Ghetto Aesthetic

The ghetto genre of entertainment is able to quickly define for cine-literate audiences the style of text they are viewing in several ways. In particular, the ghetto genre features the iconography of ‘gangstas’, run-down neighbourhoods, guns, drugs, male minority youth, and buildings in disrepair (Quinn 1996). Historically, and stereotypically, ‘ghettos’ have most commonly been associated with low income areas of the city, often characterized by the overrepresentations of certain minority groups in media representations (Grekul & LaBoucane-Benson 2008). One of the major contributors to the conventional characteristics of the ghetto genre is the setting in the *Stay out of Gangs* advertisement. For the purposes of this thesis, the setting is defined as the space used by the gang member in the print ad, TV spot and the website. Thus, the

ghetto genres' visual tropes can be identified in the setting of the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign, which draw on its familiar iconography (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005).

The central theme of the ghetto genre is the limits to social and economic success, maintained through iconic visuals of abandoned buildings surrounding 'gangstas', the housing interior of gang member's homes, darkly lit streets, and urban centres in film and television media. On a denotative level, the setting of the public service campaign features an interior of a building. The building appears to be run-down and abandoned. The windows look as though they need repair; the walls are dated in style, with wood panelling on the bottom half and white plaster on the top half. As signs of the message being produced, the building is a place that connotes loneliness and emptiness. The gang member appears to be alone in this setting. Abandoned buildings have typically been associated with criminal activity, such as selling drugs, in popular films and television shows (John 1999). Media representations of the 'gangsta' and their drug deals often occur when and where no witnesses are around. The empty building represents a 'real' inner city building, where illegal activities occur.

Audiences would typically view the run-down building in the campaign as an unsettling place (Silver 2007). This could be due to the association of this text with other texts that people have viewed – such as horror films. Horror films commonly have depicted individuals as 'lost' and alone in run-down abandoned buildings right before being attacked. Victims are attacked most often in locations where no one else is around; therefore implying that there is no escape for the victim. The difference between horror films and the public service campaign is that horror films are made to appear as an

entertaining escape, whereas the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign places the audience in a ‘truth’ based situation that is occurring in the urban centre (Ibid.).

People will typically avoid or ignore dealing with unsettling issues that do not directly affect them (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007). The ghetto setting and interior shots could potentially disengage viewers who are not directly interpellated by the ad. The campaign fails to provide visuals which reflect everyday settings that connect law abiding citizens to the message, thus the message is unlikely to resonate with them (Silver 2007).

4.4 Cinematic Conventions in the Campaign

The gang member connotes toughness, someone who is streetwise, and evokes fear. The image of a gang member takes on these unsettling connotations in part through the use of cinematic conventions. Cinematic conventions are those systems of meaning through which the screen communicates with its audience (Barsam 2004). The camera is able to change the presentation of the story the director wants to show the audience simply by changing the camera lens, the camera angle, or even the lighting of the shot. All together these conventions are summarized as cinematography. Cinematography is a language in its own right (Ibid.). When the language is used effectively it can enhance the presentation of the film as a whole. Cinematography uses the camera as the maker of meaning: the angles, style and movements of the camera “function both as a set of techniques and as expressive material” (Ibid., p. 178). The visual language of the campaign will be discussed here.

Film Stock

The film stock used to record the images in the campaign is black and white. Black and white film stock offers effects that are impossible with color film stock (Barsam 2004). For this reason, many contemporary films use black and white film stock

for its expressive capacities. It is commonly used in documentary films, newspapers, and magazine photographs. Therefore, black and white photography and cinematography is often associated with reality, which allows the images presented to be understood as the ‘truth’ of the topic under discussion (Barsam 2004; O’Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). The distinct contrasts between black and white can also express tales that have classically been told in film noir and gangster films (Barsam 2004; Silver 2007). The low lighting in the campaign’s advertisements resembles that of the classic Hollywood film noir that is associated with stark light/dark contrasts and dramatic shadow patterning (Silver 2007). The film noir commonly refers to highly stylized crime films, often in run-down or dishevelled settings filled with shadowy atmosphere (Barsam 2004). Film noir often draws out audience anxiety with its extreme lighting that enhances the drama within a scene. The archetype conventions of the lone protagonist, dark settings and voice-overs on the soundtrack prime the audience with fear and uncertainty.

In the TV spot, shot 7 (see Appendix B) places the gang member sitting on a staircase with a shadow pattern across his face. The shadows of the banister rods cast upon the gang member are iconic visuals in noir (Silver 2007). Black and white cinematography achieves a manipulation of colors by using lighting to shade the setting. This emphasizes the texture and spatial depth within the images (Barsam 2004). When the focus is on the textures and depth of the shot, black and white film often evokes romance in the images of the dark gothic figure on screen. Our vision is focused on the shapes, tones and textures of the setting. This could potentially disengage viewers of the *Stay out of Gangs* advertisements from the serious message, as the imagery becomes contradictory due to the romanticized effects of the advertisement.

In addition to creating texture, the colors black and white carry with them certain preconceived meanings. Audiences have become accustomed to reading black and white images in very simplistic ways: black is evil and white is good. As simplistic as this may be, the conventions of black and white are widespread cultural traditions (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). Even without intent, the producers of the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign have placed the gang member in stark contrast lighting, often shaded in black. This could lead to audience member's interpretations of the gang member as bad, wrong, or evil (Ibid.). If audience members do not feel an attachment to the gang member then they will be less likely to care if the gang member fails in society (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007; Silver 2007). This convention helps tell the story of urban gangsterism, but does not advocate for the individual who is in need of support.

Lighting

Lighting helps shape the way the anti-gang ad looks and its overall story. Lighting creates the cinematic space by providing details in the story, using different lighting sources, quality, direction, color and style (Barsam 2004). The campaign likely uses lighting in the advertisements to create the stark contrast between black and white, which creates shadow effects. Direct light creates harsh, well-defined shadows (Ibid.). In the advertisements there are constant shadow effects, with windows behind the gang member allowing in what appears to be natural sunlight. In this way, lighting is used to reinforce the implied narrative of the advertisement. The dark lighting in the campaign encourages the audience to engage with the seriousness of the advertisement. This reaction is further influenced by the direction from which the lighting comes.

Backlighting is used to provide a more dramatic sense of depth to the advertisement (Barsam 2004). The campaign uses backlighting from sources of light,

such as the light from the window. This is evident in the print advertisements as well as shots 1 and 8 (see Appendix B), where the gang member is in deep shadow. This provides clear visual cues to the depth of onscreen space, which allows the gang member to accentuate his presence on screen. Inevitably this sets the gang member apart from the setting in which he stands. This implies that the individual is to be focused on, instead of the space around him.

