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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
IRVINE

Gangs, Race, and Other Personal Issues: An Examination of Violence  
from the Incarcerated Youth Perspective

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
in Criminology, Law and Society

by

Daniel Walter Scott

Dissertation Committee:  
Professor Cheryl Lee Maxson, Chair  
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2016



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“It’s Complicated: Institutional and Street Gangs within DJJ” by D. W. Scott, C. Bradstreet, C. L. Maxson, M. Omori, and S. Reid, American Society of Criminology, November 2011

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## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION**

Gangs, Race, and Other Personal Issues: An Examination of Violence from the

Incarcerated Youth Perspective

By Daniel Walter Scott

Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology, Law and Society

University of California, Irvine, 2016

Professor Cheryl Maxson, Chair

Violent behaviors under different contexts have become prominent topics in criminological scholarship. Violence is common among gang youth (Thornberry et al, 2003) and scholarship has also found that violence occurs due to race issues (Carson and Esbensen, 2014; Iadicola & Shupe, 1998). Research also shows that violence in adult correctional settings also stems from other personal issues (Cunningham, Sorenson, Vigen, & Woods, 2010), but there has been little research addressing the characteristics of violent incidents related to gang, race and other personal issues within youth correctional facilities. The current project fills this research gap by utilizing interviews from over 260 incarcerated male youth, which include over 600 violent incident narratives. The project also applies subculture of violence concepts, research on violence at the situational level and Routine Activities Theory to the analyses.

The first section of my dissertation qualitatively analyzes the relationship between the institutional setting and violence, whether there is a distinct violent subculture, as well as the existence and relationship between respect norms and violence. The next section compares gang and race motivated violent incidents. Quantitative analyses are conducted on the relationship between whether an incident is gang or race related and the presence of select situational characteristics. Qualitative data are analyzed to better understand the context in which gang and

race related violence occurs and to compare the similarities and differences between these incident types. The last section of my dissertation examines violent incidents that are motivated by other personal issues. Quantitative analyses assess the association between select situational characteristics with whether or not the incident is related to other personal issues. Qualitative methods provide an improved comprehension of the context in which violence motivated by other personal issues occurs compared to gang and race violent incidents.

The results highlight significant differences in situational characteristics and dynamics of violent incidents motivated by gang, race, and other personal issues. Furthermore, the findings reveal a complex relationship between violent incidents that are gang and race related. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the implications for institutional policy and programs.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Introduction**

Violence issues are prominent among youth in correctional facilities. The amount of research conducted in this area is limited though. Specifically, there is still a lack of understanding in how incarcerated youth perceive the violence in which they are involved, and the motivating issues such as gangs that relate to specific violent incidents. Most work has analyzed the relationship between violent behavior and individual youth characteristics, but to my knowledge there has been very little research conducted at the violent incident level. Additionally, although a large amount of scholarship has addressed street and prison violence from the adult perspective, there has been minimal research that has contributed to our understanding of violence experiences from the incarcerated youth perspective. The present study contributes to this area of research by analyzing violent incident experiences and the motivating issues for violence which include gang issues, race issues, and other personal issues.

### **Broad Research Questions**

The current project contributes to youth violence research by addressing the research questions below. The importance of the first question is primarily explained through literature on situational violence, and the subculture of violence on the street as well as in institutions. The importance of the second question is addressed through examining literature related to gang violence, race violence and other institutional violence. These questions are answered through the analysis of youth participant perceptions and experiences of institutional violence. The following questions are the focus of the study which utilizes both quantitative and qualitative methods. This is explained in more detail in the methods section discussed in Chapter two.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) How do incarcerated youth describe violent incidents in which they are involved?



- 2) How do the situational dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents vary across different motivational issues?

Through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods a more complete and clearer understanding of youth violence experiences and their motivating issues is attained. This research provides insight into the violence that occurs within youth correctional institutions beyond what is officially recorded, and contributes to a better understanding of how to address youth correctional violence. Current research and the gap this project fills by answering these research questions are elaborated on in the literature review and methods sections throughout the dissertation.

### **Literature Review**

This section provides an overview of several bodies of literature relevant to my dissertation. First, I discuss the theoretical frameworks that help to guide my study which include the subculture of violence, violent behavior at the situational level, and Routine Activities Theory. The review will then transition into a discussion of general prison violence, which will lead into an examination of violence and gang involvement, the relationship between race and violent behavior, as well as violence that is motivated by other personal issues.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### ***Subculture of Violence and the Street Code***

One approach to understanding the rationale that individuals have for engaging in violent behavior includes concepts of the subculture of violence and the street code. Although Goffman (1967) does not take an overt subcultural approach, he argues that cultural values will convey how individuals should feel and appear to others. Thus, when individuals act violently they are doing so due to their feelings towards specific events that have occurred, and need to

utilize violence to keep up a certain appearance. Additionally, according to Goffman (1967), individuals put on performances in which they behave in a certain manner in front of a specific group of others, which also has an effect on these individuals. Thus, there is an interaction that occurs between violent actions and individual observers that is a part of that culture. Luckenbill and Doyle (1989) state that in order to fully understand violence there needs to be more of an explanation of culture with respect to how position, disputatiousness, and disposition for violence relate. Moreover, Collins (2008) argues that participating in violence with another individual will depend on whether they will be supported and rewarded. Furthermore, Baron, Kennedy, and Ford (2001) used a sample of 125 male street youth to analyze the development of values in favor of violence, and how these are influenced depending on the situation. They found that aggression is influenced by contextual circumstances such as conflict intensity and level of perceived harm. The current project expands on this by examining how the motivational issue that results in violence varies depending on select situational characteristics and dynamics.

Contextual circumstances were also found to be important factors when predicting dispute transformations involving street males with positive subcultural views towards violence. This is because violent acts among street youth enable them to feel accepted as well as have authority in a situation (Naterer, 2014). Furthermore, individuals who prioritize toughness and status will utilize violence to show virtue, which is a form of self-image promotion (Toch, 1986). Similarly, Oliver (1994) examined the subculture of violence among black men and found that individuals committed to the tough guy image utilized threats or violence to handle situations that were perceived as harmful to their self-image. Thus, in certain contexts violence is a tool utilized to establish and maintain control and status. Subcultural approval of violent behavior is therefore a strong predictor of violence use for dispute settlement. Understanding the subcultural

context of the situation is crucial to comprehending violent behavior. Being in the presence of violent peers potentially sensitizes one to harm, and is a type of social pressure for utilizing aggression as conflict develops (Baron, Forde, & Kennedy, 2007). This is because among male street youth, violence occurs as part of daily life through group participation, and having positive values towards violence (Baron, Kennedy, and Forde, 2001). Subculture of violence research therefore reveals that violent behavior can be attributed to multiple facets of a person's life and present situation. In order to better understand correctional violence it is necessary to examine the specific context of violent situations in which incarcerated youth participate since the motivational issue will likely vary depending on the situational characteristics and dynamics.

Researchers have applied the street code to the analysis of violent behavior in order to better understand how violence is perceived by participants. The street code is an informal set of beliefs that influence how some people act. According to this belief system having a tough identity is needed for respect; when disrespect occurs the belief system maintains that people respond with a threat of force, and use of violence if needed (Anderson, 1999). Research has revealed that a youth's attitudes towards violence and involvement in violence suggest a set of code related beliefs to which the youth adheres (Brezina et al, 2004; Anderson, 1999). Similar to Anderson's (1999) findings, Hansen et al (2014) determined when studying street youth violence that:

Respect represented a particularly valuable form of social capital to participating youth.

Participants expressed that their decision making is bound by their social context—that peers are “caught up,” perhaps within a form of bonding social capital (2014:26).

Thus, respect is something individuals are looking to obtain to improve their social status. This study further analyzes the concept of disrespect among youth in correctional facilities,

specifically when it results in violence. The development and utilization of the street code in part comes from different subcultural contexts where positive views of violence can thrive (Anderson, 1999; Naterer, 2014). Specifically, affiliating with aggressive peers contributes to code related belief development, and therefore an increase in violent behavior (Brezina et al, 2004). Furthermore, when looking at street code situations, individuals want to obtain an elite status, so an individual may go look for issues in which to get involved, as opposed to just using violence for self defense (Collins, 2008). Violence is therefore utilized purposefully and frequently to maintain and increase status. Most of the time fights over reputation that involve following the street code are not about winning; rather, individuals just need to convey that they will fight, as well as inflict and take damage if they need to, which helps to restore or establish membership among a group of tough males (Collins, 2008). Moreover, Oliver (1994) found in his study that when the issue of disrespect arose the situations included circumstances related to toughness norms as well as independence, which would arise due to loud talking, insults or attacking someone's identity.<sup>1</sup> Overall, these findings reveal that violence involvement can vary depending on youth beliefs, peers and perceptions, and may be engaged in for purposes other than winning. This further supports violence involvement as being situational, and context specific, and arguably complicates violent behavior even more by adding a sub-cultural influence. Analysis of violence at the situational level will therefore provide an improved understanding of the relationship between subculture of violence and motivational issue among incarcerated youth.

Belief in the street code also persists upon incarceration. Abiding by the street code prior to incarceration is associated with an increased chance of violence participation among inmates

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<sup>1</sup> When recalling violent incidents it is common for the individual to report their actions as just enforcing the cultural norms due to the disrespect the other party displayed and/or self-defense, or defense of another (Oliver, 1994).

especially through beliefs that promote, endorse, or require a violent response (Mears et al, 2013). Offenders therefore continue to value and respect the street code even upon being incarcerated. When examining youth committed to Georgia's Division of Juvenile Justice, Keith and Griffiths (2013) found that youth are equally likely to endorse the street code no matter what zip code they are from. Specifically, the street code is just as likely to characterize urban delinquent youth and delinquent youth in a majority of other areas in the state. This suggests that the code is a part of the culture for youth who enter the Georgia Division of Juvenile Justice regardless of where they are from. These findings also imply that violent responses within juvenile institutions are expected and justified by incarcerated youth, and shows that the subculture an individual identifies with has an important influence on their violent behavior. It is important to understand what elicits these violent responses and how this may vary depending on the context of the situation.

The culture of respect and violence is prominent among offenders in incarcerated settings. The prison environment brings together individuals with varying self-definitions, and forces them to live in close proximity, which increases the prominence of respect, and behavior related to respect (Colwell, 2007). Being in close proximity therefore increases the chances and likelihood of being disrespected and eliciting a violent response. Opportunities for disrespect are frequent since violating respect norms can be something as simple as insulting words, which need to be retaliated against with violence in order to maintain the disrespected person's self-identity (Stretesky and Pogrebin, 2007). These findings suggest that violent incidents tend to be justified from the perspective of the offender when the incidents occur after an individual has been provoked in order to maintain a specific image and identity. In analyzing inmate incident narratives in the U.K. Brookman, Copes, and Hochstetler (2011) identified cultural codes such as

the street code that are used as a narrative device. They found that there was a requirement for disrespect to be responded to with violence in order for an inmate to maintain their status. These researchers also discovered that violence was used as a tool to deter future violence, while at the same time it was acknowledged that more violence could result. This shows the importance of cultural codes and disrespect in perpetuating violence in order to maintain or gain status. There is still a lack of research in how violence motivated by disrespect and other cultural codes differ from other types of violence.

It is important to understand how violence varies depending on the specific context and situation. Edgar (2008) conducted a study exploring interpersonal conflict among inmates in English prisons and found that there was a persistent risk of being victimized by other prisoners, which leads to situational conflict among inmates. This suggests that violence needs to be learned and utilized in order for inmates to protect themselves. Tramell (2012) found in her study of California prisoners that there are three rules of prison culture: 1) informal norms need to be learned fast to avoid conflict, 2) violence is a viable option at a specific time and location, and 3) inmates perceive their actions as a performance. These findings not only further support the function for violence among inmates, but also the importance of the specific situation, context, and culture for violence to occur. Integrating subculture of violence concepts with scholarship on violence at the situational level will allow for this study to not only account for the opportunities of violent behavior within the institution, but also for an explanation of the subculture, and its relationship with these opportunities.

It is also important to address how violence may vary by culture. Gastil (1971) argues that to explain differences in homicide rates we need to look at regional culture. More specifically, he identifies a Southern tendency to resort to lethal violence that helps explain this

regional difference. Additionally, he finds a regional culture of violence that can be described as being more likely to have extreme subcultures of violence and/or a majority of the population involved in violence or violence related activities. Identifying a regional culture reveals how violence may vary among specific racial groups depending on the situational and cultural context. Furthermore, it shows why subcultures of violence may not occur uniformly everywhere when there are potentially similar conditions (Gastil, 1971). Thus, it is important to understand the culture of incarcerated youth settings and how they may differ from the street or prison settings. More specifically, it is crucial to address violence at the situational level to better understand how the situational dynamics and characteristics vary for incidents that are gang motivated, race motivated, and incidents motivated by other personal issues.

### *Routine Activities Theory*

The theoretical framework Routine Activities Theory as proposed by Cohen and Felson (1979) hypothesizes that crime is more likely when there are motivated offenders and suitable targets without any capable guardians or authority figures. Furthermore, the theory argues that crime is a function of opportunity, and it can be prevented by reducing these opportunities. Therefore, Routine Activities Theory is particularly relevant for studying violence at the incident level. Although the application of Routine Activities Theory has been prominent among research in the community it primarily focuses on general offending or non-violent crimes and to my knowledge it has not been applied to the violent situations that occur among incarcerated youth. The current study adds to the literature on violence and Routine Activities Theory by focusing primarily on the “motivated offender” concept, and the situational characteristics and dynamics associated with specific motivational issues. The concept of the “motivated offender” is limited. It is generally assumed in routine activities research when there are suitable targets and a lack of

capable guardians. Other situational factors such as dynamics and characteristics related to specific motivations for offending have not yet been thoroughly addressed in scholarship. This study provides a better understanding of the relationship between motivational issues, situational dynamics and situational characteristics, and an increased comprehension of how opportunities for violent behavior can be reduced and prevented.

Routine Activities scholarship has also found a relationship between offending and the amount of time spent participating with peers in unstructured socializing activities. Specifically, research has revealed a positive association between the amount of time spent hanging out with peers and delinquency (Warr, 2002; Agnew & Peterson, 1989). Moreover, unstructured socializing with peers has been found to be positively associated with offending (Hoeben & Weerman, 2013; Svensson & Oberwittler, 2010; Anderson & Hughes, 2009; Osgood et al, 1996; Haynie & Osgood, 2005). Miller (2013) showed that hanging around locally with friends was associated with a variety of criminal activities, but as activities became more structured the association with crime didn't necessarily decrease, there was just less variety in criminal behavior. This suggests that structured activities among friends will not necessarily decrease opportunities for delinquency, but may help to actually focus delinquent behavior. Additionally, if adolescents perceive themselves to be friends they will likely influence each other no matter the level of attachment or amount of time spent together, but spending lots of time with friends helps to increase opportunities for delinquency whether or not the friends are delinquent (Haynie & Osgood, 2005). Furthermore, Hoeben and Weerman (2013) found that unstructured socializing is related more strongly to offending in public and semi-public spaces than offending in private places. Moreover, socializing with peers is related to delinquency when at least two of three situational conditions are present: just socializing, being in public, and being unsupervised



(Weerman, Bernasco, Bruinsma, and Pauwels, 2013). When examining violence specifically, Maimon & Browning (2010) found unstructured peer socializing to be significantly associated with violent behavior.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, youth who engage in unstructured socializing more often will have more opportunities for crime, are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior and more specifically violent behavior. The current study expands on this area of research by examining the situational characteristics and dynamics of violent incidents such as unstructured socializing and the associated motivational issues that occur within a youth correctional setting. This is primarily addressed in chapter 5, when violent incidents related to other personal issues are compared to gang and race motivated violence.

### General Prison Violence

Before discussing the research on specific incident types and situational violence it is important to address the scholarship that has contributed to our current understanding of prison and institutional violence. Research on prison violence has identified various individual characteristics that help to predict violent behavior among inmates. Scholarship has found that the younger inmates are, the more likely they are to participate in violence (Steiner, 2008; Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012, Kuanliang, Sorensen, & Cunningham, 2008; Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007) even when controlling for prison level characteristics (Lahm, 2008). Additionally, the threatening behavior of younger inmates is frequently used to control and dominate public spaces and resources in prison (Kerbs & Jolley, 2007). For example, when younger prisoners cut in line older prisoners tend to remain silent instead of responding violently which is the more common response for this type of act (Kerbs & Jolley, 2007)? This shows that since older prisoners are less inclined to retaliate the younger prisoners frequently

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<sup>2</sup> Maimon & Browning (2010) in a multilevel study also found that when taking neighborhood Collective Efficacy into account there is a decrease in the positive effect of unstructured socializing on violent behavior.

disrespect them in order to capitalize on prison resources. Thus, it is important for scholarship to address and further examine the violent behavior of younger offenders, which is the focus of this dissertation.

Other individual characteristics have been found to be significantly related to violent misconduct in prison. For example, offenders who have been incarcerated for a violent offense are more likely to participate in violent behavior (Steiner, 2008). Other research shows that inmates with a history of violence in the community with pro-criminal attitudes are more likely to participate in violent misconduct in prison (Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012). Overall, studies have shown that general individual characteristics such as age, violent offending, and pro-criminal attitudes predict the likelihood of violent misconduct. In addition to the individual characteristics addressed above, it is also important to understand the situational context, dynamics, and motivation for violence among incarcerated offenders. This includes the complex relationship between violence and gang involvement as well as violence and race. It is also necessary to address and understand high violence participation among youthful offenders because inmates that enter into prison as juveniles are significantly more likely to become involved in prison misconduct, which includes violence (Kuanliang, Sorensen, & Cunningham, 2008). The current study therefore analyzes the situational dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents from the incarcerated youth perspective.

### Situational Violence

Researchers have attempted to understand violence by examining its many different aspects beyond just individual characteristics. One area that has received some attention is the situational aspect of violence. There are select situations in which individuals are more likely to react violently (Toch, 1986). To explain this phenomenon, the term *contingent consistency* is

introduced by Toch (1986), which is to react violently in multiple situations under different circumstances. It is important to understand how these situations differ. For example, Oliver (1994) applied the concept of contingent consistency and found disrespect, self-defense, or defense of a relative or friend to be evident in a majority of the situations he studied. If closure is not established in one specific situation, the issue may carry over into a completely different one. This shows how violence can be utilized in various situations under different circumstances that the participant has rationalized as justified for violent behavior. Situated violence has also been examined by Luckenbill (1977) who studied incidents of homicide and argued that homicide is a situated transaction. He proposed six stages that occurred in homicide incidents, which include insult, clarification, retaliation, counter retaliation, presence of a weapon, and onlookers.<sup>3</sup> These studies suggest that there are key characteristics and dynamics as well as crucial roles that everyone involved in a violent incident plays, which contribute to the various stages of violence. Additionally, through the analysis of felony offender case files, Felson and Steadman (1983) identified three stages of incidents for adult offenders. First, there are identity attacks, which tend to occur early in the incident. Second, there are threats and evasive behavior, with conflict instigation generally occurring in the beginning stages of the incident. The third and final stage involves a physical attack. Consistent with Luckenbill's (1977) research on homicide, Felson and Steadman (1983) found that there are crucial roles that all parties involved play in violent

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<sup>3</sup> Luckenbill's (1977) six stages in detail include: Stage 1: Opening move in the transaction was conducted by the victim and then interpreted by the offender as insulting to the "face." Stage 2: In cases which concluded in murder, the offender defined the previous action of the victim as offensive to them (whether it was intentionally offensive or not). Stage 3: The offense could have led to different reactions, but in all cases it was dealt with through a move of retaliation targeted at saving some sort of face and showing strength of character. Stage 4: Excluding cases of victim termination, the offender's move in response puts the victim in a position that is problematic; stand up to the affront to show strength of character or apologize, or flee which would place their own face on the line instead. In most of the cases, the move of the victim showed as an agreement that violence was appropriate, but this was sometimes interpreted incorrectly by the offender. Stage 5: Upon creating an agreement, the offender, and a lot of the time, the victim, both seemed to be devoted to violence, agreeing that violence was appropriate to show their character. Stage 6: The offender did one of three different things once the victim was down (fled, voluntarily remained, and involuntarily held by audience members).

incidents, but the dynamics and characteristics of these incidents have yet to be clearly understood. Scholarship is limited on how these roles, characteristics, and dynamics vary depending on the context of the situation. The current study therefore focuses on incarcerated youth, and examines the situational dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents that occur within the youth correctional setting.

The interactions individuals experience and roles participants are likely to take in a violent incident assist in determining the actions and events of a specific situation. For example, adult offenders are more likely than victims to engage in aggressive actions, while victims are more likely to engage in evasive actions (Felson and Steadman, 1983). This shows that violence tends to occur when the victim is not complying with the wishes of the offender. Furthermore, vulnerability may increase due to being disputatious and aggressive, which leads to involvement in situations that are prone to violence (Baron, Forde, & Kennedy, 2007). This is further supported by the finding that individuals who are more likely to be aggressive report being involved in more violent offenses, which increases the likelihood of self-reported victimization (Baron, Forde, & Kennedy, 2007). Additionally, when successive actions of a participant occur they are generally because of the actions of the offender, which shows the importance of interaction (Felson and Steadman, 1983). Each person's behavior is a function of the other's, and a method of defending their well being and honor, not blind irrational behavior (Felson and Steadman, 1983). Furthermore, Lyman and Scott (1970) argue that by providing a rationalization participants are attempting to bring balance to a relationship that was disturbed through the breaking of conduct norms by which they were expected to abide. These findings reveal that when violence takes place the offender or offenders have justified and rationalized their violent actions based on the context and circumstances of their present situation.

In order to comprehend how an individual's present situation can influence their violent behavior, the context and circumstances of the violent incidents need to be better understood. Research on bullying has found that the act of bullying itself is self-reinforcing because the behavior is supported by domination over peers and prestige for some groups (Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg, & Salmivalli, 2009). Thus, in situations where peer domination is possible, violence in the form of bullying is more likely to occur. Additionally, Oliver found that "violations, self-defense, alcohol intoxication, and violence as communication (1994: 105)" were the rationalizations that pushed individuals to resort to violent behavior. Moreover, choosing to participate in violence was determined by perceiving disrespect in the opposing party's statement or actions in a majority of the incidents described. Furthermore, Luckenbill and Doyle (1989) argue that disputatiousness and aggression will be more pronounced in certain situations. They hypothesize that young adults, males, blacks, low socio-economic status, as well as urban and southern residents are more likely to be disputatious and aggressive and therefore highly violent when they are offended by someone with the same status as the victim, and the offense occurs publicly. Therefore understanding the culture of violence is very important to understanding violent actions, situational dynamics, and characteristics. Some research has found three categories of youth street violence, which include violence "coming from the general social environment directed at a particular group of street children, violence between two groups of street children, and violence from the group and directed inward (Naterer, 2014, 7)." This contributes some understanding to the situational characteristics and dynamics of street violence, but it is limited, and does not address the institutional context. Additionally, according to Goffman (1967), there are rules of conduct that obligate individuals to behave in a certain way, as well as establish expectations for how individuals expect to be treated by others. For example,

in Oliver's (1994) study of black men in bars he found that disrespect was one of the most frequent reasons identified as a cause for violent behavior. He also discovered that:

The first stage in the sequence of events leading to interpersonal violence is often referred to as the precipitating event. The term precipitating event is used here to refer to a verbal statement, nonverbal behavior, and/or other actions that induce anger and awareness that interpersonal violence is a possible consequence of a particular encounter (1994: 80).

This reveals that minor events or issues may result in violence among cultures with strong violence norms. However, the specific context and situational dynamics in which violence is likely to occur within youth correctional facilities and how these vary across different motivational issues is still unclear.

Scholarship has also analyzed incident processes by focusing on general aggression and retaliation. In a study of adolescent conflict narratives Xie, Swift, Cairns, and Cairns (2002) found that in over 90% of the 600+ incidents analyzed, the respondents blamed someone other than themselves for the conflict. Furthermore, reciprocity was more likely to occur for confrontational (physical, verbal, and direct relational aggression) behaviors compared to non-confrontational. Additionally, they found that if there is social aggression (gossiping, social exclusion, social isolation, etc.) it commonly leads to physical or verbal aggression once the victim detects it and identifies the perpetrator. Lastly, there are also noticeable differences in the interactive properties of different aggressive behaviors among the narrative reports (Xie, et al 2002). This research suggests that the type of aggression that occurs during an incident will vary depending on the situational context and dynamics that occur prior to an aggressive act. Examining both how and why individuals retaliate violently is therefore crucial to understanding violent behavior.

In a qualitative study of 33 active offenders Jacobs (2004) developed a typology of street criminal retaliation. He identified “reflexive retaliation” which occurs face-to-face immediately following an affront, “calculated retaliation” which also occurs face-to-face, with a delay made by the retaliating party, “deferred retaliation” in which the face-to-face retaliation is delayed, but it is not desired by the retaliating party, “sneaky retaliation” which includes a desired delay in retaliation by the retaliating party, but there is no face-to-face contact, and “imperfect retaliation” which involves an undesired delay by the retaliating party, and there is no face-to-face contact. These findings show that the type of retaliation utilized will vary depending on the incident, but violent retaliation among incarcerated youth has not yet been addressed in scholarship.