The TV spot also uses key lighting, which is positioned to one side of the gang member in shot 2 – 7, to produce hard shadows. There are a range of ‘colors’ when the key lighting is set to the side. The ‘colors’ are shades of grey on the gang member’s face. When the light source is low-key lighting, it creates a stronger contrast – sharper, darker shadows, which are used commonly in mystery and horror films (Barsam 2004). This implies that the gang member is someone the audience should be apprehensive of. Back and side lights are used to suggest the gang member’s ambivalence and threatening appearance.

Types of Shots

The campaign’s TV spot used various shots to present a narrative to the audience. The TV spot shows the gang member changing his body position 9 times within the 31 second clip. This raises the question of the intention of the body positions, beyond the denotative visual attention. On a connotative level this restlessness implies that the gang member is not content or comfortable where he is. He moves, possibly to calm himself about the gang issues he must deal with. The commercial uses 3 basic types of shots in the scene, which refers to the distance between the audience (the camera) and the gang member: the long shot, medium shot and close-up.

Shots 1 and 8 show the gang member in a long shot which shows his full body length in the frame. This framing of the gang member allows the audience to see him as an intimidating individual due to the height and darkness of his figure (Barsam 2004). In shots 4 and 7, a medium shot is used. The medium shot shows the gang member from the shoulders up. This is used to replicate the human experience of proximity – without intimacy (Ibid.). This is typically how people meet others and communicate, whether in an office or sitting at a table (Ibid.). This gives the audience a chance to get to know the gang member in a non-confrontational way. In shots 2, 6, and 9 the gang member is positioned in a close-up. In shot 3 and 5 the gang member's mouth is positioned in an extreme close-up. The close-up and extreme close-up shots illustrate the importance of the gang member's words by having the audience focus on the gang member's mouth. The objective in the extreme close-up is to have no distractions for the audience when the camera is positioned in this way.

The basic types of shots work to portray the gang member in a very specific way. The introduction scene (shot 1) places the gang member at a distance, which informs the audience of the separation between 'them' and the 'other'. Shots 2 – 7 bring the audience closer to the gang member in order to allow the gang member to share his experience, yet the audience can still be apprehensive of the subject on screen. The last shot focuses on the gang member (shot 8), and once again, distances the audience from the gang member by moving the camera away. This maintains the initial distance created in the TV spot between the 'gangsta' and the audience. These shots then inform the audience that gang members can inform us of the activities they face daily, so the campaign potentially

intends to show the audience that they can avoid the same situation by distancing themselves from these ‘types’ of people.

Camera Angle and Height

The camera’s shooting angle and the height of the camera in relation to the gang member is another framing technique that expresses details of the narrative. Camera angles are used to define the point of view. The eye-level shot is made at the viewer’s eye level. This angle is used in the TV spot and the print advertisements. This suggests that the gang member is being positioned as a neutral individual. This effect however, contradicts other effects created throughout the TV spot. The gang member has been set up as a mysterious, conflicted individual, someone who is to be feared by audience members. So, it becomes difficult to understand the gang member, because in some shots he is positioned as a ‘neutral’ subject, while other shots position him at a distance from the audience. The low angle shot is used in the TV spot as well. This camera effect puts the audience into a subordinate position because they are positioned to look up at the gang member who dominates the audience and therefore can threaten them (O’Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). This effect emphasizes the threat of gang violence to the viewer. Furthermore, the lighting is harsh, with the setting in shadow. This plays on the way in which darkness is associated with fear, which will be discussed in the following section.

4.5 Fear and Threat in the Campaign

The campaign focuses on the risk of gang recruitment, which intends to invoke fear in the viewer. Through harnessing the effects of fear and threat tactics, the PSA is able to work within the mediated discourse of fear. A dominant opinion regarding the relationship between media and crime is that the media arouses fear in citizens (Ditton et

al. 2004). Though crime may not appear continuously in newspapers, television, and radio, it is still constant. In addition, it is often sensationalized and romanticized, leading audiences to feel that they are likely to be victims of crime (Ibid.). The anti-gang PSA uses the technique of fear and threat of victimization to appeal to those anxieties and fears in citizens (Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977), thereby promoting suspicion and mistrust of gang members.

The activities of gangs are viewed as illegal and outside the norm of the larger population. The common-sense knowledge about the illegal activities of gangs is established through representations of gangs in news coverage and fictional gangs in popular films and television media. In the majority of these representations, gang members are depicted as deviant and marginal. The naturalization process of general knowledge allows the 'common-sense' knowledge of gangs and their activities to persist in the social imagination. A great deal of complex information on this social group has been condensed in the media as well as in the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign by summarizing their activities as violent and threatening to innocent citizens. The positioning of the individual gang member within the campaign constructs the group dynamics of gangs to be understood as something to fear. The fear associated with gangs is constructed by using the anti-gang ads' website and TV spot as the means to illustrate the 'reality' of violence. When the campaign images or any other stereotypical depiction made in the media about gang members persists, it is represented as the nature of the social issue (Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977).

Many stereotypical depictions of the 'gangsta' as a marginalized member of society may help to explain the continual division between the 'law abiding citizen' and

the 'gangsta'. By maintaining the division between the two groups, the differences are more pronounced and more commonly viewed in the media. However, the 'threatening and feared' gang member stereotype expresses only one part of a 'gangstas reality'. Other realities and issues related to gangsterism are not mentioned in the campaign, which leads to the generalization that gangs are ultimately about violence. The *Stay out of Gangs* campaign continues to simplify the representation of gangs and gang life by framing it in terms of the ghetto lifestyle and especially, violence.

The recurring theme of violence is prevalent throughout the campaign, particularly violence amongst males. For instance, the website's use of personal quotations to structure the narrative include the following: "But it's really all about violence, crime and wasted days"; "they will only hurt you"; "gangs will get you stuck in jail"; "you'll hurt your friends and family"; and "you'll get stabbed/injured" (Stay out of Gangs 2009). These quotes evoke the 'reality' of physical and emotional violence experienced by the individual gang member. In addition, the TV spot intends to deter youth from gang life by using the technique of narrative to make sense of his experiences on the audiences' behalf (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). Fear is constructed in the opening of the commercial. "There's a lot of gangs out there that want a piece of you" (Stay out of Gangs 2009). Such a statement provides the audience with a sense of fear with regard to victimization. It also suggests that no one is safe from gangs due to the ominous power and presence given to the gangs from media depictions. Gangs are defined in the campaign then, as willing to exploit innocent young people.

The TV spot furthers the threatening tactics by informing audiences that the individual involved in gang life will commit crimes; "stealing, drug dealing" (Stay out of

Gangs 2009) and “you’ll push drugs, make dirty money, hurt innocent people. If you screw up or snitch, you get beaten, or worse” (Stay out of Gangs 2009). The direct address used by the gang member in the PSA conveys that he is sharing his own experiences of gang life to warn citizens of this risky and dangerous situation. In addition to this heightened distrust of gang activity, the PSA uses ‘truth’ testimonials in the website from other ‘real ex-gang members’ to communicate the violence and danger involved in gang life. These ‘truth’ testimonials are displayed in quotations throughout the website to project the fearful ‘truth’ of gang life to the audience:

Money. Fast cash. They bought me shit when I was little. (Joining a gang) was the only way for me to keep it coming in. But it ain’t worth your freedom and your life. (Stay out of Gangs 2009)

Moreover, the stories provided on the website often recount threats of danger and violence to family and friends: “They go for your family. They could get beat up or tortured. My brother was stabbed four times” (Stay out of Gangs 2009). This not only describes the potential consequences for at-risk youth, but also urges vigilance for law abiding citizens in order to avoid these risky situations. The campaign’s website presents itself as the authority and ‘truth teller’ about the ‘realities’ of gang life. This reveals that the website is using a scare tactic to discourage youth from joining gangs and guide law abiding citizens away from being a victim of gang violence. The scare tactic used by the campaign seems to imply that victims of gang violence are independent events dependent upon the individual’s proximity to gang violence. The producers of the campaign intend to provide influence in the direction of normative behaviour by illustrating that gang life affects everyone and thus, no one is safe in surrounding gang territory. The PSA intensifies the risk of joining gangs by providing an opportunity for the individual to

think about the consequences of joining a gang. The campaign therefore enables citizens to remove themselves from gang violence by illustrating 'just how bad it is' to be recruited to a gang (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1964). In addition, the PSA categorizes and portrays gang members as violent and thereby the media resort to labelling them, and cite them as the 'other' to be feared by law abiding citizens.

The physical appearance of the gang member is made ambiguous through the cinematic conventions of shading and lighting and the individual is able to conceal his identity from the audience. The producers of the campaign work within the discourse of fear by presenting the gang member as an unidentifiable individual. Fear of the unknown is a common convention in popular film, as well as in news media, which plays on audience emotions (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007). Media representations often will report particular ethnicities, but withhold any further information about the criminal. If the audience is not given specific details about the individual to avoid, other than stereotypical knowledge about ethnicity, it is possible that everyone recognizable as Aboriginal, for instance, is suspect. Assuming that all individuals within a cultural group are potential gang members constructs a racialized discourse on gangs. Racial and cultural prejudices clearly figure into the representation of gangs as feared and violent. The media representations construct the gang member to be feared as the racialized Aboriginal 'other', in opposition to the normative white mainstream citizen, which invokes the histories of representation of the Aboriginal as 'savage' (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007; O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005).

Furthermore, the audience can also identify the gang member in the TV spot as a feared and threatening individual by his threatening tone of voice. This provides

important information about the campaign's message, while also giving the audience a particular 'sound-point', or viewpoint, from which to understand the story. The capacity of the PSA to cohere the emotions of the audience through the mode of address of the statement should not be understated. The gang member's use of direct address and the urgency in his voice reminds the audience of the harsh consequences of gang life. The mode of address then performs an important task: it appeals to moral notions of who should be helped (at-risk youth) and who should be avoided (gang members). By informing the audience of his individual choice to join a gang, the gang member ultimately accepts full responsibility for the consequences, which suggests that it is too late for him. However, the youth at-risk can still be helped. Citizens are not only fearful of the 'gangsta', but also take on responsibility for managing their safety and avoiding gang activity all together. This is verified by the following quote from the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign's website introduction webpage: "gangs are out there every day looking to recruit kids. Kids that got sucked in have lived to regret it" (Stay out of Gangs 2009). Strategies of responsabilization then are subtle because the policies that encourage citizens to be responsible are more or less based on 'victim avoidance' strategies (Garland 1999; Mythen & Walklate 2006).

The PSA additionally enacts threat by illustrating the social and legal consequences that can occur to individuals who have been associated with gangs. The threats are summarized in the campaign: "you get beat in", "you get locked up and lose your freedom", "you get shot", "you get shanked", and "you put the people you care about in danger" (Stay out of Gangs 2009). In this attempt, the objective is to educate the public about the penalties involved with gang activity. This reminds the public that gang

activity will be punishable, and that eventually all gang members will be caught for crimes associated with gangs.

Gangs have been constituted through this discourse as a feared social group, causing anxiety within the law abiding citizen. The discourse of the 'gangsta' has been built upon and elaborated as a sub-cultural group of people who are dangerous and threatening to society. The media harnesses the subculture of fear and through that, maintains the marginalized status of gangs. The perpetuation of fear felt by law abiding citizens also permits the government to mandate longer and harsher sentencing for prison terms for individuals who have committed criminal acts (Mythen & Walklate 2006). This simultaneously promotes notions of responsabilization for the law abiding citizen, to encourage not only individual vigilance, but a mistrust of deviant and risky situations and individuals (Mythen & Walklate 2006). Within the environment of mistrust towards the 'gangsta', the *Stay out of Gangs* representation of the gang member both reflects and reinforces stereotypical notions of the 'gangsta', which ultimately has negative consequences for ethnic minorities and lower social classes of society. The social groups defined by minority status and low socioeconomic status are therefore socially excluded and marginalized.

The tactic of fear in the PSA gives the responsibility of 'control' to the individual. By scaring the audience away from joining a gang, the campaign aims to deter individuals from the risk of being involved in future crimes. Perhaps then, we can see that this campaign is just one of the many instances that play into the discourse of controlling citizens – whether it is through legal discourses and/or discourses of moral responsibility. This reflects on the notion of governmentality, which provides society members with a

constructed view of the law abiding citizen (Banks 2007; Paletz, Pearson & Willis 1977). We can see here that the Manitoba government initiative Project Gang Proof has created a technique of control through the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign. This makes it clear that governance of citizens is being placed squarely on the shoulders of the individual. A large focus of such prevention strategies is on controlling citizens from being involved in unacceptable or illegal activities (Mythen & Walklate 2006).