Some scholarship argues that violence is rare and difficult to participate in, and that it depends on the unique characteristics of the individuals involved combined with the specific situation. It is not that there are violent individuals; it is that there are violent situations, and the interaction of these situations reveals patterns of confrontation, tension, and emotional flow (Collins, 2008). Individuals are only violent a small portion of the time because life is a sequence of situations that unfold over time where little violence occurs (Collins, 2008). This suggests that because violence is so rare it is crucial to examine the dynamics and characteristics of violent situations to understand how and why violence occurs. Even for individuals that are viewed as highly violent, the situational dynamics are integral in describing the violence committed (Collins, 2008). Thus, there are specific conditions that may contribute to violence such as individual characteristics, but that is one condition among many. For example, Collins (2008) argues that there are dynamics such as racism that are only one of the various stipulations that may be necessary, but not sufficient for violence. The necessary conditions for violence among

youth in correctional facilities have not been addressed in scholarship. The current project helps to fill this research gap through examining the specific situational characteristics and dynamics in which violence occurs, and how this varies when comparing gang motivated violence, race motivated violence, and violence motivated by other personal issues.

### *The Gang-Violence Relationship*

Research finds a complex relationship between gangs and violence. Gang literature has generally established that gang members are involved in more violent crime compared to non-gang individuals (Thornberry et al, 2003), and that their increased violent behavior persists upon incarceration (Tasca, Griffin, & Rodriguez, 2010; DeLisi, Berg, & Hochstetler, 2004). Additionally, research has found that inmates who are prison gang members are more likely to be involved in violent misconduct (Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007; Kuanliang, Sorensen, & Cunningham, 2008). Studies have also begun addressing why violence is so prominent among gangs and their members. High social vulnerability<sup>4</sup> strengthens one's values towards violence, which then increases the chances of getting involved with troublesome youth groups,<sup>5</sup> and therefore more violent offending (Vettenburg, Brondeel, Gavray, and Pauwels, 2013). Furthermore, the gang has been found to play a significant role in the lives of individual gang members and their views towards violence. For example, Klein discusses the importance of gang membership and how it is very rewarding:

Belonging—having the status of gang membership, the identity with a particular gang, the sense (correct or otherwise) that in the gang there is protection from attack—becomes very important, very rewarding to the member. It provides what

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<sup>4</sup> Social vulnerability means that minimal advantage is gained by individuals who have negative experiences with social institutions, and the accumulation of these experiences leads to an unfavorable perspective towards society (Vettenburg et al, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> The term “troublesome youth groups” is the Eurogang Collaborative alternative term to “gang” (Klein & Maxson, 2006).



he has not obtained from his family, in school, or elsewhere in the community.

For some members, this belonging was the supreme reward (1995:78).

Therefore the gang plays a significant role in the lives of individual gang members by serving as a perceived form of protection and by providing what familial, academic, and other community sources are unable to. Additionally, Stretesky and Pogrebin (2007) found that a gang member's violent behavior seemed to have an influential position in changing an individual's identity and self, with most gang members saying that they engaged in violence more often upon joining the gang. Some subjects reported a willingness to kill or be killed for their gang to show their loyalty. For example, an inmate interviewed by Stretesky and Pogrebrin reported that:

What I might do for my friends [gang peers] you might not do. You've got people out there taking bullets for their friends and killing people. But I'm sure not one of you would be willing to go to that extreme. These are just the thinking patterns we had growing up where I did (2007:98).

This shows that individuals are willing to resort to violence for their gang no matter how serious or severe it is. Consequently, an individual's willingness to use violence for maintaining gang membership also suggests that it becomes part of their self-identity (Stretesky and Pogrebin, 2007). These findings reveal how central violence is to both the gang as a whole and to the lives of individual gang members.

Once violence becomes part of a gang member's identity an individual is then able to use the gang as justification for his violent actions. When gang members engage in violent behavior they are participating in collective vengeance and collective reputation building (Collins, 2008). Gang members also engage in staged fair fights, but these generally occur within their group for initiation or solving internal issues (Collins, 2008). This means violence is a tool utilized for

retaliation and reputation building as well as friendly sparring within the gang. Gang fights are generally limited though in that they are against rival gang members, or similar aged males and have a ritualistic significance that generally restricts the amount of damage done (Collins, 2008). This suggests that although violence may be common among gang members, its utilization is limited by the parameters laid down by the gang. By committing acts of violence for the gang, members are attempting to give justice for actions taken against that gang (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996) as well as show that they have a tough identity (Vigil, 1988). Violence that occurs without provocation is not easy to justify since it is generally not within the parameters of the gang's values. Conversely, retaliation is consistent with the perspective that gangs serve a legitimate purpose of member protection (Klein, 1995), which is central to the structure of a gang (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996). This further shows that violence is justified when acting in favor of the gang. The gang's value and belief system therefore increases the chances of violent incident involvement. Violence thus becomes part of a gang member's identity; it serves as a tool for retaliation against rival gangs, and for protection that is justified through the beliefs of the gang. This suggests that gang members are likely to view their violent actions as a response to another's actions, and not as an isolated offense.

In addition to being part of a gang member's self-identity, violence also has an important influence on the gang as a whole. Participants in a sample of gang members studied by Decker and Van Winkle (1996) reported violence as playing an important role in defining the gang; this is illustrated by the subjects Decker interviewed:

Interviewer: What is a gang to you?

Subject: A gang is, I don't know, just a gang where people hang out together and get into fights. A lot of members of your group will help you fight.

Interviewer: Why do you call the group you belong to a gang?

Subject: Violence, I guess. There is more violence than a family. With a gang it's like fighting all the time, killing, shooting (1996:253).

Violence is a primary characteristic members use to describe their gang. Furthermore, one of the few activities that involve the majority of gang members is collective violence, which can strengthen cohesion (Decker, 1996). Decker (1996) identifies a seven step process that incorporates threat, violent response, de-escalation, and retaliation which lead to violent retaliation against rival gang members.<sup>6</sup> This helps to highlight the unique characteristics of gang violence, and the importance of examining gang motivated violent behavior in different contexts.

Scholarship has also addressed specific types of gang violence. For example, Papachristos studied gang homicides specifically and found that:

Gang murders create an enduring social structure that is produced through dominance disputes and the social contagion of prior interactions. At the incident level, homicides between gangs most often result from conflict over symbolic threats within group contexts that stress the use of violence as social control (2009:115).

Gangs as a group need to show their solidarity through acts of violence so that they are able to establish or maintain their social status (Papachristos, 2009). These findings show that not only is violence a central part of gang culture, but it helps gangs to thrive and maintain strong cohesion. Threat is also important in strengthening cohesion by unifying the gang, whether the threats are just perceived or real by members of rival gangs (Decker, 1996). Moreover, Decker and Van Winkle (1996) found that some gang members identified the purpose of violence as a response to

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<sup>6</sup> Decker's (1996) seven steps include 1) Loose bonds to the gang; 2) Collective identification of threat from a rival gang, reinforcing the centrality of violence that expands the number of participants and increases cohesion; 3) A mobilizing event possibly, but not necessarily violence; 4) Escalation of activity; 5) Violent event; 6) Rapid de-escalation; and 7) Retaliation.

the violence of rival gangs. This is consistent with Klein's (1995) argument that gang structures are reinforced through specific maintenance variables, one of which includes rival groups. This shows how violence involvement can assist in unifying a gang. Gang youth also experience the threat of violence, which can result in future violent behavior (Decker, 1996). The relationship between gangs and race violence is therefore quite complex and gang motivated violence needs to be better understood at the situational level. This can be achieved by comparing and contrasting gang motivated violence with other types of motivational issues such as race.

### Race Violence

There is a complex relationship that exists between race and violence, and this relationship has been addressed in research in various ways. Some scholars argue that the high rates of violence among blacks is due to subcultural norms and values that allow and embrace violence as an appropriate method for resolving interpersonal issues (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967). They stipulate that all members of the subculture share these pro-violence values. When looking at the racial composition of peer groups, Carson & Esbensen (2014) found that a more racially uniform peer group is associated with higher levels of violent offending for black youth compared to a racially skewed peer group.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, they also found that a racially skewed peer group is associated with an increase in violent offending for white youth compared to a racially uniform peer group. This shows that the racial heterogeneity of an individual's peer group will influence group member violent behavior differently depending on the racial group of the individual. No matter the youth's race though, being a part of a delinquent peer group is associated with an increase in delinquent attitudes, belief in the street code, and negative peer influence susceptibility, which then increases violent offending involvement (Carson &

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<sup>7</sup> According to Carson & Esbensen (2014) a racially skewed peer group is when the peer group is not predominantly one race, and a racially uniform peer group consists of predominantly one race.

Esbensen, 2014).<sup>8</sup> Thus, although being involved with any delinquent peer group no matter the racial composition will increase violence involvement, the level of involvement will vary depending on the racial composition of the delinquent peer group. There is therefore a relationship between race and violence that needs to be better understood.

One type of race related violence that may occur is structural violence. This happens in the context of establishing, maintaining, extending, reducing, or as a consequence of the racial hierarchy created by people in society (Iadicola & Shupe, 1998). Thus, when racially motivated violence occurs there is generally a specific goal in mind connected to the treatment of one or more racial groups. An example of structural violence is lynching. Beliefs, attitudes and social practices of cultural racism were dominant in the fabrication of motives and justifications for lynching African Americans (Ginzburg, 1988). Lynching was found to have ritual importance for whites as a way to show support for white superiority, and was a socialization process for younger whites on responding to African Americans (Oliver, 2001). The justification for racial violence was therefore ingrained into individuals at a young age through the culture in which they grew up. Lynching was a type of structural violence that tended to occur among individuals that were behaving without formal authoritative approval with a goal of maintaining and reinforcing the racial status quo (Oliver, 2001). Thus, from a young age an individual's violent behavior is at least partly due to a strong subcultural influence established by the racial dynamics of the community. When structural and interpersonal violence occurs the motivation is due to the offender's experience and agreement with cultural racism (Feagin & Vera, 1995). For example, Hamm (1996) studied a sample of white individuals and found that due to frustration and circumstances of personal lives merging with the influence of a racist ideology, individuals look

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<sup>8</sup> When looking at specific racial groups, Hispanic and black youth were more likely to have stronger delinquent attitudes, belief in the street code, and an increased chance of being influenced by peers, which resulted in an increase in violent offending compared to white youth (Carson & Esbensen, 2014).

for respect and social status by trying to be fighters that want justice for the white population (Hamm, 1996). The racially charged violent acts are therefore justified by believing their actions are for the benefit of their specific racial group. It is important to note that structural violence is directed against a specific racial group that is interpersonal and motivated by self interests and not formal institutional authority (Oliver, 2001). Racially motivated violent behavior is therefore the result of both structural and interpersonal motivations experienced by specific racial groups. These different motivations for racial violence can be connected and applied to the frustration and circumstances that are related to the racial tensions that exist among incarcerated youth.

Scholarship has also analyzed the violent subculture of specific racial groups. Hannerz (1969) coins the term “compulsive masculinity alternative” in which he identifies masculine behavior that can be described as focusing on toughness, sexual conquest, manipulation, and thrill seeking norms. He argues that it is a way for black males to express their masculinity when conventional methods are not an option and that it is prominent among lower-class black males. Due to institutional racism, obtaining manhood through legal means has been made impossible for many black males, so alternative methods for asserting masculinity have been developed (Oliver, 1994). They want to be seen as tough, and define manhood in terms of a lack of fear, control of emotions, and the utilization of violence to resolve interpersonal issues (Hannerz, 1969). This research shows that the dynamics and characteristics of violence and the subculture that develops may vary by the experiences of a specific racial group such as the frustration of not being able to achieve legitimate economic success. More recent scholarship reveals that there continues to be race-related motivations for violence. For example, involvement in violence is more likely for students in school who reported experiencing prejudice (Hoskin, 2011), which indicates a racial motivation for violent behavior. Furthermore, in prisons the more

heterogeneous the staff and inmates, the less violence there is (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2009).

This suggests that the more racially mixed the staff and inmates the less isolated a specific racial group will likely feel, and therefore it is less probable that violence will occur due to race issues.

Thus, there are unique contexts and circumstances in which racial violence occurs, but research among incarcerated youth is limited. The current project contributes to a better understanding of racial violence in correctional facilities through the analysis of violent incidents from the incarcerated youth perspective.

Although studies have found gangs to be racialized within prisons and institutions (Berg and DeLisi, 2006; Ralph and Marquart, 1992), there is an overlap between race and gang membership that is not yet clearly understood. It is important to note that although gangs can be organized by race, it's not necessarily as simple as that because region, immigration status, and gang affiliation status prior to prison are also important factors (Tramell, 2012). In the community, assaults are more likely to occur within racial groups than across with some variation depending on whether participants are Latino or black (Hipp, Tita, & Boggess, 2009). Additionally, Maxson, Gordon, and Klein (1985) found that gang homicides were more likely to be intra-racial. This research reveals an overlap between gang and race related incidents, but the similarities and differences are not yet clearly understood. The current study contributes to this gap in scholarship by directly comparing gang and race motivated youth correctional violence at the situational level.

#### *Other Types of Institutional Violence*

Violence that is neither gang nor race related also occurs within institutions. For example, in a study of transgender inmates, Sumner, Sexton, Jenness and Maxson (2013) found that disrespect is one of the top reasons that explain violence, while race and gang issues are

unlikely reasons for non-sexual violence against transgender inmates. To clarify, I am not arguing that transgender violence specifically occurs in youth institutions; I am merely trying to express that institutional violence will not necessarily always be gang or race motivated. These findings suggest that there are motivators for violence in institutions other than gangs or race. Since violence within prisons can be about more than just gang and race issues, it is important to understand what type of violence this would be, what it looks like and why it would occur. In a study analyzing incidents in school, Kaufman, Hall, and Zagura (2012) found that a higher percentage of incidents with black offenders tended to involve non-gang or romantic disputes compared to incidents that included Latino offenders. Although this research was not on violence within correctional institutions it shows that motivations for violence varies depending on the racial groups involved, and that even if there are gang disputes in school, violence occurs due to other issues as well. Furthermore, research on incarcerated women has found that when black respondents are involved in violent incidents the issue at hand is more likely to be trivial compared to incidents with white respondents (Griffiths, Yule, & Gartner, 2011). Additionally, when examining violent incidents involving Latino offenders, Light and Harris (2012) found that over half had gang-related motives compared to less than 40% of incidents involving black offenders, and less than 20% of incidents involving white offenders. These studies show that violent incidents occur due to various motives including trivial issues, non-gang disputes, gang motives, or race motives depending on the racial groups involved.

Violence in prison can be about interpersonal conflict and may be a method utilized by inmates to control members of their affiliated group. For example, Tramell (2012) found that violent behavior could be about something as simple as manners or personality conflict, with a violent response occurring if an inmate didn't abide by simple rules such as showering. This was



considered a sign of disrespect, and therefore called for a violent response. Conflict like this occurred just due to daily problems, and had nothing to do with gangs or race (Tramell, 2012). This reveals that disrespect within the institution goes beyond race and gang issues to more general personal issues between inmates. This is further shown by issues with sex offenders illustrated by Cunningham, Sorenson, Vigen, and Woods (2010) in which they identified a representative incident in their analysis of prison homicides:

An inmate advised corrections staff that his cellmate's hygiene was unacceptable. This cellmate, a convicted sex offender, was incontinent and wore a diaper. After repeated complaints and warnings to the staff and cellmate, the perpetrator attacked his cellmate—strangling him with a bed sheet and shoelace (2010:352).

In this example, not only was the victim a sex offender, but the perpetrator also had issues with the man's personal hygiene, which resulted in a serious violent response. Additionally, when violent altercations occur about trivial issues they tend to be between opponents of equal or similar status, and if there is an audience the odds of these altercations increases (Griffiths et al, 2011). This reveals that the situational dynamics and characteristics of violence motivated by other personal issues are distinctly different than gang and race motivated violence.

Violence is therefore a complex phenomenon that occurs due to gang issues, race issues, and other personal issues that are viewed as necessary and justified under certain contexts and circumstances. The study of violence therefore needs to focus on more than just the individuals involved, but also on the situational dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents. The current project contributes to this area of research by directly comparing violent incidents that are gang motivated, race motivated, and incidents motivated by other personal issues.

## Summary

This beginning chapter has shown that there has been a significant amount of research that has examined various aspects of violence. Scholarship has found that there is a positive association between offending with both unstructured socializing and unstructured solitary activities. Studies show that violence is a normal part of gang culture and identity. Gang youth are more involved in violence as both offenders and victims compared to non-gang youth, are likely to get involved in collective violence against rival gang members, and are willing to kill in defense of their gang. There has also been research conducted on the violence process in different contexts and situations from the analysis of homicide to violent incidents in general. Additionally, work has examined the subculture of violence, street code, and respect norms both on the street and among incarcerated offenders. Lastly, based on the literature review, violence occurs due to different motivational issues which include gang violence, race violence, and violence related to other personal issues. Although there has been some research conducted on incarcerated youth, most work has addressed adult violence. There has been little research on institutional violence at the incident level among gang and non-gang youth that reside in correctional facilities. This project will contribute to this area of research by analyzing how violent incident characteristics vary.

Research has also analyzed situational violence. Scholarship has addressed and identified specific roles for participants and stages for homicide as well as for a more general violence process. Culture has also been found to play an influential role in the violent behavior of street youth, and among incarcerated offenders. This has been shown through scholarship on the street code and respect norms of offenders. Where work is limited though is on how violence is perceived and experienced among youth in correctional facilities from their perspective.

Therefore, this research will assist in developing a better understanding of how violent incidents are experienced and perceived. This will be accomplished through examining and analyzing the events and actions that occur prior to and during the violent incidents of incarcerated youth.

It is important to understand violence among youth in an institutional setting; discovering whether it is similar to or different than other settings will contribute to a better understanding of violent behavior among young offenders. Since violence norms may differ depending on the specific context, the events that occur prior to and during violent incidents may be unique to the institutional setting. Furthermore, since violent behavior may vary depending on the social context there might be distinguishing features, and unique situational dynamics and characteristics associated with specific motivational issues. Guided by scholarship on violence at the situational level, and through utilizing subculture of violence concepts, and Routine Activities Theory in the analysis of violent incidents, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the contextual and situational circumstances associated with institutional violence. This will in turn reveal whether or not violence issues need to be approached differently by policy makers and program developers depending on the motivational issue and context in which these violent incidents occur. The substantive chapters that follow will include shorter focused literature reviews addressing the specific chapter's research questions and methods. The next chapter will discuss the research context and methods that will be utilized in this dissertation.

### **Overview of Chapters**

Chapter 2 is a detailed description of the research context in which the data were collected. Additionally, the chapter describes how the data were gathered, and the quantitative and qualitative methods that are utilized throughout the project.

Chapter 3 includes a qualitative analysis of the correctional setting and culture that exists within youth institutions. The results and discussion assist in providing a better understanding of how incarcerated youth perceive the violence in which they participate including how violence can vary across motivational issue.

Chapter 4 focuses on gang and race related incidents and addresses four things. First, the features youth identify to determine if the incident is gang or race related are addressed. Secondly, the chapter expands on these analyses by examining how youth perceive and describe violent incidents that are gang related and race related. Third, analyses are conducted to determine the situational characteristics associated with gang motivated incidents and race motivated incidents. The chapter concludes with an analysis of violent incidents youth categorize as both gang and race related. This will lead to a more thorough understanding of the complex relationship that exists between gang and race motivated youth correctional violence.

Chapter 5 focuses on violent incidents related to other personal issues. Qualitative analyses are utilized to examine the situational dynamics that occur in violent incidents motivated by other personal issues. Statistical analyses are conducted to determine what situational characteristics are more likely to be associated with incidents related to other personal issues compared to gang or race issues. The sequence of events the youth described for the violent incidents are also examined in order to expand and contextualize the results of the statistical analyses and to determine the distinguishing features of incidents that are neither gang nor race related.

Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation by summarizing the findings, and explaining the significance of the project. This is followed by a discussion of theoretical and policy implications and the proposal of a violent incident typology based on the current study's findings.

## **Chapter 2: Research Context, Data Collection, and Methods**

### **Institutional Context**

Data for the current project are cross-sectional and were collected in September 2010 as part of a larger study that gathered data from multiple sources (official, youth perspectives, staff perspectives) in order to achieve a thorough understanding of the landscape of the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The purpose of the larger study was to look at gangs and violence in California's youth correctional facilities. DJJ contacted the primary investigator to conduct a study addressing the issues of violence with a focus on gang violence in DJJ's five facilities. This study was conducted due to the *Farrell v. Allen* lawsuit, which resulted in a consent decree requiring DJJ to develop and start a Safety and Welfare Remedial Plan, which needed the assistance of a national expert to create and develop strategies to reduce violence in DJJ. The data for this study were collected at a dynamic time in DJJ with closings of various facilities due to a policy effort to decrease referrals to DJJ, which could potentially impact facility violence. The youth placed in the remaining facilities were sentenced for more and more serious offenses. The data were taken from in-depth interviews conducted by Maxson and her team with randomly selected youth held in California state level institutions. A total of 306 interviews were conducted with male youth, and the current study utilizes data from these interviews focusing on the violent incident experiences of the youth.

It is also necessary to address DJJ gang policy. Within DJJ youth are automatically classified as a gang member upon intake if they are currently or were a street gang member, and this official label stays with them until they are released (Maxson, Bradstreet, Gascon, Gerlinger, Grebenkemper, Haerle, Kang-Brown, Mesinas, Omori, Reid, & Scott, 2012). Furthermore, each DJJ facility employed a Gang Information Coordinator whose job focus was the gang youth in

that specific facility. The recognized gangs and groups that exist within DJJ include Southerners, Northerners, Crips, Bays, Bloods, Bulldogs, Asians, Peckerwoods, and tagger groups among others. In accordance with official DJJ records Southerners make up over 40% of the gang members, with Northerners and Southerners encompassing almost 60% of the sample (Maxson, 2012). These gangs are generally divided by race/ethnicity with Hispanic being the predominant group in the sample.

### Youth Interview Data

A representative sample of the DJJ population was obtained through the use of simple random sampling stratified by correctional facility. Private and confidential one-on-one interviews with youth were conducted with the youth's consent.<sup>9</sup> The youth were informed of the purpose of the study at the beginning of each interview, they were assured that anything they said would be kept confidential<sup>10</sup> and there was an overall refusal rate of 16%. The youth interview was semi-structured consisting of both closed ended and open ended questions with a focus on select topics including feelings of safety, violence involvement, and violence avoidance. In addition to these topics, the interview addressed other various subjects including family, gang involvement, demographics, etc. For example, the survey contains questions about violent experiences as well as violence perceptions in both current and past situations. Moreover there are questions that ask youth to discuss their time in DJJ, and any concerns they may have about getting out. There is also a separate section of the interview that addresses gang membership including if they are currently or they ever were a street or institutional gang member. Furthermore, questions addressed how youth ended up joining gangs as well as

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<sup>9</sup> Youth had the option to refuse to interview or answer questions at anytime throughout the interview process.

<sup>10</sup>The exception, of which youth were informed, was if a youth reported that they planned on hurting themselves or someone else we were legally obligated to report that to the authorities.

questions on their affiliated gang organizational structure. Some of the demographics of the sample are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Youth Sample Demographics (N= 306)**

	<u>Total</u>
<b><u>Race % (n=304)</u></b>	
Latino	57.9
Black	28.3
White	8.6
Other	5.3
<b><u>Confinement Offense % (n=265)</u></b>	
Violent Offense	74.2
Sex Violation	19.7
Other	6.1
<b><u>Age in Years (n= 271)</u></b>	
Mean Age (SD)	18.49 (2.3)
<b><u>Time Served in Days (n=285)</u></b>	
Mean Time Served (SD)	553 (606.9)

Over half the sample is Latino and nearly 30% of the sample is black. Most of the youth interviewed were confined for a violent offense, and the average amount of time served in DJJ was 553 days at the point of the interview. The main focus of this project is on the characteristics and dynamics of the violent incidents reported by the youth, which is explained in more detail below.

**Violent Incident Forms (VIF)**

The interview includes a section where we asked the youth to describe the three most recent violent incidents in which they have been involved as well as the worst gang, worst race, and worst ever incident in which they have participated while in DJJ. This was completed using violent incident forms which consisted of both open and closed ended questions for each individual incident in which the youth reported being involved. The VIF's are the focus of this

project and cover a variety of items (Appendix A). This includes asking the youth to briefly describe the incident including what happened in the incident, the sequence of events that occurred, as well as specifically what started it. The VIF's also addressed what the youth perceived the incident to mostly be about, and if it was due to a prior issue. Additionally, the VIF's covered when the incident occurred, what facility, and where the incident occurred in the facility. The locations include room/cell, dorm/bunk area, shower, day room, field/rec yard, kitchen/dining, hospital/clinic, school, worksite, and other area. The number of youth involved on both sides as well as the number of youth from each racial group is also noted.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the VIF's identify whether or not the incident described was gang related or race related, and if so, how the youth knew. Furthermore, the forms ask the youth about the punishment they received, weapon involved, as well as whether or not anyone that participated needed medical attention and if so, whether they received medical attention. The data on these forms are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively to gain a thorough and comprehensive understanding of violent incidents from the incarcerated youth perspective.<sup>12</sup> The final sample for the analyses consists of 740 violent incidents reported by 264 youth.

### **Youth Violent Incident Experiences: Qualitative**

The data for this project allow for the opportunity to develop a more thorough and complete understanding of incarcerated youth violent incident experiences through the use of qualitative methods. A neglected area of youth violence research is the violent incident experiences of incarcerated youth from the offender perspective, which is the gap this project will help to fill. This project utilizes open ended responses from the VIF's where the youth

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<sup>11</sup> Youth identify the ethnicity Latino as a racial group, so that is how it will be referred to in this analysis.

<sup>12</sup> It is also important to note that the youth described anywhere from 1 to 6 violent incidents depending on the amount of violence in which they have been involved, and how much they remembered.



describe the events that occurred during and prior to the violent incident as well as their responses to how they know whether an incident is gang or race related. This will allow for a more complete picture of youth violent incident experiences to be revealed. How youth perceive their violent incident experiences while incarcerated should help to increase our understanding of institutional violence and divulge the importance of violent actions in maintaining individual youth identity and values among their peers.

Some of the concepts that will be examined include how violence involvement relates to a youth's identity and their values, as well as how the institutional context shapes violent behavior and culture among incarcerated youth. As mentioned previously in the literature review research has been conducted on the situational process of violence (Luckenbill, 1977; Felson & Steadman, 1983) as well as on the subculture of violence (Anderson, 1999; Baron, Kennedy, & Forde, 2001). To my knowledge, there have been no studies that have analyzed incarcerated youth violent incident involvement from the youth perspective. Since this is cross-sectional interview data I am unable to address youth violence experiences over time, but this study will provide a new context for understanding youth violent actions and experiences as well as a more detailed and nuanced comprehension of correctional violence from the incarcerated youth perspective. The current project addresses how violence varies by specific contextual circumstances, how youth identify and respond to violent incidents, if a process of violence and/or subculture exists among incarcerated youth and how this relates to their violence involvement.

#### *Qualitative Measures and Analysis Plan*

The focus of the analysis is on the youth descriptions of the sequence of events during and prior to the violent incident. This includes 740 violent incidents described by 264 youth

participants. Further analyses are also conducted on descriptions of how the youth know an incident is gang and/or race related. These data derive from item 1, as well as the open ended parts of questions 2, 8, and 10 of the VIF's which are displayed in Appendix A. Their responses were transcribed by the interviewer.

For this analysis open coding, and memo writing were utilized. More specifically, a combination of both theoretically derived thematic coding and data driven coding were used. After the coding process was complete prominent codes and themes related to incarcerated youth violence experiences were identified and analyzed. Detailed memos were written as themes were identified, which was followed by the creation of a thematic coding scheme in order to better understand how widespread and prevalent these themes were throughout the data. The perceptions of their violent incident experiences show how violence shapes a youth's identity, how youth justify or rationalize their violent behavior while incarcerated, and how the institutional context shapes their violent behavior.

Analyses were also conducted on a couple of items addressing whether the incident was gang or race related which were asked of the youth that provided violent incident descriptions. If the youth confirmed that the incident was gang or race related a follow up question asked how they knew. This analysis enables a comparison between what distinguishes gang related incidents and race related incidents from the incarcerated youth perspective. Furthermore, features of incidents that are motivated by other personal issues are also identified and compared to the distinguishing features of gang and race related incidents.

Reliability was assessed independently by checking for consistency in coding of the data at different points in time (Schreier, 2012). Coding was conducted at three different time intervals that were at least one to two months apart from one another. This allowed for the

stability of the codes to be determined. Overall the majority of coding was consistent at each time interval suggesting that the data were reliably coded (Schreier, 2012).

### **Quantitative Measures and Analysis Plan**

This project allows for the opportunity to analyze the characteristics of specific violent incidents in which youth have been involved. As previously mentioned, violence is central to the gang (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996), and becomes part of a gang member's identity (Stretesky and Pogrebin, 2007) and incidents about other personal issues tend to be based on personal issues individuals have with one another (Cunningham et al, 2010, Tramell, 2012). Thus, it is likely that the characteristics of the violent incident will vary depending on whether the incident is gang related, race related, or related to other personal issues. Furthermore, these analyses contribute to a better understanding of some of the similarities and differences between gang related violence, race related violence, and violence related to other personal issues.

#### *Analytic Approach: Multinomial Logistic Regression*

The primary analytic approach utilized is Multinomial Logistic Regression as it allows for the analysis of a dependent variable with multiple nominal categories, which include gang related, race related, and incidents motivated by other personal issues. Furthermore, in order to account for the fact that the violent incidents are not independent observations but are nested within a random sample of youth, the analyses are clustered by individual youth. Control variables are utilized in the analyses to ensure that the results are non-spurious. The analyses focus on situational characteristics, therefore the models only include violent incident characteristics. More specifically, the violent incidents are clustered within the youth that reported violent incident descriptions.

### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable for this project is the motivational issue. This is a self-reported measure that includes the categories “gang related,” “race related,” and “other personal issues.” The youth were asked “Was it about race/ethnicity” and “Was it about a gang issue?” and each incident was described in detail with the use of a VIF. If the youth responded no to both the incident being about race and being about gangs, then the incident was categorized as being about other personal issues. These analyses will help to determine what key situational characteristics are significantly associated with these three types of incidents.

### *Independent Variables<sup>13</sup>*

The total number of individuals and racial groups involved in an incident are included in the analyses as independent variables. The total number of youth involved in an incident is based on self-reported data. It is calculated by summing the reported total amount of individuals that were participating on the youth’s side and on the opposing side. The total number of racial groups involved is also based on youth self-reports and is determined by summing the number of racial groups reported being involved in a violent incident.

The participant dynamic is included as an independent variable in the analyses as a set of dummy variables. The participant dynamic consists of the categories mutual combat, one-sided, and riot. An incident is identified as one of these three distinct types. This is determined by the interviewer from the sequence of events that the youth describe for each incident they participated in. A set of dummy variables represent whether the incident occurred in the day room, dormitory, recreation area, school, or other area in the facility.

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<sup>13</sup> This list identifies the variables that are utilized as independent variables in both chapters 4 and 5. These variables are identified and expanded upon in each of these chapters. The variables not used as independent variables in a specific chapter are included in the analysis as control variables.

### *Control Variables*

Control variables are included in the analyses to ensure that the results are non-spurious. One such variable is whether or not the incident is one of the worst incidents in which the youth has participated, and is included due to the potential for distinct differences in motivating issue between the worst incidents and non-worst most recent violent incidents in which the youth has participated. This was accomplished with a dichotomous variable that classified the incident as either a “worst” incident or “recent” incident. The number of youth on the respondent’s side, as well as the number of opposing Latinos, opposing blacks, and opposing other racial/ethnic groups are entered as controls due to the potential for the number and groups of youth to influence the motivational issue.<sup>14</sup> Whether or not the violent incident involved a prior conflict is also included due to the potential association with the motivational issue. Lastly, the seriousness of the violent incident is another control variable and is measured using youth reported violent incident characteristics. An index was developed to determine the physical seriousness of the violent incident. Youth were asked if a weapon was involved, and if anyone needed medical attention. These two items were combined to make an index ranging from low physical seriousness to high physical seriousness. Additionally, a scale of institutional seriousness was created based on the severity of punishment the youth reported receiving for participating in the violent incident.

Precautionary measures<sup>15</sup> were taken to ensure that there were no issues of multicollinearity with the independent and control variables (see Appendix C, Table 1 for univariate characteristics). Correlations were examined, and none of the variables had

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<sup>14</sup> These variables are different than the independent variables that address total number of individuals and groups involved; they measure the amount of individuals in a single racial group that were involved in the violent incident.

<sup>15</sup> Multiple imputation analyses were utilized to confirm the accuracy of the results using list-wise deletion, and produced similar results.

correlational issues (see Appendix B, Table 1). Additionally the variance inflation factor was examined, and all variables have factors below 10 revealing that there are no issues with multicollinearity. The results of these analyses show that the independent and control variables can be used successfully in multivariate analyses to obtain accurate results.

### **Chapter 3: Analysis of the Youth Correctional Setting**

This chapter includes a brief literature review that will lead into a qualitative analysis of themes related to the institutional setting and culture that occur across gang motivated incidents, race motivated incidents, and violent incidents motivated by other personal issues. This will provide a better understanding of general violent incident involvement among youth in a correctional setting, which will in turn assist in laying the groundwork for a comparison of gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents in chapter four.

#### **General Prison Violence**

As mentioned previously, various individual characteristics have been identified as predictors of prison violence among inmates. Scholarship has found that younger inmates are more likely to engage in violence compared to older inmates (Steiner, 2008; Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012, Kuanliang, Sorensen, & Cunningham, 2008; Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007). Additionally, younger inmates will often use threatening behavior to control resources and public spaces in prison (Kerbs & Jolley, 2007). It is therefore important for research to address and further examine the violent behavior of incarcerated young offenders.

In addition to age there are individual characteristics that have been found to be significantly related to prison violence. For example, inmates who have been incarcerated for a violent offense are more likely to participate in violent behavior (Steiner, 2008). Other research has shown that inmates with a history of community violence with pro-criminal attitudes have a higher likelihood of participating in violence while in prison (Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012). Overall, studies have shown that general individual characteristics such as age, violent offending, and pro-criminal attitudes predict the likelihood of violent misconduct.

Although there have been many studies on prison violence at the individual level, scholarship on the situational context and dynamics of violence among incarcerated offenders is limited.

### *Subculture of Violence and Street Code*

A major approach to understanding violent behavior is through the subculture of violence and the “street code” (Anderson, 1999; Lauger, 2012). Violence values may be influenced by the specific situation and aggression may be influenced by contextual circumstances (Baron, Kennedy, and Ford, 2001). It is therefore important to examine the situational context of violence. Furthermore, Oliver (1994) examined the subculture of violence among black men and discovered that those committed to a certain image would use threats or violence in situations harmful to their image. This suggests that the subculture of violence is a strong predictor of violent behavior for dispute resolution. Moreover, scholarship has revealed that violence participation occurs due to being part of certain groups, embracing specific values, or from being in certain situational contexts (Baron, Kennedy, and Forde, 2001). Thus, violent behavior can be ascribed to various aspects of an individual’s current situation.

The street code has also been applied to the analysis of violence. Research has revealed a code that youth abide by which influences their attitudes and involvement in violence (Brezina et al, 2004; Anderson, 1999). When associating with aggressive peers youth have an increased likelihood of developing code related beliefs and increased violence involvement (Brezina et al, 2004). Additionally, individuals are looking to gain respect through their actions in order to advance their social status (Hansen et al, 2014). Thus, individuals utilize violence to abide by a subcultural code as well as to maintain and increase their status. Additionally, fights related to status are not necessarily about winning, but are just about being able to give and take damage to restore or establish group membership (Collins, 2008). In all, findings show that violence



participation may vary based on beliefs, peers, and perceptions. Further, scholarship also reveals that violence participation is situational, and context specific.

Belief in the street code and culture of respect continues when individuals are incarcerated. Following the street code before incarceration is related to an increased likelihood of violence participation among incarcerated offenders (Mears et al, 2013). Thus, the subculture an individual associates with has a major influence on their violence involvement. Individuals in a prison context are brought from different areas to live together increasing the importance of respect and related behavior (Colwell, 2007). The prison context therefore increases the likelihood of disrespect and evoking violent behavior. Research also suggests that violence is justified from the offender's view when it happens in response to a provocation in order to maintain a certain image (Stretesky and Pogrebin, 2007). This reveals the major influence of cultural beliefs and disrespect in reinforcing violent behavior for gaining and maintaining status. Moreover, the prison context increases the risk of victimization, which results in situational conflict (Edgar, 2008). This suggests that violent behavior also needs to be learned and used for self-protection.

### *Situational Violence*

There has been some research conducted on violence at the situational level. Select situations occur in which individuals are more likely to engage in violent behavior (Toch, 1986). For example, Oliver (1994) found that a majority of the situations related to violence that he studied involved disrespect or self-defense. Violence is therefore rationalized by the participant as justified in different situations and circumstances. Situated violence has also been examined by Luckenbill (1977) who argued that homicide is a situated transaction that includes six stages including insult, clarification, retaliation, counter retaliation, presence of a weapon, and

onlookers. Research suggests that there are specific situational characteristics, dynamics and roles that individuals involved play in a violent incident, but scholarship has not addressed what these would be among violent situations in a youth correctional setting.

Interactions between participants and the roles they play in violent situations contribute to the different actions they will take. For example, being disputatious and aggressive may lead to an increase in vulnerability, which may result in violent situations (Baron, Forde, & Kennedy, 2007). An individual's behavior may be a function of another's, not blind irrational behavior, but for self defense and honor (Felson and Steadman, 1983). Moreover, participants will provide a rationalization for violence in an attempt to restore the relationship that was disturbed due to the breaking of behavioral norms (Lyman and Scott, 1970). The context and circumstances of an offender's present situation therefore contributes to the justification of violence use among the individuals involved. Research that focuses on general aggression finds that social aggression frequently results in physical or verbal aggression (Xie et al, 2002). Additionally, aggressive behaviors will vary and so will the interactions between participants (Xie et al, 2002). These findings suggest that as the situational context and dynamics that occur prior to an aggressive act will vary so will the type of aggression that occurs.

The context and circumstances of an individual's current situation need to be better understood in order to improve comprehension on how they can influence violent behavior. Work addressing bullies has found that bullying behavior is supported by having power over peers and is therefore self-reinforcing (Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg, & Salmivalli, 2009). Thus, when individuals are able to have power over their peers there is a higher probability of bullying. Moreover, there are different rationalizations that assist in motivating individuals to participate in violence including violations, self-defense, and violence as communication (Oliver,

1991). Additionally, in a majority of the incidents described by Oliver (1991), violence occurred by experiencing disrespect from another party. Furthermore, Collins (2008) argues that there are not violent individuals, but violent situations. There is only a small amount of time in which individuals behave violently due to life being a sequence of situations where minimal violence happens. It is therefore crucial to examine the situational characteristics and dynamics of violent behavior in different contexts.

### Summary and Research Questions

Overall, research has addressed prison violence and its relationship with individual inmate characteristics such as age (Sorensen, & Cunningham, 2008; Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007), being confined for a violent offense (Steiner, 2008) and a history of violence in the community with pro-criminal attitudes (Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012). Research has also analyzed the culture of violence and has found it to play an influential role in the violent behavior of street youth (Anderson, 1999; Lauger, 2012), as well as among incarcerated offenders (Mears et al, 2013; Colwell, 2007). This has been shown through scholarship on the street code and respect norms of offenders. Additionally, work has been conducted at the situational level and has shown how violence is justified based on the context and circumstances (Felson and Steadman, 1983; Lyman and Scott, 1970). Moreover, scholarship suggests that the type of aggression that occurs will depend on the specific situation (Xie et al, 2001). Research is limited on the situational context, circumstances, and dynamics of youth correctional violence from the incarcerated young offender perspective. This chapter will begin to fill this gap by utilizing qualitative methods to analyze violent incident involvement and its relationship with both the institutional setting and correctional culture. This will be accomplished

by addressing the following research questions based on literature reviewed above and in chapter one:

### Research Questions

1. How do incarcerated youth describe violent incidents in which they are involved?
  - a. How does the correctional setting influence violent behavior among incarcerated youth?
  - b. Are there distinct roles that youth involved in these incidents play?
  - c. Is there a subculture of violence that is revealed in youth descriptions of violence in correctional facilities?
  - d. Are there respect norms among incarcerated youth? How do they influence their violent behavior?

### Youth Correctional Violence

It is important to understand correctional violence from the youth perspective. More specifically, it is crucial to comprehend how they describe the violence, the relationship between violence and the institutional setting, the distinct roles different parties play, and whether there is a culture of violence. This section begins with a discussion of the relationship between the correctional setting and violence involvement. It then examines the culture of violence among incarcerated youth with a focus on the construction of motivational issues youth utilize to rationalize their violent actions and obtain/maintain respect. This will serve as an introduction to the relationship between violence and the correctional context from the incarcerated youth perspective.

Correctional Setting and Violence

The correctional setting is distinct in that a youth’s life is constantly monitored and controlled by correctional officers and staff. Due to this fact the correctional setting has a unique effect on the violence involvement of incarcerated youth. In this section I discuss the themes that emerged from coding the violent incident descriptions for all three motivational issues. The frequency of the themes that occurred for gang motivated incidents, race motivated incidents, and incidents related to other personal issues are compared and discussed. Table 2 displays the frequency of themes that occurred related to the youth correctional environment.

**Table 2: Frequency of Correctional Setting Themes (%)**

<b><u>Code</u></b>	<b><u>Gang</u></b> <b><u>(n=287)</u></b>	<b><u>Race</u></b> <b><u>(n=117)</u></b>	<b><u>Other</u></b> <b><u>Personal</u></b> <b><u>(n=336)</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b> <b><u>(N= 740)</u></b>
Location	38%	40.2%	27.7%	33.6%
Staff Intervention	23%	35%	21.7%	24.3%
Correctional Processes	6.3%	10.3%	6.5%	7%
Planned Fight	10.5%	7.7%	6.8%	8.3%

Location

One of the most common themes that occurred when analyzing how youth describe the incidents in which they have been involved was location. The frequency captured in table 1 identifies how often youth mention facility location when openly describing the incident without being solicited for it. This reveals the importance of place among incarcerated youth. Due to the rivalries and tensions that occur within the institution, and because of how regulated the youth’s movements are, violent incidents tend to occur at times when youth are most likely to interact with suitable targets such as rivals, races, or other youth they dislike that motivate them to engage in violence:

David: *Five on one fight where I got beat up. I have family here and they are a part of my gang, my cousin approached a rival and they got down. I was in the classroom with the 5 rivals and I tried to rush them.*

Austin: *Group disturbance in facility over race. Some guy called a black dude the N-word on the rec yard. It just kicked off after that.*

Marco: *Day room; dude talked because I told him he was someone's bitch. He hit me three to four times, staff broke up.*

Martin: *We had our differences and took it to altercation. I was going to use the phone, went to bathroom, came back, and other guy was using it. So fought in the shower, after challenging him to get down.*

Youth tend to discuss being at school, or at recreation when they interact violently with youth of another gang or racial group. When it comes to incidents related to other personal issues youth tend to be in the day room. The day room is an area where youth tend to have a lot of unstructured time, and therefore time for issues to develop, which result in violence that is neither gang nor race related. Table 3 shows the frequency in percentage of violent incident location for gang related incidents, race related incidents, and incidents motivated by other personal issues as reported by youth from a question on the violent incident form asking them specifically about location.

**Table 3: Violent Incident Location Frequency (%)**

<b><u>Facility Location***</u></b>	<b><u>Gang (n=275)</u></b>	<b><u>Race (n=112)</u></b>	<b><u>Other (n=323)</u></b>	<b><u>Total (n=710)</u></b>
Day Room	27.3	27.7	41.2	33.7
Dorm	7.6	6.2	13.3	10
Rec Area	12.4	16.1	13.6	13.5
School	33.1	33.9	17.6	26.2
Other Area	19.6	16.1	14.3	16.6

Overall, chi-square analyses reveal a statistically significant association between facility location and motivational issue. There are no distinct differences in location frequency when comparing

gang and race incident types. Overall though, when examining both gang and race motivated incidents over 33% occur in school and over 27% happen in the day room. Very few gang and race related incidents occur in the dormitory.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, over 40% of incidents motivated by other personal issues occur in the day room, which is noticeably more frequent than any other area in the facility. Violence therefore tends to vary by location, and this is due to different aspects of the correctional environment.

### Planned Fight

Sometimes youth are motivated to fight one another, but will change locations, or plan for it to occur at a later time in order to not be seen by staff (i.e. a “blind”):

*Dylan: I said something I wasn't supposed to, and had to fight this guy. We found a blind and fought because I had to.*

*David: Raw fight. I was taking a shit and he was a rival. I was like what are you looking at. So we went to a blind area and started fighting.*

*Hugo: Conversation about luck. Off in classroom-gang stuff. Someone was eavesdropping then dialogue started and then friend talked it up, "punked up" felt played and told guy not to do it again. Meet in back of dorm in blind then staff showed up and then bailed.*

*Thiago: Still with the Bulldogs, racial fight. I am Mexican and me and one other guy and we fought and then 2 other guys jumped in. I got my lip split in the blinds, the teacher couldn't see and the tower couldn't see, and then after that they said I was respected.*

If the youth need to resolve a dispute with one another, the parties involved are sometimes willing to wait until they can engage in violence without being observed by staff. This reveals the importance of capable guardians or authority figures being present among motivated offenders to assist with violence prevention and/or delaying violent interactions. Moreover, this highlights the importance of facility location in determining when planned violence will occur.

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<sup>16</sup> The discussion of location will be expanded on more in Chapter 4 when the analysis focuses on violent incidents related to other personal issues.

Additionally, facility location may determine whether a violent incident is likely to be planned or spontaneous:

*Hugo: In recreation yard a Northerner disrespected a Crip. Crip tried to let it go but Northerner 'pushed their issues'. They set it up for the showers. Crip didn't want to fight but Northerner disrespected him. Crip called the Northerner out and Northerner fell to ground, Crip kicked him and everybody jumped in.*

*Craig: It was gang related, me and this guy had problems. We planned it, met outside on the field and fought.*

*Mario: School, one of the homies said something to me, called me a Mexican. I approached him next day in school, we talked, word got around that I was disrespecting him, he told me to come to Muslim service (staff had arranged it) in chapel, we fought.*

*Douglas: Someone stole from me, I confronted him. He said no. We were playing basketball and disrespected each other. I told him we were going to fight and we set it up for dayroom after program. We kicked off our shoes and started fighting.*

*Patrick: We was in the day room, and I heard a dude say a racist joke. I told him, 'we fitting to fight.' He didn't want to. I told him I didn't care what he thought. Then we were going to fight after rec. I did it then so that nobody's recreation would get messed up.*

In these examples youth set up fights for another time instead of resolving their issues immediately. The youth may be motivated to engage in violence, but due to the correctional setting they may not have an opportunity to interact again until a later time. The youth know each other's schedules and thus where the other is going to be, so they know when and where they can arrange to fight. Therefore the fight might be scheduled for the showers or the field. It is also important to think about other factors that potentially contribute to a planned fight; in the third quote the fight was not only planned by the youth but the staff also unintentionally assisted by scheduling the service. This reveals how even though staff are supposed to help prevent violence, youth may utilize events scheduled by staff to plan their own violent interactions. Moreover, the correctional schedule influences when a fight may occur whether it's when staff aren't looking or in the case of the last quote in order to not ruin recreation time for the other



youth. Furthermore this shows how correctional processes may also have an influence on when violent incidents occur.

### Correctional Processes

In addition to the setting and location there are different correctional processes that are described by youth in relation to violence. The theme of correctional processes captures those instances where violence appeared to occur due to a policy or procedure implemented by staff.

These processes are unique to the correctional environment:

*Tyronne: In recreation yard. Hispanic on one side, black on another. Staff tried to get us to integrate. One on one started; everyone jumped in nine black v. 21 Hispanic. Staff came and broke it up.*

*Eduardo: Very segregated- went to IMPACT, brought all 3 groups in the library, Southerner talking, they got up, fought.*

*Santino: I wanted to get off the living unit, so I attacked my enemy. I had trouble with staff and they wouldn't move me. So I got into a fight. They still didn't want to move me, so started fighting with staff.*

*Carlos: "Coming from pill call, I don't like when people are getting pushed around, and the white guy was talking smack about this gay guy and touching his hair. I told him to chill out and he told me to mind my own business, and that was disrespect".*

These quotes clearly show how correctional processes may inadvertently result in violence between youth. The first quote identifies an attempt at integration by the staff, which brought youth who were motivated to engage in violence together with youth that they perceived to be suitable targets. Similarly, in the second quote, the youth describes being very segregated, thus when all the youth got together for IMPACT, which is a treatment program, they fought. The third quote shows how a youth may abuse correctional processes by resorting to violence in order to be removed from their current living unit. In the last quote the fight occurred due to youth interacting on the way back from pill call. Thus, procedures that are unique to the correctional setting and are there for the benefit of the youth may influence the violence

involvement and motivations of incarcerated youth in a way not necessarily intended by the staff or facility.