4.6 Responsibilized Individuals

The campaign's signs and text attempt to illustrate the negative social impact of being involved in gang life. From threats of being 'beat-in', family and friends put in danger, prison sentences, and death, it is obvious that the campaign tries to deter its intended audience away from gang initiation. In fact, the campaign also creates strategic approaches that inform law abiding citizens about how to circumvent gang recruitment. The campaign promotes normative behaviour, suggesting that the 'real' good life is lived by law abiding citizens. The objective of the anti-gang ad is to prevent the illegal activities of gangs from occurring. Not only does the campaign define the negative aspects of gang life, but the campaign also outlines a discourse of citizenship for the law abiding individual.

Transformative Risk Subject

A primary objective of the campaign is to guide the transformative risk subject towards rational decision making. The individual at risk of gang recruitment is seen to have the potential to transform into a law abiding citizen. By targeting male youth who may be experimenting with risky situations, the campaign provides techniques of self-governance for the youth to manage their own self-control.

Gang members are framed in the anti-gang ad as alienated individuals, which constructs particular beliefs about who they are. This discursive framework permits ‘gangstas’ to be perceived as failed citizens in comparison to the good citizen. For instance, the *Stay out of Gangs* website testimonials are used to discourage youth from joining gangs – “you’re just wasting your time because your life will just revolve around drugs and violence. It makes your life shit” (Stay out of Gangs 2009). Youth at-risk are intended to read quotations such as this and conclude that gangs are not worthwhile.

Signs of drug abuse, violence and alienation are some of the negative characteristics of gang life presented in the campaign. This can be seen as an effort to assimilate youth at-risk into normalized society (Hannah-Moffat 2005). The campaign therefore, circulates ideas of what the good citizen is by presenting the harsh ‘reality’ of gang membership. The gang member is framed as an alienated subject in the campaign. Presenting the gang member as alienated and isolated makes use of a discourse of ‘teen alienation’, in which youth who appear insecure or isolated from society are at risk of committing criminal acts (Frymer 2009). Gang members therefore are being framed in terms of alienation: as a form of youth estrangement from parents, schools, and the major institutions and dominant culture. The target audience is intended to read these images of the gang member as an undesirable life choice, and therefore should avoid gang association. However, this framing of the gang member completely ignores the benefits of gang membership. Alienated youth at-risk may ignore the message from the campaign, as they are looking for a place to belong when no other viable options are available.

The campaign appears to offer assistance to youth at-risk by encouraging their deterrence from gang life through social service support programming. The website

invites youth to learn about the gritty ‘facts’ of gang life, to create an awareness of the harsh reality of this lifestyle. The resources are found on the web pages titled “Getting Help”, “Let’s Talk”, and “How Adults Can Help”. However, the campaign is more of a summary of the ‘how-to’s’ of exiting gang life, rather than offering direct support. The offer of support is outsourced in the website by suggesting the individual find “someone you trust”, whether it be “a good friend, a longtime family friend, a teacher, principal or counselor, a police officer, an elder, a spiritual leader” (Stay out of Gangs 2009).

In the webpage “Real Stories” the *Stay out of Gangs* website addresses the audience directly by using second-person singular speech. The intensity in the direct address expresses high modality. This confirms for the audience that the text is ‘truthful’. The website tries to convey a sense of unity between the campaign’s objectives and youth at-risk by stating, “if a gang’s trying to recruit you, you’re not alone” (Stay out of Gangs 2009). This helps create the idea that youth at-risk can find the social support necessary to avoid risky situations. In fact, youth at-risk are expected to follow the guidelines presented in the website to create their own self-control to keep themselves from gang recruitment. Even though the website suggests that it is common to have the pressures of recruitment, the campaign still places the responsibility to be a good citizen in the hands of youth in need of support.

The campaign works within the concept and techniques of governmentality, meaning that the individual remains responsible for their own exit strategy from gang life. The audience is told the ‘truth’ about gangs, and therefore the campaign has provided the audience with the opportunity to reduce their risk in committing future crimes. That is, the youth at-risk are being interpellated by the text with the

transformative potential, through individual responsabilization or ‘technologies of the self’ (Hannah-Moffat 2005). Youth not yet initiated into gang life are perceived as a minor risk. Since the risk is perceived as minor, there is the possibility for youth to practice responsabilized freedom. The objective the campaign has directed to youth therefore, is to provide the youth with the possibility of self-control. Hence, the PSA is providing a ‘frame of action’ for youth at-risk by offering the choice to be a responsible citizen. The end goal for the frame of action becomes about mobilizing these individuals to undertake self-governing tasks, to be socially accepted in society.

Binary Opposition

By providing a framework for understanding gang members, the campaign also constitutes a regulatory framework for the law abiding citizen to follow (Foucault 2002). In this way, the anti-gang ad sets up two distinct types of people: the ‘gangsta’ and the ‘good citizen’. By creating very specific connotations of what it means to be a gang member, the anti-gang ad also defines what a good citizen would be by contrast.

According to O’Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005, p. 255), binary opposition is “the cultural classification that splits the world into sets of dualistic opposing categories”, such as ‘gangsta’/‘law abiding citizen’. Each word or concept of a language is defined by its opposition. We can only make sense of what the ‘gangsta’ truly means to us, when viewing the campaign, by understanding the opposite of their position. In this case, we see the ‘gangsta’ as a minority male youth, economically unsuccessful, and alone. This places the viewers, who are not at-risk, at a distance from the campaign’s literal message. The viewer would not connect with the ‘gangstas’ message, but would react in the opposite direction of what he stands for – the normative behavior of the law abiding citizen.

This system of duality is the most simplistic form of analysis. However, the campaign has framed gang members as a very particular social group. Therefore, the opposite of the Aboriginal male youth gang member is the white responsible adult who can help this unfortunate individual out of his circumstances. These binary oppositions are hierarchical: one term is often privileged over the other and therefore devalues the 'negative' term (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). This categorizing of the world in simplistic terms allows the privileged group to maintain their privileged social status while the media continues to reproduce images of the irredeemable 'gangsta'.

By framing the gang problems occurring in Winnipeg as an 'Aboriginal problem', the non-Aboriginal public do not have to concern themselves with the issue. The criminal acts committed on behalf of gang members are blamed on ethnic minorities, specifically Aboriginal youth – the deviants of society – and are not the fault of society as a whole. This works within legal discourses of punishment, whereby criminals are seen as committing crimes by choice and not out of necessity (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). The individual who commits the crime will suffer the penalty from doing something illegal. By defining throughout the campaign that individuals who are involved in gang life will inevitably go to prison, the narrative establishes the individualization of the choice to join a gang. The consequences of gang activity then are placed on the individual. This confirms the notion of responsabilization of the individual; the campaign informs the audience that joining a gang is a matter of choice, rather than a lack of resources. Furthermore, the 'gangsta' tells the audience that by being involved in a gang you will be putting "people you care about in danger" (Stay out of Gangs 2009). This

places the moral responsibility on to the individual to make the right choices – to avoid being a victim or involved in gang activities.