### Staff Influence

The following analysis focuses specifically on how correctional staff have a strong influence on the violence that occurs in the youth correctional setting through both intervening on violent behavior and assisting with violence involvement. Within youth correctional settings staff are there to ensure that the youth behave and follow the structured schedule they are given. They are constantly monitoring youth behavior and thus are frequently there to intervene when youth engage in violence:

*Sal: School, guy from South (from my area), during movement walked up to each other and fought. Staff told us to get down, we stopped.*

*Adrian: Playing handball, Northerner said "fuck that blue shit" to a Crip, and later in the day room the Crip confronted the Northerner, knocked him on the ground and the riot started. A smoke bomb was used to stop this.*

*Javier: I was walking down the hallway to my dorm. The bulldogs- 2 locked door behind, and 10 charged. The staff saw and started to get the people down, paintball pepper spray and tear gas.*

*Lucas: Walked into class. I think the dude who assaulted me found out what I was in for (sex offense), the dude punched me- staff were 4 feet away, broke it up immediately.*

Motivated youth may therefore engage in violence with the knowledge that staff members are watching and that they will do what they can to intervene. Since youth are monitored constantly the presence of the authority figure seems to have less of an influence on a youth's motivation to engage in violence. This leads to staff stopping violence in a variety of ways from simply breaking the fight up, to more extreme methods such as paintball, tear gas, or smoke bombs. Youth may still plan to fight at a later time or in the blinds where staff cannot observe, but it seems to vary depending on the context and circumstances of the specific situation. Furthermore,

the staff may be there to intervene and monitor youth behavior, but sometimes they are not necessarily capable authority figures and may actually assist youth with violent incident involvement:

*Carlos: I was in lockup, doing a special modified program for fighting all the time. I didn't know that Northerners disliked me. I was coming out of the showers, and the staff member popped my doors. I call it a set up to this day. The staff member popped two doors. Dude ran up on me and tried to swing on me. I dipped him down, and got off him, and staff maced me, but not him. Then the guy attacked me, while I couldn't see.*

*Sherman: Sherman got hit with a chair. Knew dude who was an enemy from the streets, and he heard people pumping the kid up. Sherman was reading a magazine, looked up to see a chair coming at him, hit Sherman in the head. Other let chair go, thought he would be out. Sherman hit him hard, were fighting for two minutes, other fell to ground, staff didn't even stop it. He walked away.*

*Levi: When I came over from another facility we bet a deodorant with staff. She told me that we were friends. And then staff lost the bet (superbowl). When the staff member came back on duty a few days later she said she would not pay the debt. Levi said that the staff had to pay the debt or something bad would happen. Later that night, Levi singled a guy out and rushed him. Two guys joined in and they stomped him out pretty bad. Staff took the guy to emergency room.*

These quotes reveal that although the staff is generally supposed to be there to monitor the youth and make sure they are safe it does not necessarily stop them from contributing to the perpetuation of youth violence. A youth will be motivated to engage in violence, and the staff may assist in arranging a fight for a later time, and they also might allow one youth to pursue another youth at a time where they generally expect to be safe. Thus, a motivated youth may engage in violence due to staff members not necessarily acting as capable guardians or authority figures.

There is a complex relationship that exists between violence participation and the correctional setting among incarcerated youth. These analyses reveal a connection between facility location and violence participation that needs to be better understood. Moreover, other aspects of the correctional setting also seem to influence youth violence involvement including

aspects that were originally intended to prevent or reduce violent behavior such as correctional processes or staff influence. The youth have therefore created a culture of violence around prominent features of the institutional setting, which inadvertently foster this culture and allow it to thrive.

Youth Correctional Culture and Violence

Within the correctional setting there is a culture of violence that exists among incarcerated youth. The themes related to correctional culture are displayed in Table 4, which divides the incidents into gang motivated, race motivated, and other personal issues. Overall, these themes did not occur as frequently in race related incidents or other personal issue incidents compared to gang related incidents. More specifically, it was not very common for race or other personal motivated incidents to be related to violence guidelines. Additionally, other personal issue incidents did not frequently involve disrespect. The following section will discuss the correctional culture based on how the youth describe these themes and how they potentially connect and interact with one another.

**Table 4: Frequency of Correctional Culture Themes (%)**

<b><u>Code</u></b>	<b><u>Gang</u></b> <b><u>(n = 287)</u></b>	<b><u>Race</u></b> <b><u>(n = 117)</u></b>	<b><u>Other</u></b> <b><u>Personal</u></b> <b><u>(n = 336)</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b> <b><u>(N= 740)</u></b>
Mutual Understanding	19.5%	12.8%	18.8%	18.1%
Disrespect	10.1%	10.3%	8.3%	9.3%
Violence Guidelines	14.6%	7.7%	8%	10.5%

Mutual Understanding

The most common correctional culture theme that emerged among all different types of violent incidents was a mutual understanding for violence. This is an acknowledgement and agreement by all parties involved that violence needs to and will occur. It was part of the culture, and something that arose frequently among the violent incident descriptions:

Rodolfo: *I don't know, he told me to bounce up, and I got up. To this day I haven't found out why.*

Felipe: *I was walking on line, towards school, by classrooms and he called me out "you pushing [same as banging] the county?" He started running towards me, I stepped out of the line and we started fighting. He's a Northerner from Alameda and I'm a Southerner from Alameda.*

Andrew: *At work in laundry, one guy asked me who I'm gonna run with when I go to prison. I said whites, he said "we're gonna fight." Went outside, fought another guy, started to go inside. Said we had to fight again, came back out, two more came out. I ran, and then kept fighting.*

Elias: *Elias in gym, didn't get along. We looked at each other and we knew who each was, started rushing each other.*

Alejandro: *Putting up chairs, someone thought I said something about his mom, rushed me, and started fighting. He wanted to see if I could fight.*

Whether the person describing the incident instigated it and attacked first, or was being attacked, most of the time they would say something specific happened so they had to fight, or they had it coming. This mutual understanding also reveals a violence expectation that youth have for one another as they will expect others to be able to fight and will test them to see if they actually can. Frequently it was mutually understood that violence had to occur due to disrespect, which is a concept that will be expanded on below. A mutual understanding was least likely to occur for race motivated violent incidents, which suggests a difference in participant dynamic for violence related to race issues. This will be expanded on when comparing the themes of gang and race motivated violent incidents in the next chapter.

### Disrespect

Another common theme that was identified in these incidents was disrespect. This occurred when youth did or said something which solicited a feeling of disrespect, and therefore the youth felt obligated to retaliate with violence:

Eric: *I was with another "minor" and I said something and a Southerner dude started hitting me and I didn't know I was disrespecting ("Soreste," term of disrespect).*

Emilio: *Youth was in intake, disrespected Hispanic race so the Hispanics had to put the blacks in their place.*

Ethan: *He spit on me. He might have felt disrespected because he asked for a "channel check" (Changing TV channel) and I got upset. I first asked in respectful way to pick up his garbage..., but then I asked in disrespectful way and we started fighting.*

These descriptions reveal that disrespect may occur for a variety of reasons related to gang, race, or other personal issues. Regardless of the reason though disrespect appears to be resolved with violence whether or not it was intentional. These quotes reveal that when youth are disrespected by other youth they feel justified in retaliating with violence. Therefore issues related to disrespect motivate youth to engage in violence with one another. It is important to understand that disrespect will vary across different motivational issues. These differences between types of disrespect will be expanded on in later chapters when motivational issues are directly compared.

### Violence Guidelines

The narratives not only reveal an expectation for violence. They also show that youth do not randomly engage in violent behavior, but generally follow a set of guidelines, primarily for incidents which are gang motivated, that determine when youth will engage in violence. These guidelines were addressed in various ways by the youth:

Mario: *Kid from LA (Black) had enemy (Southerner), black hit Southerner. Staff yelled out, people started fighting in 9 classes at once. If someone ends up on the floor, you have to jump in (also if certain words are said..cracking ears).*

Nicholas: *Bulldog did an "N" backward, which is a sign of disrespect. Wrote that backwards N in a book. I heard about it, was already set up, I offered to help. Planned one on one.*

Leon: *Gang related, he was my enemy, we fought three times back to back. Fought the guy one on one. If he's black, then it's a group, but if it's a gang, then it'll be 1 on 1. With this guy, we were neighbors and were let out at the same time.*

*Arthur: I rushed him- tapped him on the shoulder so he'd turn around and then I rushed him. Kept fighting until they sprayed.*

*Maximillian: My buddy was sitting down and we were talking and Southerner came up to my friend from behind and socked him in the jaw, that violates rules. Since my buddy didn't have a chance to respond, I jumped in.*

These narratives reveal that violence tends to occur for a reason, which is consistent with the reviewed subculture of violence literature. What is interesting about violence guidelines though is that they are generally accepted by the youth. These guidelines are general understandings or cultural norms about when individuals should engage in violent behavior that are recognized by incarcerated youth. These are not strict rules though, as fights do not have to be arranged, and a youth can just be fought for something they did such as a disrespectful act. If the fights are arranged though the quotes reveal that the youth acknowledges why the fight needs to occur and agrees to it.

Violence guidelines also occur for reasons other than just retaliation in gang motivated incidents. For example, youth who are friends or family members may just want to fight for fun, a youth may need to prove themselves to a gang, or there may be a programming issue:

*Rodolfo: Me and my cousin wanted to get down and I said alright. So I went to meds, while I was going, and he flashed me to go down, took off shirt, started fight and got on ground.*

*Julian: In facility, had to prove yourself, asked who you gonna ride with, as a Southerner, gotta prove yourself. "If gonna be down for the Southerners, gotta fight someone." Fought youth, later, his friend wanted to fight Julian. Guy saw him the next day, started going at it.*

*Pedro: One ward broke code, ruining program for the whole unit. Two days later the Southsiders attacked this ward. Started 3-on-1 then a number of other people got in. Whole unit.*

When fights occur for fun they either arrange it, or one of the individuals will give a signal for them to get down, both parties will understand this signal and they will fight. In order for a youth

to prove themselves to a gang the youth may need to show that they are willing to engage in violence with another youth. It is also possible for violence to occur if a youth breaks a guideline by ruining programming for their unit. Thus, there are also violence guidelines related to programming that are established based on the correctional processes youth experience on a daily basis, which may motivate youth to engage in violence. Violence guidelines most frequently occur in gang motivated violent incidents, which is due to the culturally constructed norms youth have developed for issues between gangs. Distinguishing between violence guidelines specific to gang issues and more general guidelines and norms will be expanded on in the next two chapters.

## **Discussion**

### *Summary of Findings*

Overall, the violent incident descriptions reveal that violence among incarcerated youth is influenced by aspects of the correctional setting and the existing culture of violence. Violent behavior related to gang and race issues more frequently occurs in school whereas violence related to other personal issues more frequently occurs in the day room. There are various correctional processes that may inadvertently contribute to youth violence involvement such as bringing rival groups together, lining up for pill call, or programming in the day room. Additionally, youth are able to plan fights for later times and different facility locations such as in the blinds, and staff may knowingly or unknowingly contribute to youth violence participation. Moreover, there is a culture of violence that exists among incarcerated youth. Frequently when youth participate in violence there is a mutual understanding among the participants. The fight may be occurring due to a disrespectful act, and/or the youth involved may be abiding by the established violence guidelines that exist within the institution.



Furthermore, engagement in the subculture of violence varies across gang, race, and other personal issues.

These analyses serve as an introduction to understanding the violent behavior of incarcerated youth through an examination of the setting and culture of violence in youth correctional facilities. Violence varies depending on location in the facility with gang and race motivated violent incidents most frequently occurring in school, and incidents related to other personal issues most frequently occurring in the day room. Based on the incident descriptions this is probably because locations such as the school are where youth are likely to interact with rivals or disliked racial groups. Conversely, the day room is where youth engage in unstructured activities where they may develop other personal issues with one another. Location is crucial to understanding youth correctional violence because it helps to reveal both what the youth is doing and who they are interacting with. Furthermore, due to the predictable structure and schedule of the institutional setting youth are able to plan fights for later times and alternate locations knowing that they will not be seen or observed by staff. Furthermore, the presence of staff has a unique influence on violent behavior. Depending on the situation staff may intervene on violence, assist youth in violence participation or cause youth to schedule a fight for a later time due to their presence.

Based on the violent incident descriptions youth have developed a culture of violence that is reinforced by prominent aspects of the correctional setting. There is a mutual understanding for violence among incarcerated youth, where the parties acknowledge the transgression and agree to engage in a violent altercation. Moreover, violence is frequently related to disrespectful acts by youth, and there is also an established set of guidelines related to violent incident participation that youth tend to abide by. The violent incident descriptions reveal that it's more

complicated than believing that only a culture of violence exists within youth correctional facilities though. The prominence of the themes varies noticeably when comparing gang, race, and other personal issues. This reveals that in order to effectively intervene and prevent institutional violence the unique situational characteristics and dynamics of violent incidents need to be further analyzed.

### *Conclusion*

The violent incident descriptions reveal that there are similarities and differences in situational characteristics and dynamics of incidents that are gang motivated, race motivated, and motivated by other personal issues. In order to better understand youth correctional violence this project analyzes the similarities and differences of violent incidents across motivational issues. The two substantive chapters that follow utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods to directly compare incidents motivated by gang issues, race issues, and other personal issues.

## **Chapter 4: Variations in Youth Correctional Violence: Comparing Gang and Race Motivated Violent Incidents**

### **Introduction**

This chapter explores the distinctions between gang related violent incidents and race related violent incidents. Specifically, it examines what features youth identify to distinguish between these two types of violence, the participant dynamic that is likely to occur in these incident types, and also the number of participants and racial groups likely to be involved. As addressed in chapter 1, literature has generally focused on gang and race as individual characteristics that are associated with violent behavior. The current chapter will contribute to the violence literature by addressing and analyzing the characteristics and dynamics of violent incidents that are gang related and race related. Rarely has youth correctional violence been examined from the youth perspective, and self-reported violent incidents are beneficial in that they include violence that has not been officially reported. The context and structure of the youth correctional setting creates an environment where gang and race issues are common, and violence is utilized regularly to resolve issues. Therefore, this chapter will provide a unique look at the issues of gang and race violence that occur within youth correctional facilities and how youth are able to distinguish between the two issues when describing the violent incidents in which they have participated.

### **Gang and Race Violence**

There is a complex relationship that exists between gangs and violence. Scholarship has shown that gang membership plays a very prominent role in an individual's life and violence has a significant role in the lives of gang members (Klein, 1995). Violence is utilized to maintain gang membership and it becomes part of a gang member's identity to the point where they say

they are willing to kill or be killed for their gang (Stretesky and Pogrebin, 2007). A gang member justifies their violent actions by committing them in defense of their gang (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996; Lauger, 2012), and to show they are a legitimate member of the gang (Lauger, 2012). Violence therefore serves as a method for retaliation and protection. Additionally, research suggests that gang members view their violent actions as a response to another's actions. The violent behavior of gang members has also been found to persist upon incarceration as gang involvement increases the likelihood of violent behavior among inmates (Mears et al, 2013). Moreover, violence is utilized by gang members to preserve solidarity (Papachristos, 2009), which allows the gang to maintain strong cohesion. Violence therefore has an important influence on the gang as a whole. Collective gang violence is one of the few things that members do as a group, which may improve cohesion, and this centrality of violence increases the number of participants involved in violent activity (Decker, 1996). Additionally, gangs show that they are unified through violence participation in order to gain or maintain status (Papachristos, 2009; Lauger, 2012). Engaging in violence as a group therefore assists gangs in flourishing, and increases their cohesion. Furthermore, gangs will unite and retaliate against a rival group, which assists in maintaining this gang cohesion (Klein, 1995). Research therefore reveals that violence is justified from the gang members' perspective, and that gangs will collectively participate in violent behavior as a method for retaliation and protection against rival gang members.

There is also a complex relationship between race and violence, which has been addressed in various ways. Violence among racial groups varies due to the subcultural norms and values of that group (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967). Research has shown that violent behavior varies depending on the racial composition of peer groups (Carson & Esbensen, 2014).

Additionally, different types of racial violence may occur such as structural violence (Iadicola & Shupe, 1998), which suggests that when racial violence happens there is a specific goal in mind connected to the treatment of a specific racial group. An example of structural violence is lynching, which was a socialization process in which whites responded against African Americans (Oliver, 2001). This further suggests that the culture an individual grows up in may justify racial violence from a young age. Violent acts that occur due to race issues are justified by the perception that it will benefit their specific racial group. Thus, racial violence results from both structural and interpersonal motivations experienced by racial groups.

Research has also been conducted on specific racial groups. For example, Hannerz (1969) argues that violence is a way for black males to be masculine when they do not have more conventional options. The dynamics and characteristics of violence in addition to the subculture that develops will therefore potentially vary by different racial group experiences. Furthermore, scholarship shows that when the staff and inmates in prisons are more heterogeneous there is less violence (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2009). This suggests that racial groups will feel less isolated with a more racially diverse staff and inmates, which will result in less racial violence. Lastly, studies have found gangs to be racialized within prisons and other institutions (Berg and DeLisi, 2006; Ralph and Marquart, 1992), but even though gangs may be organized by race, factors like immigration status, and region are also important (Tramell, 2012). Thus, there is an overlap and distinction between race and gang that needs to be better understood.

### **Summary, Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Studies have shown that gang members are more likely to be victimized compared to non-gang youth (Fox, Lane, and Akers, 2013), and that this is mediated by their lifestyles and routine activities (Taylor, Freng, Esbensen, and Peterson, 2008). Additionally, research has

revealed that violence becomes part of a gang member's identity and they perceive their actions as justified on behalf of the gang (Stretesky and Pogrebin, 2007; Lauger, 2012). Moreover, subcultural norms and values among different racial groups will have an influence on violent behavior (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967). There are also different types of racial violence such as structural violence (Iadicola & Shupe, 1998). Therefore race motivated violence is rationalized by perceiving the act as benefiting one's own racial group. Thus, whether the violent incident is mutually agreed upon or is more one-sided may vary when comparing gang and race motivated violent incidents.

Collective violence is one of the few activities that involves a majority of gang members (Decker, 1996), and is a way for the gang to show solidarity (Papchristos, 2009). Additionally, the correctional setting brings together youth from a variety of racial groups and forces them to interact. Although studies have found gangs to be racialized within prisons and institutions (Berg and DeLisi, 2006; Ralph and Marquart, 1992), there is an overlap between race and gang membership that is not yet clearly understood. In the community assaults are more likely to occur within racial groups than across with some variation depending on whether participants are Latino or black (Hipp, Tita, & Boggess, 2009). Additionally, Tramell (2012) found that participants in her study would describe violent incidents as racial where they would divide into specific racial groups, but there were cases where group defense meant gang, and not race. Therefore, it is likely that the number of participants and the number of racial groups involved in a violent incident will vary when comparing gang related and race related violent incidents.

Scholarship has addressed the relationship between gangs and violence and between race and violence focusing on individual characteristics and the likelihood of violence involvement. This includes work addressing gang and race violence on the street as well as

among incarcerated offenders. Studies have also examined how gangs and gang youth perceive and utilize violence both collectively and individually. Scholarship is limited though on how gang and race motivated violence is perceived and experienced among youth in correctional facilities. Therefore, this chapter will fill this gap by utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the violent incident experiences of incarcerated youth. This will be accomplished by addressing the following research questions and proposed hypotheses based on literature reviewed above and in chapter one:

### Hypotheses

1. Violent incident characteristics will vary when comparing gang and race motivated incidents.
  - a. Race motivated incidents will involve more people than gang motivated incidents.
  - b. Race motivated incidents will involve more racial groups than gang motivated incidents.
  - c. Gang motivated incidents are more likely than race motivated incidents to be considered a mutual combat.
  - d. Race motivated incidents are more likely than gang motivated incidents to be considered one-sided.
2. What differentiates incidents that are gang motivated and incidents that are race motivated?
  - a. How does a youth identify a violent incident as gang motivated? What are the events that youth perceive prior to and during a violent incident that is gang motivated, and how do these differ from race motivated violent incidents?

- b. How does a youth identify a violent incident as race motivated? What are the events that youth perceive prior to and during a violent incident that is race motivated, and how do these differ from gang motivated violent incidents?

### **Youth Violent Incident Experiences: Quantitative**

The current analysis aims to address how incarcerated youth perceive violent incidents, and how violent behavior is shaped by the institutional setting. This is accomplished by analyzing 404 violent incidents described by 264 youth participants.

Due to the fact that violent behavior is prominent among incarcerated offenders these analyses address the relationship between specific violent incident characteristics and whether it is gang or race related. The violent incidents are analyzed to compare characteristics associated with gang related incidents and characteristics associated with race related incidents. By better understanding and addressing the incident characteristics associated with whether an incident is gang or race motivated opportunities for violence can be reduced in the future. Furthermore, these analyses will contribute to an improved comprehension of the similarities and differences between gang motivated violence, and race motivated violence.

#### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable for this analysis is the motivational issue. This is a self-reported measure that includes the categories “gang related,” and “race related” where gang is 1 and race is 0. This variable comes from the violent incident descriptions (N = 404), which were obtained by asking youth (n=264) to describe the three most recent violent incidents in which they have been involved and the worst incidents in which they participated. The youth were asked “Was it about race/ethnicity” and “Was it about a gang issue?” and each incident was described in detail with the use of a VIF. These analyses will help to determine what situational characteristics are



associated with gang related incidents and what situational characteristics are associated with race related incidents.

### *Independent Variables*

These analyses explore the relationship between the motivational issue and situational characteristics. Independent variables were selected based on past research due to their potential association with specific motivational issues. Three independent variables are included in these analyses in separate models in order to better understand the association with whether an incident is gang or race motivated.

Whether the violent incident is mutually agreed upon or is more one-sided may vary when comparing gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents. Thus, participant dynamic is included as an independent variable due to its potential to vary with the specific motivational issue of a violent incident. The participant dynamic is reflected in a set of dummy variables, which include mutual combat, one-sided<sup>17</sup>, and riot.<sup>18</sup> An incident is identified as one of these 3 distinct types. This is determined by the interviewer from the sequence of events that the youth describe for each incident in which they participated.

The correctional setting brings together a variety of gangs and racial groups into a controlled and closed environment. Thus, the total number of individuals involved in a violent incident is included as an independent variable due to its potential to vary with the specific motivational issue of the violent incident. The total number of youth involved in an incident is based on self-reported data. It is calculated by summing the reported total amount of individuals that were participating on the youth's side and on the opposing side.

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<sup>17</sup> The variable one-sided is a combination of incidents that are considered offending only or victimization only.

<sup>18</sup> Riot is included in the analyses to determine whether gang or race motivated incidents are more likely to involve the participation of youth nearby in the facility. A youth may rationalize their involvement in violence just because it involved other members of a group with which they identify.

The number of racial groups involved in a violent incident may also vary with the motivational issue. The total number of racial groups involved is based on youth self-reports and is determined by summing the number of racial groups reported being involved in a violent incident.

### *Control Variables*

Control variables are included in the analyses to ensure that the results are non-spurious. The seriousness of the violent incident is measured using youth reported violent incident characteristics. Youth were asked if a weapon was involved, and if anyone needed medical attention. These two items were combined to make a scale ranging from low physical seriousness to high physical seriousness. The scale used in the analysis ranges from 1 to 3 with a score of 1 meaning that no weapon was involved, and a score of 3 meaning that a weapon was involved and medical attention was needed. A scale of institutional seriousness was also created based on the severity of punishment the youth reported receiving for participating in the violent incident.

Another control variable is whether or not the incident is one of the worst incidents in which the youth has participated. This variable is included due to the potential for distinct differences in motivating issue between the worst incidents and non-worst most recent violent incidents in which the youth has participated. This was accomplished with a dichotomous variable that classifies the incident as either a “worst” incident or not. The number of youth on the respondent’s side, as well as the number of opposing Latinos, opposing blacks, and opposing other racial groups are included as controls due to the potential for the number and groups of youth to be associated with the dependent variable.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, there is a control variable identifying whether or not the violent incident involved a prior conflict. A set of dummy

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<sup>19</sup> These variables are different than the dependent variables that address total amount of individuals and racial groups involved; they measure the amount of individuals in a single opposing racial group that were involved in the violent incident.

variables reflecting the location of violent incident are also included as control variables in the analyses. The dummy variables include whether the incident occurred in the day room, dormitory, recreation area, school, or other area in the facility with the day room serving as the reference group.

Precautionary measures were taken to ensure that there were no multicollinearity issues with the independent and control variables. None of the variables had correlational issues. Additionally the variance inflation factor was determined, which revealed all variables to have factors below 10. The results of these analyses reveal that the independent and control variables can be used successfully in multivariate analyses to obtain accurate results.

#### *Analytic Approach: Multinomial Logistic Regression*

Due to the categorical dependent variable reflecting whether the incident is gang motivated, race motivated, or motivated by other personal issues this chapter utilizes multinomial logistic regression as its primary quantitative analytic approach.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, in order to account for the fact that the violent incidents are not independent observations but are nested within a random sample of youth, the analyses are clustered by individual youth. Lastly, the analyses for this project focus on the situational level therefore the models only include violent incident characteristics.

#### **Youth Violent Incident Experiences: Qualitative**

Qualitative analyses were conducted on items asking youth to describe the events that occurred including prior events, and on a couple of items addressing whether the incident was gang or race related (i.e. items 1, 2, 8, and 10 of the VIF's, see Appendix A). If the youth confirmed that the incident was gang or race related a follow up question asks how they know.

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<sup>20</sup> This chapter shows the results of the multinomial logistic regression models that directly compare gang and race motivated violent incidents. The results that compare gang and race incidents to incidents motivated by other personal issues are addressed in chapter 5.

These data will therefore enable a comparison between what distinguishes gang related incidents and race related incidents from the incarcerated youth perspective.

For this analysis open coding, and memo writing are utilized. More specifically, a combination of both theoretically derived thematic coding and data driven coding are used. After the coding process prominent codes and themes were addressed and analyzed, and throughout the process detailed memos were written to better understand how widespread and prevalent these themes were throughout the incidents. The perceptions of these violent incident experiences address how youth distinguish between gang related violence and race related violence and reveal a better understanding of how violence is perceived by youth in a correctional setting.

The mix of qualitative and quantitative methods allows for a unique opportunity to analyze youth correctional violence. Through quantitative analyses I determine how situational characteristics vary when comparing gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents. The qualitative analyses provide a deeper understanding of the context and dynamics in which these violent incidents occur.

### **Variations in Situational Characteristics of Gang and Race Related Violent Incidents**

This chapter begins by discussing the characteristics that youth identified when an incident was gang related and when an incident was race related. It will then transition into a discussion of the descriptive statistics and bivariate associations comparing gang and race related violent incidents. This is followed by an integration of methods in which significant multivariate results are addressed and qualitative findings are discussed in relation to the results. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the violent incidents that the youth identified as both gang and race motivated. These analyses will allow for a more complete understanding of the similarities



Martin: *To us, the bulldogs are dropouts.*

Tobias: *Rival gang members.*

These quotes clearly show that the youth knew the incident was gang related because of a gang dislike or rivalry, but more specifically it also reveals that it is all youth need to know to understand that they are participating in gang related violence. It's as simple as having a dislike between two different groups, perceiving the other group negatively, or just identifying an incident as gang related. The two gangs involved have a strong rivalry and/or dislike between the two groups, which tends to result in violence.

Similarly, racial animosity is seen when a youth identifies an incident as race related due to offensive acts that are directed at a specific racial group or just because a youth is racist:

Patrick: *Racist joke against blacks.*

Levi: *Because he's racist.*

Leon: *Always makes comments about black people.*

Fernando: *It was a black-brown thing. I didn't have anything personal.*

This reveals a clear racial division among youth. These quotes show that race violence is identified by youth due to some form of racial animosity which is in part due to the mindset or intent of the youth. This may sound obvious, but this animosity is identified as separate from gang animosity. These quotes reveal that racism exists within the facility and that there are actions youth understand as having racial intent. One of the most fascinating things about the last quote is that the youth says it's not personal. According to this youth, having racial animosity among incarcerated youth is nothing personal; it's just how it is. This is not to say that the youth in any way did anything overtly racist, it is just that their motivation or intent was racist, and the

youth involved understand that this is the case. This connects to other incidents where youth said that they knew an incident was racist because they “just knew,” or it “just was.”

Analysis of the responses on how youth knew an incident was race-related revealed some distinct dynamics. Frequently the youth identified a racial slur said by another youth, which signified that the violent incident was indeed about a race issue:

*Benjamin: The other guy said “Nigger.” Benjamin said the other guy was playing but it felt disrespectful.*

*Tomas: Called him out by racial name.*

*Jason: Majority of cracking ears is about race because all Latinos are Surenos (implying they are racist). The guy said “fuck niggers.”*

The incidents described are distinctly race related in that they are insulting a racial group directly. These quotes reveal how overtly racist the incarcerated youth culture can be, and how much one group can dislike another based on their race and thus know an incident is motivated by race issues. The third quote also shows that there is indeed an overlap between gang and race issues, and that youth are able to distinguish between the two.

Race related violent incidents will also occur due to a past race issue, similar to how gang related violent incidents will occur due to some history the youth had with each other. This past race issue could be a onetime thing where the issue just needs to be resolved with violence, or it could be an ongoing problem between youth:

*Kevin: Had previous racial animosity.*

*Derrick: Was about revenge, but also Southerners feeling institution was theirs.*

*John: I used to gang bang, my hood used to be real racial towards Hispanics.*

Youth are able to identify an incident as race motivated when the violent incident is related to past race issues. In addition to having a past race issue that needed to be resolved the second two quotes identify this overlap between when it is a gang issue and when it is a race issue by mentioning gangs and gang practices. The youth may represent a specific gang and act in conjunction with them to target a specific racial group, which would make the incident race motivated since it is not necessarily gang on gang violence or due to internal gang issues. Gangs will therefore have gang rivals, but will also have a unified dislike for entire racial groups. This overlap between gang and race issues will be discussed later in the chapter when incidents that youth identify as both gang and race related are addressed.

Youth may identify an incident as gang related due to gang business or issues. There were various times where the reason the youth knew the incident was gang related is because it was about a gang issue or it was gang business:

Samuel: *It was all a gang issue.*

Manuel: *No one would hit Manuel out of nowhere. At the time, he was a rep of gang.*

Liam: *In Liam's associate's eyes, other wasn't meeting criteria.*

Vincent: *Vincent not a blood, other tried to push institution on him.*

The comments range from just mentioning it was a gang issue to describing the specific problem at hand. Sometimes there is an assumption that occurs due to the status the youth has as a gang rep; if they are attacked it must be due to a gang issue or some sort of gang business. These quotes also reveal that there is violence that occurs due to issues internal to the gang, which is how youth are able to identify it as gang related. For example, a youth might not be meeting the necessary qualifications for being a gang member, and therefore their affiliated gang is motivated to punish them violently for it. Lastly, violence may occur when a youth refuses to join an



institutional gang which is being pushed on them suggesting that there are times when gangs try to directly coerce youth into joining through violence.

Another way gang issues are observed is through the breaking of a specific gang rule or guideline. This is similar to gang rivalry/dislike except that the youth mention a specific rule being broken between rival groups:

Adrian: *There was an earcracker.*

Lucas: *I had said 'chapsticks'<sup>21</sup> so that meant I had to fight a dude. Then I was supposed to fight another and then 17 jumped me.*

In these examples the youth's behaviors signified that a gang rule or guideline had been broken by a rival gang member, and therefore the youth identified the incident as gang motivated.

Distinguishing features for gang related incidents took other forms in addition to the clear breaking of rules and rivalries. There were times when youth would respond that they knew an incident was gang related due to their history with the other party. This is shown in the quotes below:

David: *Just from our history.*

Felix: *Know from streets.*

Donald: *They were enemies from the street.*

These quotes clearly identify that gang related violence is distinguished by the history that the youth have together. Even more specifically, the latter two quotes reveal that this history may be related to their interactions on the street. Thus, youth are able to identify a violent incident as gang related due to events that took place prior to incarceration.

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<sup>21</sup> A term used by youth to insult rival gang members.

A form of racial organization also exists within these facilities. The youth would identify an incident as race related because there were high-powered youth that represented specific racial groups or the incident was about racial politics:

Marcus: *High-powered guys.*

Anthony: *Homeboy was "high power" from TS and blacks were "on him."*

Vicente: *Mostly about politics.*

These quotes show that among different racial groups certain youth are identified as being high-powered, and because of this they tend to be the target of racial animosity by youth of other racial groups. In the third quote the youth does not expand beyond that it's just politics, which suggests that violence due to racial politics is a common occurrence in DJJ. These quotes overall allude to certain youth handling the politics for a specific racial group, and some form of organizational structure that exists for racial groups in the youth correctional setting that is separate from the organization of gangs. Thus, youth are able to identify when an incident is race related when it involves the racial organization and politics that exist in the youth correctional setting.

It is important to address a theme that seems to transcend all types of incidents whether or not they are gang related or race related. This theme is disrespect. It is important to show that although disrespect is prominent among institutional violence, when it is used to identify an incident as gang related it means that a youth did something to disrespect a specific gang or individual gang member. Disrespect is used by youth in race related incidents to identify when an incident is related to racial disrespect:

Nicholas: *Disrespecting hood.*

Gregory: *Called the Southerners bitches.*

Todd: *Was insulting Todd's gang.*

Martin: *It was about the dirty look so we just decided to kick it off.*

Dylan: *Gang disrespect.*

Damian: *A few of us knew GL from other institution, had disrespected race and organization.*

Esteban: *Disrespected Esteban's race by the way he was, his personality, his actions.*

Disrespect is an important and meaningful term among incarcerated youth. In these examples disrespect can mean a variety of things, but it seems to usually be conveyed as some form of insult towards the gang or racial group that results in violence. This insult can be disrespecting the youth's hood, something as simple as a dirty look or could come in the form of a direct verbal insult towards a gang or disrespecting a specific racial group. Overall, disrespect is an influential part of the youth correctional culture, and has an impact on gang related and race related violent incident involvement among incarcerated youth. The youth are able to differentiate between types of disrespect in order to identify an incident as gang or race related. This reveals how disrespect is used as a justification for violence against specific groups whether the target is a gang, gang member, member of a specific racial group or an entire racial group. Disrespect is therefore a cultural construct that motivates incarcerated youth to engage in violent behavior.

Identifying an incident as gang related tended to vary depending on the context and circumstances. Sometimes the reason a youth knew an incident was gang related was as simple as just seeing other affiliates from their gang or an opposing gang participating in the violent incident so they decided to provide their assistance. This is clearly shown by the quotes below:

Carl: *Saw other affiliates.*

Elias: *Cause he gang bangs and I gang bang.*

The main point here is that according to the reporting youth they perceived the incident as gang related simply due to other affiliates participating, or because they were fighting with a rival gang and that was it. Identifying violence as gang related is therefore sometimes just an observation of who is participating, which serves as motivation for other youth to participate. Similarly, there were also race related incidents that youth identified because of the number of a specific racial group involved in the situation. This further alludes to the idea of racial tension in the facility, and understanding an incident is race related because of the specific racial groups and number of youth that are involved:

Juan: *More Hispanics.*

Michael: *One on one. The blacks were in groups, fighting in threes.*

Chase: *Black and Mexican never do a riot about gang-banging. If enemies fight one-on-one, if someone doesn't get involved, they will get green-lighted.*

These quotes continue to show the racial intentions that youth assume specific groups possess. They also reveal the guidelines these groups abide by when engaging in violence with one another. This helps to convey how youth are able to confidently assume or identify when an incident is about race issues.

These analyses reveal that although there are many similarities between gang and race related violent incidents youth are able to distinguish between when an incident is motivated by one or the other. The characteristics youth identify to distinguish between gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents also tend to be similar, such as when the incident is related to disrespect, but youth are able to identify different types of disrespect. Thus, even though these incidents tend to have many similarities youth are still able to distinguish between them. In order

to better understand the similarities and differences between gang and race motivated violent incidents quantitative and qualitative analyses of gang and race related incidents are conducted.

**Mixed Methods Comparison of Gang and Race Related Violent Incidents**

The results of the descriptive and bivariate analyses in Table 6 reveal important statistically significant differences between gang and race motivated violent incidents.

**Table 6: Variable Descriptives of Gang and Race Incidents (N = 404)**

	<b><u>Gang Related Incidents</u></b> <b><u>% (n = 287)</u></b>	<b><u>Race Related Incidents</u></b> <b><u>% (n = 117)</u></b>	<b><u>Total %</u></b>
<b><u>Total Participants</u></b> <b><u>(n = 396)**</u></b>	(n = 280)	(n = 116)	
2	57.9	23.3	47.7
3 to 5	12.5	13.8	12.9
6 to 10	10.7	15.5	12.1
11 to 20	9.6	12.1	10.4
greater than 20	9.3	35.3	16.9
<b><u>Number of Racial Groups</u></b> <b><u>(n = 389)**</u></b>	(n = 273)	(n = 116)	
1 Group	60.4	6.9	44.5
2 Groups	38.5	90.5	54
3 Groups	1.1	2.6	1.5
<b><u>Participant Dynamic</u></b> <b><u>(n = 366)**</u></b>	(n = 257)	(n = 109)	
Mutual Combat	56.8	26.6	47.8
One-Sided	19.1	19.3	19.1
Riot	24.1	54.1	33.1

\*\* p < .01

Table 6 displays a statistically significant association between the total amount of youth participating in a violent incident and whether the incident is gang or race related. About 35% of

race related incidents involve greater than 20 people, but only about 9% of gang related incidents. Additionally, over half of gang related incidents involve two participants while only about 23% of race related incidents do. There is also a statistically significant association between whether the incident is gang or race related and total number of racial groups involved. About 60% of gang related incidents involved only one racial group, and about 90% of race related incidents involved two racial groups.<sup>22</sup> Very few gang or race related incidents involved 3 or more racial groups. Lastly, there is a statistically significant association between the participant dynamic of the violent incident and whether it is gang or race related. Over half the incidents that are gang related are considered a mutual combat compared with only about 26% of race related incidents. Furthermore, over half of the incidents that are race related are considered a riot but only about 24% of gang related incidents are. These results reveal that further analyses should be conducted to better understand the differences in situational characteristics and dynamics between gang related violent incidents and race related violent incidents.

Due to various similarities and differences between gang and race motivated violent incidents further analyses are conducted for an improved understanding of these violent incidents. This is accomplished by comparing gang and race motivated violent incidents through integrated multivariate and qualitative analyses. The quantitative analyses are only able to provide a partial explanation for the differences between gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents. In order to better understand the context in which gang and race motivated violence occurs these violent incidents are analyzed qualitatively as well. The use of qualitative methods will assist in expanding and better comprehending the quantitative findings.

Additionally, the qualitative analyses will contribute to an improved comprehension of how

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<sup>22</sup> A small percentage of race related violence only involve one race, which is likely due to racial politics, which will be discussed in the qualitative analyses when violence occurs within the group. Ethnicity is also captured in this category, so it is possible that different ethnic groups are engaging in violence.

complex gang and race issues are in a correctional setting and why gang and race related incidents tend to have many similarities and only a few differences between them.

Participants , Racial Groups and Group Dislike

The relative risk ratios for the first two models of the Multinomial Logistic Regression Analyses that directly compare gang and race motivated violent incidents are displayed in tables 7 and 8 with standard errors shown in parentheses. The model in Table 1 includes total participants, and the model in Table 2 incorporates total racial groups. The results of Table 7

**Table 7: Multinomial Logistic Regression Analyses Results Comparing Total Participants (n=468)**

<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>Gang (1) vs. Race (0)</u>	<u>Gang (1) vs. Other Personal Issue (0)</u>
Total Participants	.965* (.016)	1.04 (.035)
Physical Seriousness	.656 (.197)	.90005 (.198)
Institutional Punishment	.964 (.163)	1.12 (.129)
Dormitory	1.88 (1.29)	.944 (.380)
Recreation Area	1.17 (.615)	1.48 (.555)
School	1.06 (.38)	2.49** (.780)
Other Area	1.16 (.562)	2.40** (.818)
Prior Issue	1.24 (.407)	1.82** (.425)
Worst Incident	.761 (.238)	1.68* (.400)
Opposing Latinos	1.05 (.042)	1.05 (.069)
Opposing Blacks	.828* (.082)	.832† (.090)
<u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	4.22 (4.27)	.543 (.274)

\*\*\* p < .001; \*\* p < .01; \* p < .05 ; † p < .10

The results of Table 7 support the first hypothesis. Gang motivated incidents are significantly likely to have fewer participants than race motivated violent incidents. Every unit increase in participants decreases the odds of the incident being motivated by gang issues by 3.5%.

Additionally, the results reveal that the association between number of opposing blacks and whether the incident is gang or race related is significant and negative. Thus, gang related incidents are significantly less likely to involve more opposing black youth.

**Table 8: Multinomial Logistic Regression Analyses Results Comparing Total Racial Groups (n=471)**

<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>Gang (1) vs. Race (0)</u>	<u>Gang (1) vs. Other Personal Issue (0)</u>
Total Racial Groups	.084*** (.035)	.274*** (.068)
Physical Seriousness	.725 (.235)	1.13 (.247)
Institutional Punishment	.853 (.157)	1.03 (.123)
Dormitory	2.01 (1.74)	1.37 (.626)
Recreation Area	.96 (.524)	1.57 (.622)
School	1.18 (.455)	2.79** (.866)
Other Area	1.1 (.562)	2.55** (.926)
Prior Issue	1.01 (.338)	1.77* (.424)
Worst Incident	.756 (.243)	1.87* (.468)
Opposing Latinos	1.05 (.042)	1.14** (.055)
Opposing Blacks	.869† (.071)	1.03 (.091)
<u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	8.75 (6.49)	.818 (.204)

\*\*\* p < .001; \*\* p < .01; \* p < .05 ; † p < .10

The results in Table 8 show that gang related incidents are significantly likely to involve fewer total racial groups which supports the second hypothesis. Every unit increase in number of racial groups decreases the odds of the incident being motivated by gang issues by 91.6%. Additionally, whether an incident is gang or race motivated and its association with number of opposing black youth is only of marginal significance in model 2. This suggests that number of racial groups involved in a violent incident accounts for part of this association.

When doing a direct comparison of gang and race related incidents the themes that were identified reveal some very distinct similarities with subtle differences between the incident types. These analyses aid in understanding why gang and race motivated violent incidents significantly differ in number of participants and racial groups. Although the themes were contextually different, connections can be made across them such as between gang dislike/rivalry and race dislike/intent, which were both very common. This is where the youth described fighting because of a gang dislike or rivalry, or due to the dislike of a specific racial group. Gang dislike/rivalry can be seen in the following incident descriptions:



*Adrian: It was a 'kick-off'. Southerners against the Northerners. We just don't get along with the Northerners. A Northerner rushed me while I was watching TV. After that we started a riot in the yard a couple of weeks later.*

*Duncan: He was an enemy from another hood/county - he saw him and rushed him and threw first.*

*Vicente: I-on-I big enemy rival. He just got there, so we had to fight.*

*Valentino: Yard, kicking it. Another fight going on. Rival gang member told me to "get up." We fought, both got sprayed.*

*Eric: I wasn't racial, but he went racial. Told all his homies he wanted to get blacks and we just started fighting.*

*Leo: Leo was racially motivated. Decided he had no love for blacks, they got a big mouth. Levi was in school area and seen him and called him out. He didn't want to [fight]. Levie went over and started hitting him, other tried to defend self, staff broke it up.*

*Joshua: Guy came, didn't like whites or blacks, started talking shit. Ran at me, hit me, I hit him and he fell to the floor, started kicking him.*

These examples reveal how violence can occur specifically because of a group dislike or rivalry whether it's an entire racial group or a gang. In these descriptions youth distinguish between race and gang dislike suggesting that these differences are necessary to understand. A youth has an automatic dislike for a specific gang depending on their own gang affiliation. The institutional setting also forces gang rivals such as Northerners and Southerners to interact on a regular basis which motivates youth to engage in violence within the institution during regular day to day activities. Since these two gangs consist of primarily Latino youth<sup>23</sup> this also assists in explaining why gang motivated incidents are more likely than race motivated incidents to involve only one racial group.

There are also dynamics or politics that occur within and between groups which influence violence. These are issues related to membership, affiliation and organizational characteristics

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<sup>23</sup> Youth identify the ethnicity Latino as a racial group, so that is how it will be referred to in this analysis.

such as behavioral expectations, membership and leadership. These issues happen both internally and externally for gangs and racial groups. The following quotes reveal some of the dynamics that may occur among youth correctional gangs:

*Tobias: Two rival gang members, blacks, Southerners, Bulldogs, Bays all jumped in against Northerners (his side). Trying to integrate us- at the time, we were pushing the issue.*

*Cameron: Couple of my homies were cool with the Northerners. You can't let your homie go like that. [stood up for Northerners against Southerners].*

Gang violence therefore may involve alliances between rivals in order to attack another mutual enemy. Youth may align themselves with others they generally dislike in order to attack another group. This is something that needs to be agreed upon by the gang. As shown in the second quote if a single gang member cooperates with a rival group that is justification for a fellow gang member to respond violently. A similar phenomenon occurs among racial groups:

*Nathan: Asian fool ran with Hispanics, another Asian fool came in and didn't like the Asian with the Hispanics, disrespected Asian with the Hispanics. All going to school, Asian attack the Asian with the Hispanics, Nathan got involved, whole facility in riot.*

This reveals both similarities and differences between gang violence and race violence. Youth may choose to align themselves to a different racial group than the one they may be perceived as by other youth. If a youth were to align themselves with a different racial group though, that would also be justification for a youth of the same racial group or of the race they are aligning with to respond violently. Therefore, alliances or affiliations need to be acknowledged and accepted by the gang or racial group otherwise it may result in issues within and between groups, and potentially violence.

Specific to gangs, if youth have the same gang affiliation within DJJ, but are enemies on the outside they may view that as a rationale for engaging in violence with each other:

*Omar: Playing handball with fellow Southerner and a guy came over and attacked Omar from behind and started hitting him on back of head. This guy was a fellow Southerner but an enemy on the outs.*

Another internal gang issue that may occur is if a member is not fighting he makes the group look weak and therefore needs to be punished:

*Ricky: There was a fight between him and another ward of same group segment (Northerner). Fought because he [other ward] showed signs of weakness that made group look weak and had to be addressed (he wouldn't fight). He told the ward he had to fight.*

*Liam: Liam got done playing basketball, was sweating and pores were open. Rushed somebody of own race, other guy had asked Liam to do it. Other guy seen as a lame, wanted others to see him as doing what he was supposed to, Liam was willing to help, started fighting, staff sprayed shit out of him. Liam's face red and burning, started scabbing and oozing.*

Interestingly, a “weak” member may be motivated to schedule a fight with a friend in order to make themselves look strong to the group and avoid punishment. An additional issue internal to the gang is rejecting youth as affiliates if they are sex offenders:

*Liam: Started in receiving unit. Liam went to mainline, he met everyone was supposed to ride with, then a Northerner came and has a sex offense. Homies didn't want 'em, said was going to kick it off (Make a group disturbance). Liam's Homies told him to watch out, Northerner walks over, one homie started fighting. Once homie was hit when down, kicked off, laced him up (Explained the rules). Liam got knocked off table, got up and started fighting. Staff threw bombs and started spraying.*

A youth who claims a specific gang affiliation may not be accepted into that group due to a past offense, and members may even be motivated to punish them violently for it. This reveals the situational context in which gang violence occurs within gangs and thus frequently within racial groups.

Lastly, it is important to address that there is an organizational structure that exists for both gangs and racial groups specifically in the form of leadership. For example, gang youth reference leaders when they are ordered to complete a violent task:

*Gregory: A Southerner was told by his leader to go on a mission to beat up this youth. The Southerner threatened the youth and the youth got up and "mixed" (punched) him.*

There are also leaders among racial groups that the youth call “reps,” and instead of ordering affiliates around they seem to be responsible for the rapport with other racial groups:

*Hugo: Lined up for breakfast and some guys running erections. I was irritable and guy in front (Mexican) of me had an erection. We had an argument. I cussed him, everyone got quiet. black rep went to Mexican rep but they didn't have a good rapport and they (mexican) wanted the black rep out of the unit. We tried to keep it down, but saw 50 mexicans come up stairs. A guy came up and blindsided black rep that caused me to jump in and we all started fighting.*

These quotes show that there are leaders or representatives for entire gangs and racial groups. For gang related incidents the youth engage in violence because of orders made by their gang leader and for race related incidents if the representatives do not cooperate with one another it may result in violence among the racial groups. The representatives of a specific race therefore assist in determining when racial groups will cooperate, and when they will not and therefore assist in determining when racial violence will likely occur. This assists in explaining why race motivated violent incidents occurs more frequently between racial groups, and not within racial groups compared to gang motivated violent incidents.

#### *Participant Dynamic, Disrespect, Dislike, and Group Dynamics*

The model in Table 9 includes participant dynamic and displays the relative risk ratios from the results of the Multinomial Logistic Regression Analyses with standard errors shown in parentheses. Table 10 includes the full model with total participants, total racial groups, and participant dynamic.

**Table 9: Multinomial Logistic Regression Analyses of Motivational Issues (N= 431)**

<b><u>Independent Variables</u></b>	<b><u>Gang (1) vs. Race (0)</u></b>	<b><u>Gang (1) vs. Other Personal Issues (0)</u></b>
Physical Seriousness	.7 (.213)	.979 (.228)
Institutional Punishment	.987 (.174)	1.08 (.130)
One Sided (vs. Mutual Combat)	.323** (.131)	.656 (.196)
Riot (vs. Mutual Combat)	.322* (.165)	5.54*** (2.65)
Dormitory (vs. Day Room)	1.54 (1.12)	1.13 (.483)
Recreation Area (vs. Day Room)	1.13 (.607)	1.92† (.738)
School (vs. Day Room)	.878 (.329)	2.96** (.984)
Other Area (vs. Day Room)	.839 (.415)	2.79** (1.02)
Prior Issue	1.17 (.399)	1.69* (.410)
Worst Incident	.822 (.273)	1.75* (.468)
Opposing Latinos	1.04 (.048)	.996 (.033)
Opposing Blacks	.802* (.074)	.836† (.079)
<u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	2.5 (1.76)	.569* (.133)

\*\*\* p < .001; \*\* p < .01; \* p < .05 ; † p < .10

The results in Table 9 support the third and fourth hypotheses. There is a statistically significant and negative association between incidents being gang related or race related when comparing whether an incident is considered one-sided or a mutual combat. More specifically, incidents motivated by gang issues are 67.7% less likely to be considered one-sided compared to race related incidents. Additional results reveal that it is less probable for gang motivated incidents to be considered a riot, and they are also significantly less likely to involve more opposing black youth than race motivated incidents. Thematic findings related to disrespect, dislike, and group dynamics aide in explaining these significant differences in participant dynamic between gang and race motivated violent incidents.

Disrespect in this context can be described as an act committed by at least one youth that offended at least one other youth's gang and/or race, and resulted in violent retaliation. As discussed in chapter 2 violence seems to be a readily available avenue a youth can take after experiencing disrespect from another youth whether it's disrespect towards their gang, or race.