The Law Abiding Citizen

The media work as a system that hails target groups to the work being done. Media texts address audiences in specific ways to interpellate them to particular subject positions. This is particularly true of PSAs, where ‘direct address’ is often used to grab ‘your’ – the audience’s – attention. The *Stay out of Gangs* anti-gang advertisement and website not only interpellate minority male youth, but also, audiences that are perceived as responsible adults. Hence, a second premise within the theme of the responsabilized individual is the law abiding citizen, where the objective for this individual is to regulate their behaviour within the rules and regulations of societal values. The anti-gang ad intends to inform and educate citizens and therefore, addresses law abiding citizen as people who can take responsibility to adhere to the social demands of the government campaign, *Stay out of Gangs*. By providing the audience with obvious connotations of loneliness, alienation, and above all else, violence, the campaign strives to parlay the message that gangs are the wrong choice to make if you want to find the ‘good life’.

The ‘gangsta’ discourse is pronounced in the anti-gang ad and website, through the use of text and images that shape the perception of the marginalized ‘gangsta’. The campaign provides ‘real life’ examples of the negative lifestyle associated with gang life, which provides clear guidelines for good citizens to follow. The PSA consequently transmits intervention and regulation messages to law abiding citizens in order to maintain acceptable social conduct, which inevitably is to reinforce normative behaviours. This can further be recognized in the campaign’s acknowledgement of adult viewers. Adults may use the website as a resource to help youth they personally know.

The website includes a webpage titled “How Adults Can Help”. This page offers resources for adults to review and potentially control youth at-risk. The text on the page states: “You know of kids or friends who have been sucked into a gang, or who may be on the verge of getting sucked in. You want to help them stay out of gangs. Here are some programs that work with at-risk youth”. This suggests that individuals other than the at-risk youth are also encouraged to view the website. Adults are then being called on by the PSA to do the work of governing these youth, when the youth themselves cannot. Adults may be persuaded by the anti-gang ad to take responsibility for potential gang activity by educating themselves and dispensing this information to youth at-risk.

4.7 Potential for the Campaign

The campaign has been designed to target youth at-risk of joining gangs; however, ‘youth’ is an abstract term, one that has become increasingly generous in its definition, especially in recent years. With no clear definition of who is included in the category ‘youth’, it is left largely open for interpretation on the audience’s part. As such, it becomes difficult to determine what the specific needs are in order to provide the appropriate services for youth. With this in mind then, the campaign has also been faulted with respect to the transmission of the message. If the target audience are youth at-risk, it stands to reason that they potentially would not have access to internet or television providers to obtain the information regarding exit strategies. This leads to a probing question that would need further examination; the question of whether the producers put much thought into the campaign for the intended audience, or was it really just a chance to service the ‘good citizen’ by calming their anxieties about the increase in gang problems in Winnipeg.

Within the first month of launching of the campaign, there was much debate concerning the effectiveness of the campaign's message in reaching the intended audience. First, according to a recent report, the television ad was often featured in the afternoon (Winnipeg Free Press 11 February 2010, p. B1), a time of day when television shows such as soap operas can be viewed. This creates frustration in the public eye, since youth at risk are unlikely to watch the daytime television shows in which the TV commercial was slotted to run (Ibid.). Therefore, one could infer that the TV commercial does not inform the target audience members whom the government wishes to deter from illegal activities. Second, it has been suggested that the message in the commercial and poster advertisement has been disappointing in its quest to present the harsh realities of gang life through the design of the campaign (Owen 2010). Without effective imagery and realistic representations of gang life, the campaign will be lost on its target audience. This is a concern because the campaign potentially lacks the influence it sets out to create.

In addition, PSAs historically have been limited in their potential to reach the target audience they intend to communicate to. As mentioned previously, Weinstein (1980; 1984) found that people tend to believe that they will not fall victim to any unhealthy or illegal activities they are involved with. People tend to believe that they in fact have more control over their own life than others do. This may create a boomerang effect with regards to public service announcements deterring particular incongruous behaviours. The *Stay out of Gangs* campaign is intended to influence viewers to act in particular ways; however, following Rice and Atkins' (2001) argument, some messages which intend to deter viewers may actually increase an individuals' curiosity. The

proscribed behaviour may be seen as intriguing, and the individual will experiment with the behaviour, believing that the negative consequences will not occur to them. The use of the 'ghetto style' makes it seem 'cool' to participate in illegal and dangerous activities. Thus, when intense fear tactics are used, the message may 'boomerang' by creating ignorance or desensitization in some viewers. Therefore, the attempt to deter youth at-risk from gang recruitment may actually positively reinforce their activities if they believe that the stereotypes and 'real life' experiences of the depicted gang member will not affect their particular gang life experience.

Furthermore, Foucault's (2002, p. 171) argument regarding the "black-border" of the glamorous death which gives life meaning suggests that some individuals will inevitably ignore messages. This is due to the conception of death as detached from nature, meaning that death can be controlled in the living body of individuals. Death is inevitable, thus individuals may feel motivated to maintain their unique, risky activities in order to define themselves and their lifestyle as individualistic, which is in contrast to the common, monotonous, average life that is offered to them by society's normative expectations. Thus, the campaign lacks potential effectiveness since the techniques used with regards to themes of danger and risk are seen as negative consequences of gang activity and not used as elicit tools to entice individuals.

However, not all PSAs are ineffective in their attempt to transform individuals towards a proscribed behaviour. For instance, the PSA "Smokey Bear" and the memorable slogan "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires" has been in circulation since 1944 (O'Barr n.d.). The campaign encouraging forest fire prevention places this responsibility in the hands of the individual. This PSA has been well received by

individuals as can be shown by report statistics that suggest that there has been a definite decrease in forest fires since the PSAs inception (O'Barr n.d.). The success of this campaign cannot be explained here; however it could be assumed that its success could be due to the environmental cause of the issue. Environmental issues could potentially affect social groups differently than health warnings for individuals. Thus, in the case of "Smokey Bear" the vested interests of the sponsors of the campaign were in line with those of the citizens viewing the campaign.