More specifically, as revealed in the quotes below, intentional disrespect towards gangs can occur in various forms. One of the most common forms reported by youth was verbal disrespect:

*Santiago: "Disrespect." Santiago disrespected gang. He said a word, "buster," that apparently disrespected Northerners. Santiago didn't mean to. They (Northerners) approached him and he apologized. They (Northerners) didn't want to let it go, "it escalated," 4 hours between time they approached Santiago and they fought.*

*Alfonso: Another organization disrespected mine. Guy comes into dayroom, say "F", I got up & fought.*

*Franco: One of my homies got up and dissed a black. 30-40 people jumped in. Staff sprayed us.*

Similarly, verbal disrespect also occurs frequently against racial groups:

*David: I was programming with a black in BTP. He thought I called him an 'n-word' and then a month and a half later he called me out.*

*Kenny: In visiting area of facility, several attacked a group of African Americans. One of us disrespected the black race, attacked the black guy, he hit the ground, several of us stomped him. Other African Americans got involved; staff came and cuffed us.*

Depending on the verbal disrespect and whether it was towards a specific gang or entire racial group determined who was motivated to participate in violence against the suitable target engaging in the disrespectful behavior. Youth may dislike and disrespect not just a gang, but an entire racial group, which may result in the serious victimization of one youth just because of their race.

Another form of disrespect that occurs is visual through symbols, which was generally described as gang disrespect:

*Nestor: Someone came to lodge with a tattoo disrespecting Southerners and one anti-Mexican. He came out of room and then a bunch of Southerners jumped him. Then blacks jumped in.*

Alexander: *Was seated, Northerner approached, had "eye cracker"<sup>24</sup> (had N-crossed out on arm). Northerners challenged, they arranged to fight walking to dinner. Some other Northerner who was not involved in original arrangement attacked.*

Crossed out letters written by other youth symbolized a direct form of disrespect towards a specific gang, and the youth needed to be punished violently. It was considered disrespectful to use a gang symbol unless the youth is a part of that gang. Disrespect is a cultural construct that is dual-purpose. When an individual commits an act of disrespect it motivates others to retaliate violently because the individual has become a suitable target based on their disrespectful behavior. The youth is motivated to mutually engage in violent activity with another youth to maintain or gain status. This may occur in both gang and race motivated incidents, but in accordance with the quantitative findings a mutual combat is much more likely to occur for gang related incidents. The qualitative analyses reveal that the significant difference in participant dynamic exists because gang motivated violence tends to occur due to a mutual rivalry or dislike between groups.

Race motivated violence on the other hand tends to vary more depending on the specific context and circumstances of the situation, and therefore less likely to be considered mutual in comparison to gang motivated violence.<sup>25</sup> Racial dislike may seem automatic based on the youth's identified racial group, but it may be more circumstantial depending on the youth's upbringing and experience:

Richie: *Dayroom, programming. Felt like fighting so fought black (because he's black). Got sprayed, slammed to floor, cuffed.*

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<sup>24</sup> Although it is difficult to determine from the quote above what an "earcracker" is, from the interviews it was learned that this was when a gang youth verbally insults another gang youth. Thus, when "earcracking" does occur the youth identifies the incident as being gang related. This is similar to "eyecracking," which is when a gang youth visually insults another gang youth.

<sup>25</sup> It is possible that gang violence is really prominent in the community, and gang rules are therefore common knowledge among incarcerated youth whereas youth might not be exposed to a lot of race violence until they are incarcerated. This would explain why gang violence is more likely to be considered a mutual combat, but this needs to be pursued further in future research.

Omar: *I was raised racist. I used to say the N word in Spanish and made fun of the Crip walk and some black guy at facility rushed Omar. Then staff was extremely rough when they restrained.*

Bruno: *Racial tension, segregated in a room by myself. My friends told me about being "cut" by Hispanics. Next day, smacked the Hispanic with a book, and he stabbed my friend with a pencil, later I rushed a Hispanic with heart problems and he had to go to the hospital. Fought the other Hispanics who came to help him.*

The institutional setting is unique in that it brings together youth from different parts of the state, which creates a place of high tension and dislike among racial groups that motivates youth to engage in violence. Although tension might exist on the streets, these quotes reveal that when youth are secured in close quarters together it assists in perpetuating or increasing this racial tension. These examples reveal how violence can occur specifically because of a group dislike or rivalry whether it's an entire racial group or a gang. These analyses also show how the context of racial violence is more likely to result in one sided violent incidents compared to the context of gang violence, which is more likely to result in mutual combat.

Another phenomenon that occurs frequently is participating in violence to assist a friend or affiliate. This was coded as gang loyalty or race loyalty depending on the incident. In many of the narratives the youth described that they observed a fellow gang member, fighting with another youth of a different gang and therefore joined in:

Leonardo: *Group disturbance. After school walking back through hall, 3 homies walking and had discussion with Southerners, talked shit. Southerners hit homies, saw homie was being jumped, helped him (hit other youth).*

Juan: *Saw a homie start getting down, so I hopped in. Got sprayed, got down, everybody kicked off. Got back up in handcuffs and fought more, got tackled again.*

Youth also joined in when they saw another youth of the same race fighting:

Darrell: *No clue how it started. Class change after first period. One of my race, I'd call a homie, got attacked. He was getting jumped so everyone of my race jumped in. It caused a riot.*



The youth have an institutional expectation where no matter the reason for their ally being involved in violence, they are motivated and obligated to join in and assist them in any way possible. The quotes also reveal that this is actually the cognitive frame that contributes to the escalation of one on one fights resulting in riots. This highlights a similarity in participant dynamic between gang and race motivated violent incidents when riots occur. Youth will hear fights occurring from across the room or facility and are motivated to hurry over to wherever the fight is located to get involved. This occurs whether the incident is gang or race related, the youth are able to distinguish between the two even if the fight has already begun, and act accordingly. This highlights why the statistical analysis did not find a significant difference in whether or not gang or race motivated violent incidents were considered riots. There is a similar mindset of loyalty towards a gang or racial group in which one on one fights escalate into riots.

**Table 10: Multinomial Logistic Regression Full Model Analyses of Motivational Issues (N= 407)**

<b><u>Independent Variables</u></b>	<b><u>Gang (1) vs. Race (0)</u></b>	<b><u>Gang (1) vs. Other Personal Issues (0)</u></b>
Total Participants	.983 (.018)	.981 (.023)
Total Racial Groups	.097*** (.042)	.248*** (.065)
One Sided (vs. Mutual Combat)	.314* (.44)	.646 (.209)
Riot (vs. Mutual Combat)	.52 (.283)	8.96*** (5.18)
Dormitory (vs. Day Room)	2.69 (2.34)	1.56 (.733)
Recreation Area (vs. Day Room)	1.30 (.727)	2.12† (.858)
School (vs. Day Room)	1.04 (.414)	3.17** (1.08)
Other Area (vs. Day Room)	1.02 (.558)	3.05** (1.21)
Physical Seriousness	.73 (.24)	1.01 (.246)
Institutional Punishment	.813 (.153)	.980 (.131)
Prior Issue	1.21 (.434)	1.65† (.430)
Worst Incident	.974 (.351)	1.96* (.564)
Opposing Latinos	1.07 (.051)	1.03 (.044)
Opposing Blacks	.936 (.068)	.949 (.077)
<u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	<u>8.24* (8.07)</u>	<u>.724* (.104)</u>

\*\*\* p < .001; \*\* p < .01; \* p < .05 ; † p < .10

When looking at the full model in Table 10, the total number of participants is no longer significant, and does not support the first hypothesis. This is likely due to the inclusion of the total number of racial groups or participant dynamic. There is a significant and negative association with total number of racial groups. Every unit increase in number of racial groups decreases the odds of the incident being motivated by gang issues by 90.6%. Race motivated incidents are therefore significantly likely to involve more racial groups, which supports the second hypothesis. Moreover, there is a statistically significant and negative association with an incident being considered one sided. Incidents motivated by gang issues are 68.6% less likely to be considered one-sided compared to race related incidents. Thus, it is significantly more probable for race related violent incidents to be one-sided and for gang related incidents to be considered a mutual combat, which supports the third and fourth hypotheses. Lastly, the full model reveals a statistically significant and positive association with total number of opposing Latinos. Gang motivated incidents are more likely than race motivated incidents to involve more opposing Latino youth.

The results of the quantitative analyses reveal that there are significant differences in the number of racial groups, and participant dynamic when comparing gang motivated incidents to race motivated incidents. Qualitative analyses help to explain and contextualize these significant quantitative findings by revealing a variety of themes related to the situational dynamics among gang and race motivated violent incidents. Furthermore, it's notable that there are no significant differences in seriousness or location when comparing gang and race incidents. This helps to highlight some of the similarities that also exist between gang and race motivated violence. Overall, the analyses have shown many similarities and select differences between gang related incidents, and race related incidents among incarcerated youth. This reveals a fine line between

gang and race violence that is complicated and needs to be better understood. The following section therefore qualitatively examines violent incident descriptions that the youth identified as being both gang and race motivated simultaneously. These analyses further reveal the complex relationship that exists between gang and race issues within the youth correctional setting.

*Violent Incidents Identified as Both Gang and Race Related*

There were a select number of violent incidents that youth classified as both gang and race related (n = 34). The events of these incidents at times were very similar to the events of gang motivated and race motivated incidents, and the youth would just identify the incident as both. These incidents tend to vary in level of clarity on the gang and/or race issues to which they are related. Some of the youth descriptions are very similar to those illustrating violent incidents that are only gang or race related. For example the youth provided the following descriptions for violent incidents:

*Adrian: I called a black guy the N-Word at camp. He got pissed off and I rushed him.*

*Benjamin: Staff trying to integrate Solo groups. They try to bring rival groups and they take the cuffs off and get down. They were Southerners and we were Northerners.*

*Cameron: I was in the blinds, they (South) were looking for a weakness and the Southerners attacked me when I was by myself. There were three other guys.*

Based on the youth's descriptions of violent incidents that were only gang motivated or race motivated these quotes would suggest one or the other. Thus, when the youth were asked how they knew it was gang related and how they knew it was race related their responses varied from complete dislike of gangs and racial groups:

*Adrian: I don't like the east side crips. I don't like blacks period.*

To a progression from a gang issue to a race issue:

*Alfonso: Black on Brown. Started from gang issue, went to race.*

Or a mix of both gang and race issues:

*Simon: Cause it was all blacks. Kind of low key gang.*

*Mario: They didn't like that I have Mexican in me. Don't like that I'm a Blood, think I'm fake.*

*Patrick: Eating after rule. "Everyone thinks I'm full White, but my dad's black, White, and Indian and my mom is full white. They thought I was Peckerwood but I didn't go down like that."*

These quotes really highlight the overlap that may exist between gang and race issues. Not only may an incident be motivated by complete dislike, but gang and race issues may be so strongly intertwined at times that the incident transitions from one issue to another during the fight. There were a few examples where issues of both gang and race were mentioned, which really clarified when an incident might be motivated by both. This tended to occur when there was a gang affiliation expectation that conflicted with their perceived racial group. This is further illustrated when the youth describe the incidents:

*Christian: Youth from 18th street had beef with vato from Black P Stones and 1 guy from Black P Stones and 1 other from Insane Crips jumped Southerners. 15 Southerners fought 20 Crips and Bloods in the Dorm.*

*Simon: Group disturbance, "my boy A.J. at the facility, if you black you being rolling with blacks... Eating lunch, A.J. was in back with the Southerners and said "Can't none of you all fight my way." To the Southerners, then the leader stood up and said something in Spanish to the guys... then everybody jumped up, started fighting." Jumped and started kicking A.J.*

*Gael: One on one, blind spots outside two towers at the facility. Walking back from visiting. He disrespected my homie, who's black, because he shouldn't be in a gang that's not his own race.*

These quotes begin to reveal where the line is between gang and race violence, and why it can be difficult to distinguish between them. The descriptions show situations where there is a distinct overlap between gang and race issues. It may be that the incident is heavily entrenched in both, or that the youth describing the incident is unable to discern between the two. The event may

involve gangs, but it may be all the black gangs against the Southerners as shown in the first quote. The second and third quotes reveal the expectation of gang involvement based on perceived racial group, and if that expectation is not met it may result in violence. Thus, there is an overlap between gang and race issues that may occur as these are clear examples of gang violence due to youth not meeting expectations based on their perceived racial group.

Incidents that are both gang and race related are very similar thematically to incidents motivated by one or the other. Violent incidents motivated by both gang and race issues does not necessarily mean that there is an even split between the issues or that it is obvious where one issue ends and the other begins. The overlap and relationship between gang and race issues is much more complicated than that. As the quotes reveal, since gang and race issues may at times intertwine, violence will occur due to a complete dislike for a gang and the racial group of which the gang generally consists. Alternatively, the racial expectation for gang membership is contradicted or not met. When violent incidents are both gang and race related and the youth clearly describe both issues it seems to be a gang dislike with a racial undertone that is motivating the youth to engage in violence. It's not that the violence is also related to race issues directly, but based on the descriptions it tends to be more of an underlying quality or feeling of the participants.

## **Discussion**

### *Summary of Findings*

Qualitative analyses show that youth know whether an incident is gang or race related if it's about a rivalry or group dislike, the specific type of disrespect, or who is involved in the incident. The bivariate analyses confirm that there are statistically significant differences between whether the incident was gang or race related with total participants, total racial groups,

and participant dynamic. The results of the multivariate analyses do not support the first hypothesis in accordance with the full model. The association between total participants and gang/race motivational issue is not statistically significant. The results overall did support the second hypothesis. Incidents that are race motivated are significantly likely to have more racial groups involved than incidents that are gang motivated. Lastly, multivariate analyses revealed support for the third and fourth hypotheses. Gang related incidents are significantly more likely to be considered a mutual combat and race related incidents are significantly more likely to be considered one-sided. Qualitative analyses expanded on the quantitative findings showing that gang related incidents frequently involve one racial group due to internal gang dynamics and specific gang rivalries that exists within DJJ. Additionally, the analyses show how gang related violence is agreed upon by the youth after a culturally constructed rule or guideline is broken such as disrespect. Conversely, race related violence in comparison is more likely to be considered one sided as it may occur due to an innate dislike for a specific racial group that could result in violent victimization or offending. Lastly, the findings reveal how gang and race issues can overlap and be motivated by both simultaneously. This further shows the complex relationship that exists between gang motivated and race motivated violence within youth correctional institutions and the need for continued research in this area.

### *Theoretical and Policy Implications*

The findings highlight how prominent the subculture of violence is in the youth correctional environment. The results also reveal that in order to truly understand and effectively intervene on violent behavior among incarcerated youth it's necessary to examine the situational context in which violence occurs. The qualitative findings suggest that there are certain situational dynamics and characteristics that will occur in the institutional setting that are related

to either gang motivated violence, race motivated violence, or both. Statistical analyses reveal that gang motivated incidents are more likely to be a mutual combat and race motivated incidents are more likely to be one sided. This suggests that gang involved youth will frequently agree to engage in violence whereas when the incident is race related more often one party is clearly identified as the victim. This is explained further when analyzing the quotes. Although disrespect as a cultural construct occurred for both gang and race incidents the quotes revealed that with gang rivalries the dislike was automatic, and the youth had no trouble committing disrespectful acts in order to motivate another gang member to fight with them. With race related incidents the disrespect and dislike is not necessarily automatic, and thus may not be mutual. It may depend more on the specific context and circumstances of the situation. Race motivated incidents are therefore more likely to be considered one-sided than a mutual combat when compared to gang related incidents.

Quantitative analyses also reveal that race related violent incidents are significantly more likely to involve more racial groups compared to gang motivated incidents. This is explained more in the quotes on gang rivalry and internal gang dynamics which identify fights occurring frequently within the same gang or between gangs that are of the same race. Conversely, the race quotes revealed fights occurring due to racial dislike or disrespect, or more specifically one race disliking and/or disrespecting another race and therefore involving at least two racial groups.

There are features of the institutional environment and more specifically situational characteristics and dynamics that are associated with a youth's motivation to act violently in support of their race or gang affiliation. These include the number of participants, racial groups, and participant dynamic in conjunction with the violent subculture and correctional context that exists among incarcerated youth. It is therefore important to acknowledge that it takes a

motivated offender for violence to occur, but it is also necessary to understand what aspects of the situation are motivating them to act. The qualitative findings suggest that there are certain situational dynamics and characteristics that will occur in the institutional setting that are related to either gang motivated or race motivated violence. Thus, to more effectively address youth correctional violence, methods for intervening and preventing gang related violent behavior will likely differ in approach compared to methods for race related violent behavior. It is therefore important to understand the similarities and differences in gang and race issues in order to effectively prevent opportunities for violence in the future. This idea will be discussed in more detail in chapter six.

The concept of disrespect is a predominant theme that occurs in the violent incidents, and is a major aspect of the youth correctional subculture of violence. How it differs from being gang or race disrespect is in how it is portrayed or acted upon. This can be in the form of verbal insults, hand gestures, or written symbols. Thus, gang and race affiliation are used by youth to develop different avenues of disrespect in order to invoke a violent response from one another. As was addressed in the examination of how youth can distinguish between whether an incident is gang or race related, many of the reasons are very similar for both; it is the general group or affiliation that is being disrespected which tends to differ. In the context of the correctional institution where youth have limited options for gaining status, aligning with a specific gang and/or defending or standing up for their identified racial group becomes one of the few ways youth have to increase their status and thus gain and maintain the respect of their peers. Youth are therefore creating their own motivation for engaging in violent behavior and assisting other youth by testing their willingness to engage in violence over issues they have created and defined



as disrespectful. If staff were to monitor what youth define as disrespectful acts or talk and stop it when it occurs violence could be more effectively prevented in the future.

With an improved understanding of situational characteristics and dynamics it will be easier to identify what motivated the youth to engage in violence and therefore what can be done to effectively intervene and potentially prevent this type of violent incident from happening in the future. For example, by understanding that a violent incident which involves many racial groups is likely race motivated staff could adjust the youths' schedules and/or staff scheduling in order to more effectively intervene and potentially prevent race motivated violence in the future. Additionally, if there are certain racial groups that tend to engage in violence with one another they could closely monitor their interactions during programming, school, and meal times to quickly intervene or potentially prevent them from engaging in violence. Moreover, if there are times where multiple gangs or large numbers of youth need to interact, the staff could prepare by having additional officials available to more effectively intervene if violence were to occur.

An understanding of the participant dynamic as it relates to the motivational issue also has implications for policy. Staff needs to understand that in order to successfully address violence they may need to approach violent situations differently depending on whether it is gang motivated or race motivated. By acknowledging that there is a relationship between the motivational issue and the roles youth participating in these violent incidents play, the staff will be able to more effectively address youth violence issues. More specifically, a mutually agreed upon violent incident is likely to be gang motivated, whereas in race motivated violent incidents there is more likely to be a clear offender and a clear victim, and by being aware of this staff can more effectively address youth correctional violence issues. This could include developing

methods that closely monitor when gang rival youth interact in order to minimize opportunities for them to engage in mutual combat with one another or allow for more effective intervention. Another possibility would be for staff to be more attentive to race issues by not tolerating any racial talk among youth as that may result in someone getting victimized or potentially a riot. This will be expanded on in chapter five after the results of the analyses of violent incidents related to other personal issues are discussed in the next chapter.

### *Conclusion*

In all, violence is a prominent issue within California youth correctional facilities (Maxson et al, 2012). The results of this chapter contribute to a better understanding of violent incident involvement in youth institutions by revealing the similarities and differences in situational dynamics and characteristics of gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents. To more effectively address issues with youth correctional violence these situational differences need to be taken into account by correctional staff and policy makers.

Although gang and race issues are prominent in DJJ, incidents may also occur that are motivated by other personal issues. The next chapter focuses on violent incidents which youth have identified as neither gang nor race related. Analyses compare and contrast incidents related to other personal issues with those that are gang and race related and identifies situational dynamics and characteristics significantly associated with incidents motivated by other personal issues. This contributes to an improved understanding of the situational characteristics and dynamics tend to occur within violent incidents motivated by gang, race, and other personal issues.

## **Chapter 5: Now it's Personal: Violence Issues Beyond Gangs and Race**

### **Introduction**

This chapter analyzes the dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents that are not gang or race related, but related to other personal issues. The youth's descriptions of violent incidents are examined to determine the themes and motivations youth describe for incidents related to other personal issues. Incident characteristics are also analyzed to determine the relationship between incidents being motivated by other personal issues with the participant dynamic, number of participants and racial groups involved, and location. Chapter 1 discussed how literature has primarily addressed the relationship between violent behavior and misconduct with individual offender characteristics focusing frequently on gang and race issues. The current chapter contributes to the violence literature by identifying and analyzing the dynamics and characteristics that are typical in other types of violent incidents. The analysis of youth correctional violence in scholarship is minimal, and to my knowledge there has been no research that has addressed violence related to other personal issues among incarcerated youth offenders. The correctional setting forces youth to interact with one another on a daily basis where violence is frequently used to resolve not only gang and race issues, but other personal issues. Thus, this chapter provides an examination of the other personal issues that result in violence among incarcerated youth.

### **Brief Literature Review**

It is important to understand the interactions between participating parties in violent incidents. One individual's behavior is a function of the other parties involved, and is used to defend well being and honor (Felson and Steadman, 1983). Violence occurs which the participants have justified because of the specific context and circumstances. Oliver (1994)

found that individuals rationalized violence participation due to issues such as self-defense and communicating through violence and occurred due to disrespect in a majority of cases. The concept of disrespect frequently comes up when addressing violent behavior, but needs to be better understood within specific situational contexts. To respond violently in various situations with different circumstances is called *contingent consistency* according to Toch (1986). This includes circumstances such as disrespect, self-defense, or defense of a relative or friend in most violent situations studied by Oliver (1994). Violence is therefore justified by participants for various reasons. Situational violence has also been studied by Luckenbill (1977) and Felson and Steadman (1983) who identified various stages of violent situations. These stages suggest crucial characteristics and dynamics as well as roles that are played in violent incidents, but the dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents need to be better understood.

There are certain characteristics of individuals that are likely to be more prominent depending on the situation. For example, Luckenbill and Doyle (1989) argue that disputatiousness and aggression will be more distinct in specific situations due to both demographic and cultural characteristics. Furthermore, there will be events that result in violent behavior no matter how minor they might be in specific cultures including cultures of violence (Oliver, 1994). Some research has examined adolescent conflict incidents and finds that when conflict occurs it is likely the participants will attribute the cause to someone else, and that social aggression tends to lead to violence (Xie, Swift, Cairns, and Cairns, 2002). It is thus also necessary to analyze how people retaliate to better comprehend violent behavior since the type of retaliation will likely vary by incident. Jacobs (2004) shows that there are different types of retaliation that can occur, but the reasons for this variation need to be further analyzed. Scholarship has also identified different categories of youth street violence (Naterer, 2014), but

has not thoroughly examined violence in the youth correctional context. It is also important to understand that violence may be rare and difficult and will depend on the characteristics of the situation (Collins, 2008). Two main paths to violence are posed by Collins (2008), either through control of emotion or lack of emotional control, which will influence when violence occurs as well as the type of violence. It is therefore necessary to understand the various contextual dynamics and characteristics that result in violent behavior.

As previously mentioned, research has found a positive association with delinquency and the amount of time spent hanging out with peers (Warr, 2002; Agnew & Peterson, 1989). There is also a positive association between unstructured socializing with peers and offending (Hoeben & Weerman, 2013; Svensson & Oberwittler, 2010; Anderson & Hughes, 2009; Osgood et al, 1996; Haynie & Osgood, 2005). Spending a lot of time with friends increases opportunities for delinquency (Haynie & Osgood, 2005), and unstructured socializing is also significantly associated with engaging in violent behavior (Maimon & Browning, 2010). There has been little research that has examined the issues that occur during unstructured socializing situations that result in delinquent and violent behavior specifically among youth in correctional facilities.

Individual characteristics have been identified as predictors of violent behavior among inmates. Research has revealed that younger inmates are more likely to participate in violent behavior (Steiner, 2008; Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012, Kuanliang, Sorensen, & Cunningham, 2008; Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007). Young incarcerated offenders will utilize threats of violence to take charge of public spaces and resources in prison (Kerbs & Jolley, 2007). The violent behavior of younger inmates therefore needs to be examined further. Additionally, inmates are more likely to participate in violent behavior if they have been incarcerated for a violent offense (Steiner, 2008), or if they have a history of violence in the

community and pro-criminal attitudes (Arbach-Lucioni, Matinez-Garcia, & Andres-Pueyo, 2012). In addition to individual characteristics, it is necessary to address the situational context, dynamics, and motivations to fully understand violent behavior. The current chapter focuses specifically on the situational characteristics and dynamics of violent incidents motivated by personal issues other than gang or race.

When looking specifically at incarcerated offenders different issues resulting in violence tend to occur. Race and gang issues are infrequent reasons for non-sexual violence against transgender inmates, and disrespect is one of the top reasons (Sumner, Sexton, Jenness and Maxson, 2013). Offending can also be about issues of disrespect related to manners or personality conflict (Tramell, 2012). Additionally, violence occurs due to issues with sex offenders and personal hygiene (Cunningham, Sorenson, Vigen, and Woods, 2010). Furthermore, violent incidents about trivial issues happen between individuals of similar standing with an increased chance of occurrence with an audience (Griffiths, Yule, and Gartner, 2011). Violent incidents therefore occur due to other personal issues and are perceived as justified under certain circumstances. Thus, violence research needs to address the situational characteristics and dynamics of incidents motivated by other personal issues.