Conflicts with Techniques

The lighting, mentioned previously, and the use of black and white imagery connote documentary realism (Barsam 2004; O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005). Black and white images often attempt to depict the 'truth' or reality of the message they are capturing, much like headlining news in news papers or news columns. However, the director of the commercial and photo shoot has framed the gang member in an artful, romantic configuration (Barsam 2004). The photos and TV ad appear to be staged, as opposed to an unprompted interview with a 'real' gang member. The contradiction between fear and poetic imagery does not capture the gritty realism that is associated with gang life. The technique used by the producers of the anti-gang campaign presents the message in a stylized way. This style is likely to appeal to youth for consumer products, but it is never a certain marketing tool. By stylizing the ad using film noir techniques, the intent to create a perception of fear or anxiety in viewers might be effective, but youth audiences are extremely intuitive and can read through those signs. In addition, the fear of crime felt by any individual is dependent upon their interpretation of the images and texts presented to them, regardless of which tactic is used to induce fear, or threat of harm to audiences (Cronin 2004).

Youth Audiences

Recent research has made claims that in order to reach youth audiences in an influential way it is important to address the diversity of the social group. Stereotypes and labels are too obvious for youth who are tremendously media literate, which means that youth will ultimately ignore the message and its claim (Gillespie 1995) – regardless if it’s a consumer advertisement or a public service announcement. Youth look to advertisers to express their unique lifestyle through new technology and fast cutting images. The *Stay out of Gangs* anti-gang ad simply does not fulfill the requirements for youth audiences today. The ad does not challenge traditional views of crime or gang life, and it falls within the stereotypical depictions encountered in popular culture. It also implies a racialized view of the ‘gangsta’ as Aboriginal. Moreover, by disregarding females in the message, the campaign discounts a whole group of youth who may be at-risk of joining gangs. By missing the mark on gender, the campaign has misrepresented the youth cohort’s culture (Leiss et al. 2005). Youth will maintain a resistant attitude toward traditional views of society because of the lack of diversification in social class, ethnicity, and gender. Youth are increasingly using media texts in their daily socialization, yet the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign is likely to be ignored due to its presentation style and stereotypical views.

Stereotypes of our Citizens

It is important to note that although concepts of who is a gang member serve a number of important functions in everyday communication and discourse, treating concepts as though they are concrete and natural leads to the fallacy of reification, the error of regarding something as true, rather than as an outcome of thinking (Rome 2006). The mass media have played a crucial role in the way white people perceive Aboriginal

people and other ethnic minorities in Canada (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007). As a result of the overwhelming media focus on crime, drug use, gang violence and other forms of anti-social behaviours of ethnic minorities, the media have fostered negative public perceptions of minority citizens. Among the stereotypes, the stereotype of the Aboriginal male as a criminal element in society continues to be a major obstacle to racial equality. This stereotype could be internalised by Aboriginal youth, so they are made to feel as though illegal activity and delinquent behaviour is expected from them. The campaign presents images that may foster the myths that help maintain and reproduce the stereotypes that have hindered Aboriginal communities. The concern here is that media imagery becomes real in our minds – not just a representation of one individual, but a whole social group. This continues to be reproduced because we then seek indicators for the definition we believe to be true.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have sought to critically analyze the taken-for-granted nature of a public service advertisement. I have attempted to demonstrate that the anti-gang PSA acts as an apparatus of legal and moral regulation, serving to draw distinctions between the ‘law abiding citizen’ and the ‘gangsta’. This distinction privileges a particular subject position, one that reflects responsabilization, promoting normative behaviours for the ‘good’ citizens, while representing certain social groups as uncontrolled, and therefore feared and threatening to society. The discourse working within the campaign text privileges the rational, responsible white adult, and can be viewed as an attempt to suppress the disorderly conduct of human behaviour. In the campaign, young Aboriginal people are framed as the irredeemable, irresponsible, marginalized individuals. As a consequence, the attempt to incite responsabilization in this traditional form of advertisement only serves to stereotype and negatively impact the minority cultural group. Thus, my examination of the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign has shown that interpellation of particular subject positions is occurring in the campaign. Both the marginalized and socially accepted subject positions are being hailed to the campaign, but in very different ways. Therefore, the PSA reinforces social discourses of social inclusion and exclusion for citizens who view the campaign.

Though the Stay out of Gangs PSA operates as a technique of self-governance, this is not inherently problematic. The issue lies within the representation of gang life. Gang life and gang members are represented using racialized stereotypes. The choice of colours, language, and other signs in the PSA ultimately convey prejudices regarding Aboriginal people, constructing stereotypes of young Aboriginal men in particular as dangerous, irresponsible, ‘bad’ citizens. As such, this campaign contributes to the social

processes of discourse working to define socially acceptable citizens and unacceptable 'others'.

The binary oppositions that structured meanings in the campaign are an important aspect of the critical awareness of language and discourse. The insistence on discriminating between law abiding/gangsta, responsible/irredeemable, and white/other has been central to depictions of gang members and ghettos in popular media and remains so. Such essentialism is too reductive, failing to recognize the plurality of difference that exists in the social world (Lupton 1995). This inevitably will have a relatively modest degree of impact on the target population (Rice & Atkin 2001), since youth are likely to actively ignore messages that are conventional and lack the diversity of their social and cultural surroundings. Moreover, the PSA constructed a discourse of gangsterism that summarized it as a life of violence. This simplistic view of gang life is limited since it neglects the benefits of group membership for these youth, thereby defining them as marginalized and their group membership as criminal and irredeemable. Law abiding citizens are then encouraged to avoid these irredeemable individuals in order to protect themselves and prevent their own victimization.

The construction of the Stay out of Gangs PSA invokes particular subject positions and reproduces stereotypes that could potentially be avoided through different means or programming. Other available alternatives may be more effective with regard to addressing youth at-risk of gang recruitment. For instance, programs that work with youth directly may allow those at-risk of gang recruitment to convey their personal experiences of gang activity, enabling greater audience involvement by offering opportunities for self-expression. An example of this is found in Just TV, a Winnipeg

based program that works with youth to make video and other media forms, to express their ideas of what they think gang life is really like. This program advocates that real life stories from youth may work more effectively at disseminating the message that gang life is dangerous. The difference in this attempt is that Just TV provides an outlet for youth at-risk to not only present their stories, but also provides youth with agency, which can empower the youth to avoid gang life on their own regard. It is a youth to youth approach in which messages are shared between peers rather than conveyed in top-down fashion.

In addition to promoting youth agency, future PSAs could potentially impact audiences more successfully if producers interrogate their campaign for discriminating or stereotypical characteristics in the discourse to prevent any normalizing assumptions of who is a gang member. In addition, other sites for regulation should be considered, such as individual counselling for youth at-risk, or awareness/information sessions at schools. Accordingly, there is hope that more audiences, like youth audiences, will oppose messages that convey stereotypical views of society and its citizens. Media's discourse allows much space for competing views, and discourses will inevitably change over time.