### **Violent Incident Involvement from the Youth Perspective**

As mentioned previously, the violent incident data for this project provides an opportunity for an improved comprehension of violence among incarcerated youth. It is crucial to analyze violent incident experiences from the incarcerated youth perspective in order to more effectively address youth correctional violence. This includes examining incidents related to other personal issues. These incidents were most commonly reported in the sample, and have only been minimally addressed in scholarship. This chapter uses both open ended and closed

ended responses to examine dynamics and characteristics of violence focusing primarily on incidents related to other personal issues. The open ended responses from the VIF's where the youth describe the events that occurred during and prior to the violent incident are examined through qualitative analysis. The closed ended responses representing the violent incident characteristics from the VIF's are quantitatively analyzed. These analyses will assist in revealing the situational characteristics that are associated with violent incidents motivated by other personal issues compared to gang and race motivated violence.

### **Summary, Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Routine Activities Theory research finds that youth who engage in unstructured socializing activities are more likely to participate in delinquent behavior, and specifically violent behavior. Since a youth's life is completely scheduled within a correctional facility their unstructured socializing occurs during select times at certain locations in the facility. Specifically, unstructured socializing occurs in the day room or common area of the facility when the youth are not in class, eating, sleeping, participating in a treatment program, or engaged in a recreational activity. Additionally, the reviewed literature highlights situational and contextual differences in violence motivated by gang, race, and other personal issues. It is therefore likely that the motivational issue for violence will vary by facility location and that violent behavior will occur frequently in the day room and other locations where youth engage in unstructured socializing activities.

Violence is central to the gang, and members engage in violent behavior to maintain solidarity, gain status, and/or to retaliate against rivals. Race related violent behavior has been found to occur in the form of structural violence with the perception that it will benefit the participant's entire racial group. Gang and race violence will therefore occur due to group related

issues, but violence among incarcerated offenders will also occur for other reasons. Inmates engage in violent behavior due to issues such as disrespect or romantic conflicts, and these issues will vary by racial group. Violence will also occur due to dislike of sex offenders, personal hygiene or other trivial issues, and violence is perceived as justified under these circumstances. Moreover, research shows that violence motivated by other personal issues occurs due to personal or individual reasons as opposed to group issues and it is therefore likely that these incidents will vary in total number of participants and racial groups compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents.

Research has also revealed that the participant dynamic (i.e. mutual combat, one-sided, and riot) can vary across motivational issue. When looking specifically at violence related to other personal issues, scholarship has shown that violence may occur due to being impolite or due to conflicting personalities (Tramell, 2012). Additionally, violence may happen due to having a sex offender status (Cunningham et al, 2010). It is therefore likely that violent incidents motivated by other personal issues will differ in participant dynamic compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents.

Studies have also identified different stages of violent situations, and have addressed the importance of both interaction and retaliation among conflict incidents. Scholarship therefore suggests that there is variation in situational characteristics and dynamics depending on the incident. Research is limited on the characteristics and dynamics of violent incidents that occur due to other personal issues from the incarcerated youth perspective. The current chapter will contribute to this area of scholarship through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the violent incident experiences of youth. This will lead to an improved



understanding of youth correctional violence, and will be accomplished by addressing the research questions and hypotheses listed below:

1. Violent incident characteristics will vary by motivating issue.

*Location of Violent Incident*

- a. Incidents related to other personal issues are more likely than gang or race related incidents to occur in the day room where they are likely to be engaged in unstructured socializing activities.
- b. Incidents related to other personal issues are less likely than gang or race related incidents to occur in school where the activities are likely to be structured.

*Incident Type (Mutual Combat, Victimization Only, Offending Only)*

- c. Incidents related to other personal issues are more likely to be considered one-sided compared to gang or race related incidents.
- d. Incidents related to other personal issues are less likely to be considered a riot compared to gang or race related incidents.

*Number of Individuals and Racial Groups Involved*

- e. Incidents related to personal issues are likely to involve fewer people than gang or race related incidents.
  - f. Incidents related to personal issues are likely to involve fewer racial groups than incidents that are race or gang related.
2. How do incarcerated youth describe violent incidents in which they are involved?
    - a. What are the events that youth perceive prior to and during a violent incident that is related to other personal issues and how do these differ from the events of incidents motivated by gang and race issues?

- b. How are violence conflicts shaped by the institutional setting?
- c. Are there distinct roles that youth involved in these incidents play?
- d. Is there a subculture of violence that is revealed in youth descriptions of violence in correctional facilities?
- e. Are there respect norms among incarcerated youth? How do they influence their violent behavior?

### **Youth Violent Incident Experiences: Quantitative**

The quantitative analyses address the association of specific situational characteristics and dynamics with violent incidents related to other personal issues compared to gang and race related incidents. By better understanding the situational characteristics associated with specific motivations for violent behavior such as other personal issues, opportunities for violence related to these motivational issues can potentially be reduced in the future. Moreover, these analyses will contribute to an improved understanding of violence issues and participation among incarcerated youth. This chapter utilizes routine activities theory by focusing on the motivational issue, and examining its relationship to facility location in the quantitative analyses.

#### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable is the motivational issue, which is whether the violent incident was motivated by other personal issues, gang issues, or race issues. The variable originates from the youth violent incident descriptions (N = 740), which were collected through interviews with the youth (n= 264) where they were asked to describe the three most recent incidents in which they have been involved as well as the worst incidents in which they participated. If the youth identified the incident as not related to gangs or race it was categorized as an incident related to other personal issues.

### *Independent Variables*

The selection of independent variables was based on past research and theory. The analyses examine the association between situational characteristics and violent incidents related to other personal issues.

Due to the potential for variation in participant dynamic across motivational issue it is included as an independent variable. Participant dynamic is represented by a group of dummy variables consisting of riot, one-sided, and mutual combat. The interviewer categorizes the violent incident as one of these types based on the youth's description of the violent incident in which they were involved.

As mentioned previously scholarship shows that violence occurs due to personal dislike, manners, or other trivial issues between parties. These are issues related to the individual as opposed to the gang or racial group. This suggests that the number of participants and racial groups involved will potentially vary across motivational issue, and are therefore included as independent variables. Both variables are based on self-reported data. Total number of participants is determined by combining the total participants on the reporting youth's side and the opposing side. Total number of racial groups is represented through combining self-reports and summing the total number of racial groups the youth reported participating in the incident. Lastly, location is also included as an independent variable. Due to the fact that an incarcerated youth's schedule is determined by the institution; the activities in which they participate, and the individuals with which they interact will vary depending on facility location. Location is represented by a set of dummy variables reflecting the location of violent incident. The dummy variables include whether the incident occurred in the day room, dormitory, recreation area, school, or other area in the facility, with the day room serving as the reference group.

### *Control Variables*

Control variables are also included in the analyses to confirm that the results are non-spurious. These variables are incident characteristics from the VIF's and include the seriousness of the violent incident as a control variable and is measured using youth reported violent incident characteristics. A scale was developed to determine the physical seriousness of the violent incident. Youth were asked if a weapon was involved, and if anyone needed medical attention. These two items were combined to make a scale ranging from low physical seriousness to high physical seriousness. The scale used in the analysis ranges from 1 to 3 with a score of 1 meaning that no weapon was involved, and a score of 3 meaning that both a weapon was involved and medical attention was needed. A scale of institutional seriousness was also created based on the severity of punishment the youth reported receiving for participating in the violent incident. Another variable included as a control is whether or not the incident is one of the worst incidents the youth has participated in. This variable is included as a control due to the potential for distinct differences in motivating issue between the worst incidents and non-worst most recent violent incidents the youth has participated in. This is accomplished with a dichotomous variable that classifies the incident as either a "worst" incident or "recent" incident. The number of youth on the respondent's side, as well as the number of opposing Latinos, opposing blacks, opposing other racial groups are included as controls due to the potential for the number and groups of youth to be associated with the dependent variable.<sup>26</sup> Another control variable identified whether or not the violent incident involved a prior conflict due to the potential of this having an influence on whether the incident is related to gang, race, or other personal issues.

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<sup>26</sup> These variables are different than the dependent variables that address total amount of individuals and racial groups involved; they measure the amount of individuals in a single racial group that were involved in the violent incident.

Precautionary measures were taken to ensure that there were no issues with multicollinearity with the independent and control variables. None of the variables had correlational issues. Additionally the variance inflation factor was determined, which revealed all variables to have factors below 10. The results of these analyses reveal that the independent and control variables can be used successfully in multivariate analyses to obtain accurate results.

### *Multinomial Logistic Regression*

Due to the categorical dependent variable reflecting whether the incident is gang motivated, race motivated, or motivated by other personal issues this chapter utilizes multinomial logistic regression as its primary quantitative analytic approach.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, in order to account for the fact that the violent incidents are not independent observations but are nested within a random sample of youth, the analyses are clustered by individual youth. Lastly, the analyses for this project focus on the situational level therefore the models only include violent incident characteristics.

### **Youth Violent Incident Experiences: Qualitative**

The current chapter will apply and expand on Routine Activities theory by qualitatively analyzing the relationship between the situational context of violence and the institutional setting. This is accomplished by examining how youth perceive the situational dynamics and characteristics of violence that is motivated by other personal issues. The data are from items 1 and 2 of the violent incident forms (VIF). These items include youth descriptions of the events that occurred prior to, and during the violent incident. These data are thoroughly analyzed to determine the prominent features and themes that occur in violent incidents related to other

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<sup>27</sup> This chapter shows the results of the multinomial logistic regression models that directly compare gang and race motivated violent incidents to incidents motivated by other personal issues. The results that compare gang and race incidents directly are addressed in chapter 4.

personal issues. The themes and features of violent incidents related to other personal issues will then be compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents.

Similar to chapter four, a combination of both theoretically derived thematic coding and data driven coding are utilized. Through this process common codes and themes can be addressed and analyzed. Additionally memos were written for an improved comprehension of how prominent the themes were throughout violent incidents related to other personal issues. Overall, the youth descriptions of violent incident participation identify events, dynamics, and characteristics that typically occur during non-gang or race related violence. Analyses of these violent incident descriptions will therefore contribute to an improved understanding of why violence occurs among incarcerated youth beyond just gang and race issues.

The mix of qualitative and quantitative methods allows for a unique and beneficial analysis of youth correctional violence. The quantitative analyses determine how situational characteristics and dynamics vary when comparing violent incidents that are gang or race motivated to those motivated by other personal issues. The qualitative analyses provide a deeper understanding of the context and dynamics in which these violent incidents occur. The analysis begins with a qualitative approach in order to broadly describe the unique characteristics of incidents related to other personal issues. The section then moves to a direct comparison of incidents motivated by other personal issues to both gang and race related violent incidents through the use of descriptive and bivariate statistics. The chapter concludes with integrated thematic and multivariate analyses comparing the situational dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents motivated by other personal issues to gang and race motivated incidents.

## How Other Personal Issues Differ from Gang and Race

One of the most intriguing things about these data was the fact that out of all of the violent incidents in which the youth reported involvement, most of the incidents were identified as being neither gang (n = 287) nor race (n = 117). These were incidents that tended to be non-group motivated with many unique themes identified that were related to other personal issues (n = 336).

One theme that tended to resonate throughout most of these incidents was general routine issues or really minor things that were non-group related. Youth would fight over things like sharing food, or because another youth was talking too loudly, and they wouldn't quiet down. This is a frequent phenomenon among the incidents described by the youth:

Christopher: *Someone squirted baby oil in my face because I wouldn't share noodles.*

Rodolfo: *I started it, arguing in showers. Fight for longer there because staff wouldn't see. Arguing over a shower, who got to use the better one.*

Tomas: *Got into a fight with one dude because he hid my shoe (collateral for borrowing a pencil). Called each other out and got into a fight.*

David: *Two on two, the guy owed my little brother a body wash or something, after betting on a football game. So David decided to back up his younger homie. Happened while walking to pill call.*

Alexander: *He poured water on me, upset me, and I walked away. But he poured more water than I poured juice and tried to walk away again. But he kept coming at me, so I started swinging.*

As these quotes reveal, violence occurs due to minor issues that are neither gang nor race related.

Additionally, youth engage in violent behavior as a result of utilizing resources or engaging in activities provided by the facility:

David: *Got in a physical altercation over the use of the phone. He called me out. He thought he was next in line and I thought I was next.*

*Aaron: Fight over remote. Wanted to watch a different show and then he started running mouth & had built up issues and fought him.*

*Jose: Didn't want to wake up and work. One of the wards was getting me up and I told him I would beat him up if he kept bothering me. So I beat him up and went back to sleep. But the staff didn't report because he wasn't supposed to be in my room.*

What these violent incident descriptions suggest is that youth will take whatever reason they can to engage in violent behavior. The quotes also show how pronounced the culture of violence is within the institution. It is not used only for major transgressions, but also for more trivial issues. Incidents motivated by other personal issues therefore have unique characteristics and dynamics that need to be better understood. The following sections will directly compare incidents related to other personal issues to gang and race motivated violent incidents through both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

### **A Direct Comparison of Gang and Race Issues to Other Personal Issues**

This section begins with descriptive and bivariate comparisons of violent incidents motivated by other personal issues to gang and race motivated violent incidents. These are followed by a comparison of violent incidents through an integration of multivariate statistical analyses and thematic analyses for an improved understanding of youth correctional violence motivated by other personal issues.

Table 11 displays the descriptives and bivariate associations comparing the characteristics of gang and race with other personal issue motivated incidents. There is a statistically significant association between total individuals involved in a violent incident and whether the incident is gang or other personal issue related such that gang incidents involve more people. Over 76% of other personal issue incidents involve two participants compared with 58% of gang related incidents. There is also a statistically significant association between total number of racial groups and whether the violent incident is gang or other personal issue related.



Over 60% of gang related incidents involve only one racial group whereas nearly 60% of other personal issue incidents involve two racial groups.

**Table 11: Other Personal Issue Incidents Compared to Gang and Race Incidents (N = 740)**

	<u>Other Personal Issue Incidents % (n = 336)</u>	<u>Gang Related Incidents % (n = 287)</u>	<u>Race Related Incidents % (n = 117)</u>
<b><u>Total Individuals%</u></b>	<b>(n = 319)</b>	<b>(n = 280)*</b>	<b>(n = 116)**</b>
2	76.5	57.9	23.3
3 to 5	10.7	12.5	13.8
6 to 10	4.1	10.7	15.5
11 to 20	3.1	9.6	12.1
greater than 20	5.6	9.3	35.3
<b><u>Total Racial Groups%</u></b>	<b>(n = 324)</b>	<b>(n = 273)**</b>	<b>(n = 116)**</b>
1 Group	37.6	60.4	6.9
2 Groups	59.3	38.5	90.5
3 Groups	3.1	1.1	2.6
<b><u>Participant Dynamic%</u></b>	<b>(n = 296)</b>	<b>(n = 257)**</b>	<b>(n = 109)**</b>
Mutual Combat	65.5	56.8	26.6
One-Sided	25.7	19.1	19.3
Riot	8.8	24.1	54.1
<b><u>Incident Location %</u></b>	<b>(n = 323)</b>	<b>(n = 275)**</b>	<b>(n = 112)**</b>
Day Room	41.2	27.3	27.6
Dormitory	13.3	7.6	6.3
Recreation Area	13.6	12.4	16.1
School	17.6	33.1	33.9
Other Area	14.3	19.6	16.1

\*\* p < .001, \* p < .01

Interesting findings were also revealed when comparing participant dynamic and location characteristics. There is a statistically significant association between participant dynamic and whether the incident is gang or other personal issue related. In terms of mutual combat the two motivational issues are pretty similar, but less than 10% of other personal issues are considered a riot, whereas nearly 25% of gang related incidents are riots. Lastly, there is a statistically

significant association between location and whether an incident is gang related or due to other personal issues. Over 40% of other personal issue incidents occur in the day room, and less than 30% of gang related incidents. Conversely, less than 20% of other personal issue incidents occur in school while over 30% of gang related incidents occur there.

Table 11 also displays the descriptives and bivariate associations for incidents related to other personal issues and race issues. There is a statistically significant association between total individuals involved and whether the incident is other personal issue or race related with over 76% of other personal issues involving 2 participants and less than 25% of race related incidents involving two participants. Additionally, only 5% of other personal issue incident involve over 20 youth while over 35% of race related incidents do. Moreover, there is a statistically significant association between total number of racial groups and whether the violent incident is motivated by other personal issues or race issues. Nearly 60% of other personal issue incidents involved two racial groups and about 90% of race related incidents. Furthermore, over 35% of other personal issue incidents involved one racial group while only about 7% of race related incidents did.

There are also notable differences between whether the incident is other personal issue related or race related with participant dynamic and location. There is a statistically significant association between participant dynamic and whether the incident is motivated by other personal issues or race motivated. In terms of mutual combat about 65% of other personal issue incidents are considered to be a mutual combat while about 26% of race related incidents are also considered to be a mutual combat. Another interesting finding is that less than 10% of other personal issues are considered a riot, and over 50% of race related incidents are also considered to be a riot. Lastly, there is a statistically significant association between location and whether an

incident is motivated by other personal issues or race related. Over 40% of other personal issue incidents occur in the day room, and less than 30% of race related incidents also occur there. Conversely, less than 20% of other personal issue incidents happen in school with over 30% of race related incidents occurring there. These significant findings support analyzing these variables further through the use of multivariate and thematic analyses to better understand the similarities and differences in situational characteristics across motivational issue.

#### *Unstructured Socializing and Location*

The results of the Multinomial Logistic Regression Analyses are displayed in the tables below as relative risk ratios with standard errors shown in parentheses. Table 12 presents incident location in the analyses, table 13 incorporates participant dynamic, table 14 examines total participants, table 15 has total racial groups, and table 16 is the full model with all independent variables included in the analysis. These results reveal significant differences between other personal issue violence and gang motivated violence in the first column and when comparing other personal issue incidents to race related incidents in the second column.

**Table 12: Multinomial Logistic Regression Results Comparing Facility Location of Other Personal Issue Incidents to Gang and Race Incidents (n= 484)**

<b><u>Independent Variables</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Gang (0)</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Race (0)</u></b>
Dormitory (vs. Day Room)	.999 (.403)	1.79 (1.50)
Recreation Area (vs. Day Room)	.637 (.233)	.681 (.328)
School (vs. Day Room)	.385** (.119)	.417* (.153)
Other Area (vs. Day Room)	.422* (.143)	.513 (.225)
Physical Seriousness	1.00 (.212)	.621 (.186)
Institutional Punishment	.904 (.100)	.886 (.144)
Prior Issue	.577* (.131)	.639 (.201)
Worst Incident	.580* (.137)	.394** (.118)
Opposing Latinos	.899* (.042)	.904* (.046)
Opposing Blacks	1.11 (.101)	.862† (.070)
<u>All Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	1.73 (.936)	4.79* (3.36)
*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05 ; † p < .10		Pseudo R2 = .113

The results in Table 12 reveal that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly less likely to occur in school than in the day room compared to incidents that are gang or race motivated, which supports the first hypothesis. More specifically Incidents motivated by other personal issues are 61.5% less likely to occur in school than in the day room compared to gang motivated violent incidents and 58.3% less likely compared to race motivated violent incidents. Additionally, incidents motivated by other personal issues are 57.8% less likely to occur in other areas of the facility than in the day room compared to gang motivated violent incidents. These findings only partially support the second hypothesis because no differences emerged when comparing recreation area to the day room across motivational issue.<sup>28</sup>

Other significant findings include incidents related to other personal issues to be less likely about a prior issue compared to gang related violent incidents. Moreover, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly less likely to be considered one of the worst

<sup>28</sup> Upon changing the reference group the results reveal that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely to occur in the dormitory than school compared to gang or race motivated violent incidents.

incidents in which a youth has participated compared to gang and race motivated incidents. Furthermore, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly likely to involve fewer opposing Latinos than gang and race motivated violent incidents. Lastly, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly likely to involve more other opposing racial groups compared to race related violent incidents.

These significant findings are only a partial explanation of the relationship between the situational context and violent incidents motivated by other personal issues. Specifically, it is necessary to examine the context qualitatively to gain a better understanding of why these incidents are more likely than gang or race motivated incidents to happen in the day room compared to school or other areas in the facility.

The day room is where youth spend most of their time engaged in unstructured socializing activities, and when looking at incidents related to other personal issues, a common theme that occurs is a personal dislike towards another individual. In these situations the youth does not mention anything about gang or race, just that they do not like another person, or had an issue with them:

Trevor: *I was stubborn, seen someone I didn't like...a little thing that escalated.*

Gabriel: *Me and another didn't get along, so we fought.*

Maximillian: *I knew the guy and didn't like him so we were fighting.*

Rodrigo: *Argument about personal things between friends, so they fought.*

Nathan: *Some bitch-ass fool in the unit didn't like, rushed him.*

Angel: *One on one, Southside, but homies didn't like him so he got green lighted and has to be rushed.*

In all of these incidents, the reason for violence was due to a personal dislike or issue the youth had with another individual. There is also the potential of a youth's friends having a personal

problem with another youth, which in turn leads to the group attacking an individual due to these personal issues. This differs from gang or race issues because it is a personal dislike towards another youth, and is not automatic like a gang rivalry for example. Therefore, youth will engage in violence due to the development of a personal dislike or issue, which frequently occurs in the day room where they are engaged in unstructured socializing activities.

Another common reason that violence occurred was an event between youth over-escalating or due to a misunderstanding. When describing the incidents youth would at times identify a situation that started as friendly bantering or fighting until someone took it personally:

*Benjamin: Me and my homies were horse playing and it got out of control.*

*Jamie: We were joking around and someone put their leg out and I slapped him on the head and then we started calling each other out, and started to fight.*

*Hugh: Guy was talking shit and they got in each other's face. Guy told respondent to get out of his face so respondent shoved him. So that turned into horse play, but then it turned into a real fight.*

*Julian: We were horse playing, both got pressured (got mad) cause other guy got hit in the face on accident, other guy got mad, started saying stuff to each other, started fighting.*

*Liam: Liam's friend/associate eating dinner, and wiped hands on napkin. He thought friend was done, put napkin on tray, Friend threw napkin at him. Liam could see Friend was still angry, Friend threw kool-aid at him, started fighting.*

*Leon: Issue with money. I paid him money, and he was supposed to pay me back \$150. We were both high and he thought I gave him two 50's but when i went back and checked my stash, and he said he didn't and we fought for a long time.*

*Jeff: Jeff thought he lost his comb, started disrespecting or "shooting" a lot of people. Later found out no one stole it, but had to fight a lot of people. Four attacked him back to back in dorm.*

Within the youth correctional culture, violence seems to be the default when anything is taken personally, or gets out of hand. Something as simple as playing a game can turn violent due to a comment or accident made within the game. There were also instances where a youth identifies a

misunderstanding with another youth that leads to violence. This can result from misunderstandings about food, money, stolen property, or even who the youth's allies are at that time. This may occur when one youth thinks they can share food, and the other does not, or when one youth thinks someone is done using something, but the other is not done. When issues like this occur, one youth gets upset or potentially feels offended and responds with violence. Thus, when youth have time to engage in activities that are more unstructured, such as when they are in the day room, this may result in the over escalation or misunderstanding of what may be an originally harmless interaction.

*It's Personal: Participation, Insults, and Property*

The results in Table 13 partially support the third hypothesis and fully support the fourth hypothesis. Incidents motivated by other personal issues are 76% more likely to be considered one-sided than mutual combat compared to gang motivated violent incidents.

Additionally, incidents related to other personal issues are significantly less likely than both gang and race motivated violent incidents to be considered a riot compared to a mutual combat.<sup>29</sup>

More specifically, Incidents motivated by other personal issues are 70.9% less likely to be considered a riot than mutual combat compared to gang motivated violent incidents and 89.3% less likely than race motivated violent incidents. Moreover, similar to Table 12, the results show that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly less likely than gang motivated violent incidents to be related to a prior issue. Furthermore, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly less likely to be considered one of the worst incidents the youth has been involved in compared to gang and race related incidents. Lastly, incidents related to

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<sup>29</sup> Upon changing the reference group the results reveal that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely than gang and race related incidents to be considered one-sided compared to a riot.

other personal issues are significantly likely to involve more opposing other racial groups compared to race motivated violent incidents.