A limitation of this study is derived from its methodology. In order to effectively assess the impact of this or any other advertisement, it would be necessary to conduct interviews with producers of the campaign, and more importantly engage in audience studies, which this study simply was not able to accommodate. Audience studies typically focus on the interpretative relationship between the audience and the media message (Leiss et al. 2005). Any message can be measured in its effectiveness best by understanding the groups of individuals who view the images. Future research should

consider how audiences interact with the campaign's messages, and how this varies along the lines of age, social class, ethnicity and gender. This would provide a great deal of insight into the potential social impact of public service campaigns. Livingstone (1998) suggests that audience studies research improves our understanding of media texts. Moreover, it is important to critically analyze the meanings derived from audience members in order to understand the potentially large variation of readings that come from viewing the *Stay out of Gangs* campaign.

As a final point, the social division of citizens created in society is also found in the Stay out of Gangs campaign. This technique of labelling gangsters as different, bad or irredeemable is a key component to maintaining a strict division between 'law abiding citizens' and 'others' in society. This distance between those in need and those who can help will inevitably persist because the social discourse of inclusion/exclusion constitutes particular subject positions which inevitably constructs and maintains racialized stereotypes of gangsters. The intended sense of fear and threat in the Stay out of Gangs campaign draws its force from the discourse of inclusion/exclusion that frames gang members as the irredeemable members of society and the responsible adult as living the 'good life'. The choice to join a gang and hence to risk the dangers of gang activity is therefore viewed as a youthful discretion that is no one's fault except the youth involved in gang life.

Appendix A:

Semiotic Analysis:

Deciding what the signs are:

- Clothing
 - Plaid jacket/shirt (blue and white)
 - Represents 'blue collar' worker
 - Plaid and blue color
 - Cold dress wear
 - Hood
 - Tough
 - Sheltered
 - Represents avoidance from people
 - Dark jeans
 - Jeans represent working class
 - Low income
 - Street wear
 - Casual
- Building/scenery
 - Empty hallways – abandoned building?
 - Windows need repair (image where he is looking out into the future? abyss?)
 - The walls
 - ½ wood panelling, ½ white drywall?
 - Suggests an old building based upon design
 - A school perhaps (suggests youth)
 - Darkness surrounds him
 - He is the light?
 - Or is the light behind him if he chooses the right decision (to stay out of gangs)
 - Exposed brick
 - Tough exterior
 - Stability
 -
- Language / Words
 - Beat in – have to understand certain terminology
 - Font smudge
 - Plain language
 - Suggests below average reading levels
 - Colors of font
 - Red, white, yellow (background black)
 - Original aboriginal colors of the earth are yellow, white, red and brown
 - Stay Out of Gangs Spray paint font
 - A typical crime committed by gang members is graffiti
 - Against exposed brick wall
- Body position/ body language

- Hands in pocket
 - Insecure
 - Uncomfortable
- Head down
 - Never see his complete face in one shot
 - Ashamed?
- Shoulders shrugged
 - Lost child...
- Crouched
 - Leaning against wall
 - Sitting on floor against wall
 - Suggests a scared child (inferring youth again)
 - Sadness, alone

Camera angles

Shooting angles – the level and height in relation to the subject

Eye level

High angle shot

Low angle shot

Dutch angle

Point of view

TV spot

Black and white (31secs)

a) Photographic composition and conventions:

- Lighting
 - Harsh
 - Part of the building is dark (shadow)
 - Not a place of light
 - Associated with fear/ the unknown
- Black and white
 - Documentary realism 'reality'
- Camera angle
 - Low angle (introduction of commercial)
 - Place the audience as subordinates/inferior
- Camera lens
 -

b) Type:

- High modality
 - Black and white suggests reality
 - Evidence or fact
 - Close connection with reality/authenticity
 - serious

c) Content:

- Signs and signifiers

- Costume denotes gang member
 - Connotes toughness, streetwise, fear
 - Not showing gang members face (hidden)
 - Connotes danger, fear, suspense
 - Environment is not safe, he is hiding out...
- d) Setting:
- As a sign, an empty building (school?)
 - connotes loneliness, emptiness,
 - a place for crimes to occur
 - property crimes
 - unsettling place
 - people rarely feel comfortable in large empty buildings (see horror films where people are lost in a large building)
 - social setting/space

Audience

Who is the inscribed reader?

Youth (those introduced to gang life)

Addressed as “you”

What is the story here?

The actor is warning others not to get involved in gang life

We can assume he is speaking from personal experience – but this is never confirmed

We are put in the audience because of the low angle camera position. so we are being told what to do.

The images are stark (lighting effects)

Suggests a serious conversation and perhaps threatening

Text implies it is addressing a particular audience

polysemic could be an undercover cop – a white man wearing stereotypical ‘gang’ costume

Intertextuality

Our readings are dependent upon cultural knowledge and are constructed intertextually (related texts). The images of the gang member take on an unsettling connotation through cinematic conventions. What we see in gang crime fiction films – recurring conventional figure in these films is the hooded gang member, with plaid jackets and baggy jeans.

Harsh, shadowy lighting and views to create uncomfortable/distress/upset/troubled

Captions

‘anchorage’

(Barthes 1977)

It ties down the image to a certain meaning for us (this reduces the polysemic possibilities)

How words, captions and titles anchor the meaning of images – important steps in semiotic analysis

Focus on relationship between words and images

Ideological meanings

Being involved in gangs only occurs in low class

Ethnic background?

Discourse Analysis:

Video/TV spot:

- Dark shadow
- Discourse of gang life
- Youth are susceptible to involvement
- All gangs are out to get you
 - o “they all want a piece of you”
- Gangs are liars and use members for their own profit making
 - o You’ll see none of the ‘good life’
- You commit crimes
 - o Stealing, drug dealing
- They own you and you get punished

? is this more of a threat – expectations of what happens from an outside perspective

?we see this in other texts – Soprano’s, Sons of Anarchy

- “You get locked up and lose your freedom”
 - o More than prison time
 - o Lose your choice in life
 - o Like a threat
- “People you care about in danger”
- “So find out how to stay out of gangs ... before you get beat in”

Website:

- Plain language
- Color of text
- Website is boring – no excitement
- Repetitive images (background photos)
- Not interactive – must consider target audience!!!
- It describes the activities you would partake in with negative terminology (‘dirty’ money, hurt ‘innocent’ people, ‘screw up’, ‘snitch’)
- Ask you directly if you are sure you want to do this...
- Make aware that you are not alone – recruits occur all the time?
- The website tries to convey honesty and realism – yet when a personal story is offered the profanities have been covered – ‘s***’.
- The term beat-in is not necessarily obvious at first – is it?
 - o Defined 10 pages in (10th web page)
- Forgets that the pressure to conform could be too great – the recruiting process is more difficult than simply avoiding them.

- Stronger concepts are expressed in the website – but would majority of people even see the website
 - o “Show these kids the ugly parts of the gang- dead gang members, funerals, people crying.”
- “But it’s really about violence, crime, and wasted days” – some youth would be interested in this from viewing films with high action and no real work.
- One page (near the end) mentions females in gangs – simply property – inferior species in a gang
- “Your home life may be s***, but gang life is worse” – on the ‘girls and gangs’ page. So if a female is raped and assaulted at home this is better than a gang?
- The term “getting sucked in” – assumes that they brainwash individuals recruited for gang life. However, most individuals would deny this by suggesting that they chose to be in the gang and were not sucked in.
- Who can help you – a list of persons who you can reach out to – an elder, or spiritual leader suggest aboriginal ancestry.
- Website defines what a good friend means – by suggesting you help out someone else who may be recruited into gang life
- In films and television shows we see people get ‘beat-in’ but right after they are rewarded with women, money, and drugs.

How is it Communicated?:

- Threatening
 - o This will happen – no other options
- Conceals a moral discourse
- Legal discourse of punishment
 - o Prison – lose freedom – locked up

- It assumes you have loved one you care about
 - o Some people don’t care about others
- It assumes they have access to the internet to find out more details
 - o Individuals needing help often cannot afford internet
- Reflects on social impact of being involved in a gang

The campaign can also be understood as an instance of political communication that functions to promote the government of Manitoba. Which supports certain values – youth concerns – despite the fact that the government has been responsible for budget cuts resulting in less programming for youth

A white man (tries) cannot tell an aboriginal to do/not do something

Interpellation

- Linguistic strategy
 - o Personal form of address – ‘you’
 - o Sense of inclusiveness

In one sense, audience members are being interpellated into the subject position of being the responsabilized individual, but in relations to the actor, they also occupy the position of the inferior in need of harsh advice from someone who has been through it.

Aboriginals/ethnic minorities are not being 'called' to the text – they do not see themselves in the campaign

Picture of a white male, western...

Analysis Points:

Statements – they will only hurt you, gangs will get you stuck in jail, you'll hurt your friends and family, you'll get stabbed/injured, being in a gang won't benefit you in anyway, it only benefits the highest authorities in the gang, you'll be left alone with no friends

Modes of Statements – gangs are no good, dangerous, hurtful, deceitful, you need to stay away from them, if you are in a gang you will go to prison, you will hurt friends and family, once you are involved with a gang you can't get out

Personifications – an individual, someone who is vulnerable, susceptible to committing crimes, talk directly to 'you' alone

Authority- authority is the actor discussion experience we can infer are his won. An ex-gang member?

Based upon experience therefore must be true

Authority would also be government of Manitoba – they are providing info for our best interest.

Practices- PSA to deal with youth not yet involved in gang life. Avoid the situation – get help at the website. Ask for help from other services listed on website. (Website contact list)

Historically Contingent – gang has a negative connotation based on conventions in film, television.

Appendix B:

Camera Angles In The TV Spot From The Stay Out Of Gangs Campaign		
Shot	Description of Action in Shot	Camera Angle and Function
1	The scene begins in a long, darkly lit hallway. (You hear footsteps coming towards the audience), A tall man walks towards the camera beginning at the end of the hallway (his figure is dark and cannot see any characteristics). Gang Member: "There's a lot of gangs out there that want a piece of you".	Angle: eye-level shot Function: establishes entry of someone who should be paid attention to in an overall climate of fear and suspicion. Supports the gang member's height and size as a commanding individual.
2	Close-up of the gang member. The face is shadowed by the lighting. (The lighting is a back light to create a heavy shadow over the eyes. Gang Member: "Get you when you're young, say you'll live the good life"	Angle: eye-level shot Function: to introduce the gang member as a neutral individual to the audience. However, still maintains the separation by the shadow/light effects.
3	Extreme close-up of gang member. The focus is placed on the gang member's nose and the outline of the hood worn by the gang member. The rest of the face is concealed by shadow effects. Gang Member: "you find out fast that you're only there to make them rich. You steal for them".	Angle: low-angle shot Function: places the audience in a position of feeling helpless in the presence of the superior force. Reinforces the commanding position of the gang member.
4	The camera has pulled away maintaining a medium length close-up. The gang member remains wearing his hood and is covered in shadow effects. Gang Member: "you deal their drugs".	Angle: low-angle shot Function: reminds the audience that they do not know this individual, and possibly who they would be dealing drugs for.
5	Back to extreme close-up. Focused on the gang member's mouth. The shadow surrounds him. Gang Member: "they own you".	Angle: low-angle shot Function: the focus on the mouth reinforces the importance of his words. Suggests that the gang member is very

		serious about what he says.
6	Camera pulls away to a medium length close-up. The whole face is in view. The shadow effect is still used. One eye is visible due to the lighting Gang Member: “What do you get? You get shanked, you get shot”.	Angle: eye-level angle shot Function: allows the gang member to look the audience in the eye to remind them of the seriousness of joining gangs.
7	The shot takes place behind a dated style banister of a staircase. The lighting is behind the gang member creating a shadow effect over his face. Gang Member: “you get locked up and lose your freedom”.	Angle: low-angle shot Function: reminds the audience of being ‘locked up’ in prison. Reinforces the mystery and the commanding attention of the gang member.
8	The gang member is at the end of a hallway. His back is towards the audience. The gang member’s body is shadowed due to the lighting at the back of the setting through the window. Gang Member: “You put the people you care about in danger”.	Angle: eye-level shot Function: suggests he is recollecting his thoughts of the days before gang life. Establishes the gang member’s vulnerability and apparent fear of gang life. Allows the audience to feel sympathetic for him.
9	Back to close-up. Focus on mouth again. Shadow effect from the back light. Gang Member: “So find out how to stay out of gangs”.	Angle: repeats pattern of shot 5. Eye-level shot. Function: reinforces the importance of learning how to stay out of gangs. Focus on the words he says is of the utmost importance.
10	Screen fades to black. The campaign title “Stay out of Gangs” is strung across the screen in white, spray paint font, (hold for two seconds). Anchorage of the website address is found at the bottom of the screen, in white font. Black screen remains as the Manitoba government logo appears. A voice over of the Gang Member: “before you get beat in”.	Angle: straight angle for fonts Function: the white font on the black screen enforces the seriousness of the message, as the colours black and white remain ‘fact based’ conventions in media production.

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