**Table 13: Multinomial Logistic Regression Results Comparing Participant Dynamic of Other Personal Issue Incidents to Gang and Race Incidents (N= 740)**

<b><u>Independent Variables</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Gang (0) [n = 448]</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Race (0) [n = 448]</u></b>
One Sided (vs. Mutual Combat)	1.76* (.502)	.659 (.259)
Riot (vs. Mutual Combat)	.291** (.123)	.107*** (.056)
Physical Seriousness	1.00 (.214)	.658 (.202)
Institutional Punishment	.982 (.112)	.930 (.149)
Prior Issue	.571* (.137)	.676 (.220)
Worst Incident	.563* (.145)	.434* (.143)
Opposing Latinos	.988 (.033)	1.01 (.046)
Opposing Blacks	1.18† (.114)	.943 (.082)
<b><u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u></b>	1.65 (.527)	4.50* (3.07)
*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05 ; † p < .10		Pseudo R2 = .129

The results shown in Table 14 partially support the fifth hypothesis. Incidents related to other personal issues are significantly likely to involve fewer participants compared to race, but not gang motivated violent incidents. Every unit increase in the number of participants decreases the odds of the incident being motivated by other personal issues by 60% when compared to race motivated violent incidents. Consistent with the results in previous tables incidents related to other personal issues are significantly less likely than gang motivated violent incidents to be related to a prior issue. Additionally, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly less likely to be considered one of the worst incidents in which a youth has participated compared to gang and race motivated incidents. Lastly, incidents related to other personal issues are significantly likely to involve more opposing other racial groups compared to race related violent incidents.



**Table 14: Multinomial Logistic Regression Results Comparing Total Participants of Other Personal Issue Incidents to Gang and Race Incidents (N= 740)**

<b><u>Independent Variables</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Gang (0) [n = 487]</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Race (0) [n = 487]</u></b>
Total Participants	.971 (.025)	.940* (.025)
Physical Seriousness	1.10 (.224)	.685 (.196)
Institutional Punishment	.936 (.104)	.872 (.134)
Prior Issue	.525** (.120)	.663 (.209)
Worst Incident	.580* (.135)	.433** (.336)
Opposing Latinos	.944 (.055)	.982 (.061)
Opposing Blacks	1.20† (.126)	.996 (.094)
<u>All Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	1.94 (1.24)	7.88* (7.32)
*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05 ; † p < .10		Pseudo R2 = .110

The results shown in Table 15 reveal that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely to involve fewer racial groups compared to race motivated violent incidents. Every unit increase in number of racial groups decreases the odds of the incident being motivated by other personal issues by 69.2% compared to race motivated incidents. This partially supports the sixth hypothesis. Conversely, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly likely to involve more racial groups compared to violent incidents related to gang issues. The odds are nearly 3 and half times higher for an incident to be motivated by other personal issues for every unit increase in total amount of racial groups compared to gang related incidents. This contradicts the sixth hypothesis. Incidents related to other personal issues are also significantly less likely than gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents to be related to a prior issue. Additionally, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly less likely to be considered one of the worst incidents in which a youth has participated compared to gang and race motivated incidents. Lastly, incidents related to other personal issues are also significantly likely to involve fewer opposing Latinos compared to gang related violent incidents and more opposing other racial groups compared to race related violent incidents.

**Table 15: Multinomial Logistic Regression Results Comparing Total Racial Groups of Other Personal Issue Incidents to Gang and Race Incidents (N= 740)**

<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Gang (0) [n = 490]</u>	<u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Race (0) [n = 490]</u>
Total Racial Groups	3.46*** (.842)	.308** (.121)
Physical Seriousness	.904 (.184)	.613 (.182)
Institutional Punishment	1.01 (.115)	.845 (.133)
Prior Issue	.534** (.124)	.548* (.168)
Worst Incident	.516** (.123)	.370** (.114)
Opposing Latinos	.883** (.040)	.911† (.046)
Opposing Blacks	.992 (.088)	.851† (.082)
<u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	1.22 (.381)	11.21** (7.79)
	*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05 ; † p < .10	Pseudo R2 = .171

Thematic analyses expand on these findings by providing a more detailed explanation of why there are significant differences in participant dynamic, amount of participants, and number of racial groups for incidents motivated by other personal issues.

One prominent reason violence occurred for gang, race, and other personal issues was due to verbal insults. The youth distinguished between when the insult was gang related, race related, or neither, and no matter how a youth was verbally insulted it generally was justification for violence:

*Alejandro: Putting up chairs, someone thought I said something about his mom, rushed me, and started fighting. He wanted to see if I could fight.*

*Jordan: Little dude was talking about having sex play with my little brother. So he started talking real close and so I decided to fight him.*

*Ryan: Ryan got mad over a peaknuckle game, started calling someone out [called him a "Sewer rat" (anti-sureno)] to piss him off. He got up, other got up and started fighting each other.*

*Dante: In school and started fighting because he thought they were calling him a punk and they started fighting.*

*Carter: Paisa said, "Your homies only do county time cause they're afraid to do level 3 Prison Yard (high powered.), they're bitches." Warned Paisa to shut up, Paisa confronts Youth and 5 others stomped on him for 15 seconds. Stopped, deputy who was watching, came in after they stopped, asked if everyone was okay. Ask the Paisa to "roll it up" (go to another unit).*

*Sergio: In unit outside rec, guy was high and he offered him drugs and he said no. But then friends came back and kid made fun of him and he got mad because he said "fuck your dead ass homie."*

*Roger: Got jumped. Roger beat up Hispanic guy, 2 more people jumped in, his friend jumped in to help when Roger realized what was going on. He had been rushed by Hispanic guy initially. Roger had disrespected him, teachers told him to answer a question, he answered it wrong, Roger called him a dummy.*

Words are utilized by these youth in order to convey verbal disrespect against another. Youth verbally insult one another appearing to know full well it will lead to violence with another youth. These descriptions show how incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely to be considered one-sided compared to gang motivated violent incidents. In these examples the insults aren't always about disrespecting and mutually engaging in violence, but frequently occur due to a personal insult towards an individual and/or their family. This reveals that violent incidents motivated by other personal issues will frequently occur due to a personal attack, which assists in explaining why incidents related to other personal issues are more likely to be considered one-sided than mutual combat compared to gang motivated incidents.

In addition to just a personal dislike or misunderstanding there were certain actions made by youth or statuses youth had which were not related to gangs or race that would result in violence. A common identifier that came up at times primarily in incidents that were related to other personal issues was stolen property. Frequently youth reported that they fought another youth because they stole something from them, or because they lent something to another youth, and that youth refused to give it back:

Hector: *Dude I was cool with guess he had something he wasn't supposed to. Somebody took it, this youth knew who took it, so when talking to that guy, ended up fighting.*

Cameron: *One on one cause he was gonna take my body wash, just started fighting.*

Tyler: *Fought black guy cause he stole my shirt and pants.*

Joaquin: *On living unit, youth took picture of Joaquin's daughter and other things, other denied it. Few days later Joaquin sees him with his stuff, Joaquin just asked for stuff back, kept saying he didn't take it, started fighting. Joaquin apologized later. He didn't want to show weakness by being disrespected. Joaquin hit other, other fell.*

Austin: *Fought somebody over trying to take my food at dinner time. So we just started fighting.*

Donald: *Had let someone else use my radio, and he went to his room, and tried to break it. I found out and we fought. Staff broke it up. He was trying to break my radio because my friend had stolen some contraband from him a year before.*

In these situations, the youth did not mention anything gang or race related; it was solely about the stolen property. The youth could steal or be attempting to steal toiletries, money, food, or electronics, and the owner of the property would respond violently. Overall, whether it is due to verbal insults, personal dislike, misunderstandings, and/or stolen property, youth are targeting individuals and not entire racial groups. This helps explain why incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly likely to involve fewer racial groups and fewer participants compared to race motivated violent incidents.

*Full Models Comparing Incidents Motivated by Other Personal Issues to Gang and Race Motivated Violent Incidents*

Table 16 shows the results of the two full models. There is no longer a statistically significant association between total participants and whether an incident is motivated by other personal issues compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents. Violent incidents related to other personal issues are significantly likely to involve greater total racial groups compared to gang related incidents, but are significantly likely to involve fewer total groups when compared

to race related incidents. The odds of an incident being motivated by other personal issues are over four times higher compared to gang motivated incidents for each unit increase in the amount of total racial groups. Moreover, every unit increase in number of racial groups decreases the odds of the incident being motivated by other personal issues by 60.8% compared to race motivated incidents. This continues to partially support the sixth hypothesis. Additionally, the third hypothesis is not supported in the full model. There is no longer a statistically significant association between whether an incident is one-sided compared to mutual combat when comparing incidents related to other personal issues to gang motivated violent incidents. Incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly less likely than gang or race related incidents to be considered riots compared to mutual combat, which continues to support the fourth hypothesis.<sup>30</sup> Incidents motivated by other personal issues are 88.8% less likely to be considered a riot than mutual combat compared to gang motivated violent incidents, and 94.2% less likely compared to race motivated violent incidents. Incidents motivated by other personal issues are also significantly less likely to be considered the worst incident the youth has been involved in compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents.

Most notable though is that the findings reveal that compared to gang and race related incidents, those related to other personal issues are significantly more likely to occur in the day room compared to school, or other areas in the facility.<sup>31</sup> Incidents motivated by other personal issues are 68.5% less likely to occur in school than in the day room compared to gang motivated violent incidents and 67.1% less likely compared to race motivated violent incidents.

Additionally, incidents motivated by other personal issues are 67.2% less likely to occur in other

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<sup>30</sup> Upon changing the reference group the results reveal that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely than gang and race related incidents to be considered one-sided compared to a riot.

<sup>31</sup> Upon changing the reference group the results reveal that incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely to occur in the dormitory than school or other areas in the facility compared to race motivated violent incidents.

areas of the facility than in the day room compared to gang motivated violent incidents, and 66.6% less likely compared to race motivated violent incidents.

**Table 16: Multinomial Logistic Regression Full Model Results Comparing Other Personal Issue Violent Incident to Gang and Race Incidents (N= 740)**

<b><u>Independent Variables</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Gang (0) [n = 407]</u></b>	<b><u>Other Personal Issue (1) vs. Race (0) [n = 407]</u></b>
Total Participants	1.02 (.024)	1.00 (.026)
Total Racial Groups	4.04*** (1.06)	.392* (.169)
One Sided (vs. Mutual Combat)	1.55 (.502)	.487† (.212)
Riot (vs. Mutual Combat)	.112*** (.064)	.058*** (.037)
Dormitory (vs. Day Room)	.641 (.302)	1.73 (1.46)
Recreation Area (vs. Day Room)	.471† (.190)	.613 (.342)
School (vs. Day Room)	.315*** (.107)	.329** (.138)
Other Area (vs. Day Room)	.328** (.130)	.334* (.172)
Physical Seriousness	.986 (.239)	.720 (.242)
Institutional Punishment	1.02 (.136)	.830 (.141)
Prior Issue	.608† (.159)	.737 (.266)
Worst Incident	.511* (.147)	.498† (.198)
Opposing Latinos	.970 (.041)	1.04 (.060)
Opposing Blacks	1.05 (.085)	.986 (.052)
<u>Other Opposing Racial Groups</u>	1.38* (.199)	11.39* (11.09)
	*** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05 ; † p < .10	Pseudo R <sup>2</sup> = .24

The results of these quantitative analyses reveal that there are significant differences in the amount of racial groups, participant dynamic, and facility location when comparing incidents related to other personal issues to gang and race motivated violent incidents. The quantitative results show that there are multiple situational characteristics and dynamics that are significantly more or less likely to occur in incidents related to other personal issues compared to gang motivated and race motivated violence. The qualitative analyses assisted in providing a more in depth explanation of the violent incidents to better comprehend and explain the significant quantitative findings. The overall analyses contribute to an improved understanding of violence related to other personal issues in a youth correctional setting.

## **Discussion**

### *Summary of Results*

Overall the findings reveal that violent incidents related to other personal issues are significantly different than gang and race motivated violent incidents. These incidents frequently occur due to routine issues from living together such as the use of the phone, sharing food, or using the television remote. Incidents related to other personal issues are also significantly less likely to occur in school, and other areas of the facility compared to the day room which supports the first hypothesis. Additionally, the findings support the second hypothesis by revealing that violent incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly more likely to occur in the day room compared to gang and race incidents. The day room is where youth are frequently engaged in unstructured socializing activities, and the qualitative findings reveal that youth will engage in violence due to a personal dislike or over-escalation of a harmless situation. Moreover, incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly less likely than gang or race related incidents to be considered riots compared to mutual combat, which supports the fourth hypothesis. Furthermore, violent incidents related to other personal issues are significantly more likely to involve a greater number of total racial groups compared to gang related incidents,<sup>32</sup> but are significantly more likely to involve fewer total groups when compared to incidents that are race motivated, which partially supports the sixth hypothesis. The qualitative analyses help to show how violence related to other personal issues is more individualistic where youth personally insult one another or steal their property. This assists in explaining why these incidents tend not to escalate into riots compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents. Moreover, the individualistic nature of the violent incidents helps to explain why incidents

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<sup>32</sup> Based on the findings in chapter 4 that show how violence is prominent between Northerners and Southerners, and occurs due to internal gang issues it is not surprising that incidents motivated by other personal issues are significantly likely to involve a greater number of racial groups.

motivated by other personal issues do not involve a large number of racial groups compared to race motivated violent incidents. Furthermore, the qualitative analyses help to reveal that incidents motivated by other personal issues occur due to problems such as a personal dislike or misunderstanding, which tends to develop over time and/or occur during unstructured activities such as when the youth are in the day room.

### *Theoretical and Policy Implications*

The significant differences across motivational issues in relation to facility location reveal some interesting theoretical implications. Incidents related to other personal issues are more likely to occur in the day room where youth spend most of their time engaged in unstructured socializing activities. This makes sense as the themes that came up are consistent with issues that would occur in routine unstructured activities. These incidents can be about status, but are frequently related to general routine issues, personal dislike, and/or a misunderstanding/over-escalation. These are issues that come up naturally within the institutional environment that the youth uses in order to justify a violent response. This could be attributed to typical male adolescent behavior, or possibly the existing culture of violence. For example, when a youth would talk about being verbally insulted they would say specifically how, such as offending their family or calling them names. Not just that it was disrespect, which is what youth would frequently indicate in gang or race related incidents. Facility location determines the type of activity the youth is engaged in as well as the youth with which they interact. Gang and race violent incidents are more opportunistic compared to other personal issue incidents as they are likely to occur in school where they are forced to interact and will engage in violence in order to develop and/or maintain status.



In the correctional setting youth most frequently report being involved in violent incidents motivated by other personal issues. The findings suggest that the other personal issues which motivate youth to engage in violence would occur less frequently if the youth were engaged in structured activities. This is consistent with Routine Activities Theory which argues that youth who engage in unstructured socializing activities are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior and specifically violent behavior. The findings expand the application of Routine Activities Theory into youth correctional institutions, and provide a deeper understanding of the violent interactions that occur during unstructured activities.

Incidents related to other personal issues are also significantly less likely to be considered riots compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents, and the qualitative analyses help to explain why that is. The findings from chapter four revealed that gang and race loyalty were common themes, which show how youth will engage in violence to assist an affiliate or friend no matter what the situation is. These thematic findings help to show how a one on one fight can escalate into a riot. Although friends did assist each other at times during incidents related to other personal issues it was much less common because the incidents were not group related, or opportunistic. These incidents were related to issues of personal dislike, personal insults, or stolen property. Thus they tended not to escalate into riots. These findings suggest that for incidents related to other personal issues there is not as much of a cultural expectation of violence for youth not directly involved. This is because these incidents are not related to group affiliation or identification, but are focused on individual youth. Such contexts do not appear to call forth demands for loyalty like with race and gang issues.

These findings suggest that methods for violence intervention and prevention in youth correctional facilities should vary when addressing violent incidents related to other personal

issues compared to gang and race related violence. Staff can utilize resources more efficiently and more effectively when approaching violence related to other personal issues by taking into account that they are likely to occur in the day room. It might be beneficial to add some structure to the youth's activities in this location to limit opportunities for personal issues to develop and violence to occur. This could be in the form of games or other activities where the youth are entertained, but also requires minimal supervision from staff. Another possibility is that since these incidents tend to occur due to personal issues between youth, are more individualistic, and do not tend to escalate into riots it might be beneficial for the youth to receive lessons in conflict/dispute resolution, or other similar programs. This will potentially assist in reducing violence participation that is motivated by other personal issues, and at the same time provide the youth with life lessons that will help them inside and outside of the correctional environment. Gang and race motivated violent incidents are more likely to occur in school, which suggests that they are more opportunistic. Staff could be more aware of the gang and race rivalries, and place rival youth in different classrooms. The youth that need to be separated should then be required to participate in alternative activities and programs with their rivals where they learn to cooperate with one another. Additionally, staff could become familiar with the cultural norms that have been established by the youth, so that they will be more aware of when violent incidents will occur. This will result in more successful prevention or intervention.

Overall, the staff needs to comprehend that violence occurs most frequently among incarcerated youth due to issues that are neither gang nor race related, and to more effectively address violence staff should take the motivational issue into account. By understanding that the situational dynamics and characteristics of violent incidents vary across motivational issue it will

be easier to effectively intervene and potentially prevent violent incidents motivated by other personal issues from happening in the future.

### *Conclusion*

The results of this chapter contribute to a better understanding of violent incident involvement in youth institutions by applying Routine Activities Theory and subculture of violence concepts to the situational context of youth correctional violence. By comparing violent incidents motivated by other personal issues to gang motivated and race motivated violent incidents these findings suggest that staff should approach youth violence differently depending on the motivational issue. Overall, the situational differences in dynamics and characteristics between motivational issues need to be taken into account and examined further in future research.

The final chapter examines the significant findings of the overall project, provides a detailed explanation of the theoretical and policy implications, and addresses research limitations and future directions. Specifically, it examines how violence motivated by gang, race, and other personal issues needs to be approached differently in order to more effectively intervene and prevent youth institutional violence. The chapter also provides an in depth discussion of the application of Routine Activities Theory and subculture of violence concepts at the violent incident level in a youth correctional setting. It concludes with addressing the need to further examine violence at the situational level, the relationship between the motivational issue and violent incident involvement that exists among incarcerated youth, and how the findings can inform youth violence studies in different settings.

## **Chapter 6: So What? Significance and Implications for Theory and Policy**

Most research in the area of violent crime examines individual characteristics of youth and adults in relation to violence. Analysis of violent behavior at the situational level is a neglected area of research, especially in youth correctional facilities. This dissertation fills a major gap in the literature by examining violence at the incident level from the incarcerated youth perspective. This is accomplished by comparing violent incidents motivated by gangs, race, and other personal issues in which incarcerated youth reported participating. Moreover, this project utilizes a mixed methods approach. The quantitative analyses provide an improved understanding of the situational characteristics and dynamics that are likely to occur in incidents motivated by gang, race, and other personal issues. The qualitative analyses describe the events of the violent incidents and assist in explaining why select situational characteristics and dynamics vary across motivational issue. A mixed methods approach also allows for the integration of situational and subcultural concepts and overall provides a more comprehensive understanding of youth correctional violence.

### **Overview of Findings and Significance of Research**

Qualitative analyses of the violent incident descriptions in chapter three revealed that there are unique situational dynamics and characteristics of violence that exist in the youth correctional setting. Additionally, the analyses showed that these dynamics and characteristics may differ when comparing gang motivated violence, race motivated violence and violence motivated by other personal issues. These results highlight the importance of taking the motivational issue into account when studying youth correctional violence.

### Gang vs. Race

Chapter four compared the situational characteristics and dynamics of gang and race motivated violent incidents. The statistical analyses revealed that gang incidents are more likely to be mutual combat and race incidents are more likely to be one-sided. The qualitative analyses show that disrespect as a cultural construct occurred for both gang and race-incidents, but the context and circumstances in which it occurred varied. In gang-motivated violent incidents, rivalries were automatic and youth utilized disrespectful acts to motivate other gang members to engage in violence. Gang members primarily tend to engage in violent behavior when they are provoked. This reflects results of earlier studies which find that gang members participate in violence for collective vengeance and reputation building (Collins, 2008). Gang youth use violence as a way to provide justice for transgressions against their group (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996). They are therefore likely to view their actions as a response to another's actions, and engage in mutual combat. In race-related incidents, the disrespect and participant dynamic seemed to depend more on the context and circumstances of the situation.

Quantitative analyses also reveal that race-related violent incidents are significantly more likely to involve more racial groups as compared to gang incidents. This is explained more in the quotes on gang rivalry and internal gang dynamics, which describe fights occurring frequently either within the same gang to determine membership or resolve group issues (also see Collins, 2008), or between gangs that are of the same race or ethnicity. A specific example of this within DJJ is the prominent rivalry between the Northerners and Southerners, both which primarily consist of Latino youth. Additionally, descriptions of race-related incidents revealed fights occurring due to racial dislike or disrespect, or more specifically one race disliking and/or disrespecting another race, and therefore involving at least two racial groups.

It is also important to address that youth at times identified an incident as both gang and race-motivated simultaneously. Qualitative analyses show that violent incidents may be considered both gang and race motivated when a youth's gang affiliation conflicts with their perceived racial group, the incident involves all the gangs of one race against one gang of another race, or it begins as a gang issue and escalates into a race issue. These results reveal a complex relationship between gang and race-motivated violence.

### *Other Personal Issues*

The results show that violent incidents most frequently reported by youth are motivated by neither gang nor race issues, but other personal issues. These incidents are distinctly different from gang and race-motivated violence. They were more likely to occur in the day room where youth spend most of their time engaged in unstructured socializing activities. Incidents motivated by other personal issues may be about status, but may also be related to general routine issues, personal dislike, and/or stolen property. For example, when a youth talked about being verbally insulted they would say specifically how, such as offenses to their family or name-calling. These are issues of disrespect that come up naturally within the youth correctional environment. Conversely, gang and race incidents are more likely to occur in school where youth are forced to interact. Youth frequently described these incidents occurring due to disrespect, but would either not say specifically how, or that it was due to breaking a racial or gang guideline that was established by the youth.

There are also significant differences in participant dynamic. Incidents related to other personal issues are significantly less likely to be considered riots compared to gang and race motivated violent incidents. Group loyalty was a common theme for both gang and race motivated violent incidents, which helps to show how these incidents are more likely to escalate

into riots. The results reveal how in gang or race-motivated incidents youth engage in violence to assist an affiliate or friend irrespective of the situation. In incidents motivated by other personal issues, youth engage in violence due to problems such as a personal dislike, stolen property, or misunderstanding. This is similar to findings from Tramell's (2012) study who found that violence occurred among inmates due to manners or personality conflict. Incidents motivated by other personal issues were therefore less likely to escalate into riots because they were related to individual problems, and not group issues.

### **Theoretical Implications**

#### *Correctional Setting*

The results of this dissertation expand on both the subculture of violence perspective and the Routine Activities perspective. Sykes' work (1958) on adult prisoners found that inmates created their own culture in response to the struggles of incarceration including a devotion to a set of cultural norms that supported group loyalty and toughness. Another study on adult offenders (Tramell, 2012) found that in the prison culture, inmates needed to learn informal norms, that violence could be used depending on the time and location, and that violent actions were seen as a way of performing. The current project shows that the development of unique cultural norms in response to incarceration also occurs in the youth correctional setting.

There is a unique relationship between the correctional setting and violence involvement. Location within the facility reveals whether the youth are engaged in structured or unstructured activities, the individuals with whom they are interacting, and presence of staff. The constant presence of correctional officers also results in frequent intervention or assistance with youth violence participation depending on the situation. Youth may also schedule violent incidents for certain times and locations where staff are unable to view their actions. Moreover, the youth

have developed guidelines for engaging in violence, and the concept of disrespect is a prominent theme, which frequently results in violence. Thus, within the youth correctional setting there is a mutual understanding of when violence needs to occur; youth recognize when this happens, and agree to fight one another. The analyses also reveal that these situational dynamics and characteristics tend to vary across motivational issue.

### *Gang vs. Race*

Analysis of gang and race motivated violent behavior reveals that there is a complex culture of violence that exists in the youth correctional setting. The results of the qualitative analyses show that youth have developed their own culturally constructed guidelines for violence engagement, which may differ between gang incidents and race incidents. For example, the youth are able to distinguish between when violence occurs due to gang or race disrespect and gang or race dislike. Additionally, in some of the violent incident descriptions, the youth referred to either gang organizational characteristics or racial politics. These results suggest that incarcerated youth have developed their own culture of violence with established rules and guidelines for engaging in violent behavior motivated by gang and race issues. Violent behavior is therefore guided by the specific rules of the gang or racial group. Additionally, the incidents highlight a culture of racism that exists in the facility (also see Feagin & Vera, 1995). The racist culture of the correctional setting results in youth engaging in violence to defend themselves and their identified racial group (also see Hamm, 1996).

My analyses also revealed significant differences in participant dynamic between gang and race motivated violent incidents. The quantitative findings showed that mutual combat is significantly more likely in gang motivated violent incidents than race-motivated violent incidents. Conversely, race motivated violent incidents are significantly more likely to be



considered one-sided compared to gang incidents. This suggests that within the youth correctional culture, gang involved youth will frequently agree to engage in violence whereas in race related incidents, it is more frequent that one party is clearly identified as the victim.

At times, violent incidents were simultaneously motivated by both gang and race issues. They overlapped because gang membership is frequently based on race. Violent incidents may therefore begin as gang motivated, but escalate into race motivated violence because disrespect targeted at a gang can expand to include entire racial groups. The descriptions also reveal how youth may have some difficulty discerning the differences between gang and race violence, such as a violent incident which involves an entire racial group against one gang, or a youth engaging in violence due to a dislike for both the gang and its primary race affiliation. Thus, issues of gang and race may occur independently, but may also be intertwined, revealing a complex culture of violence among incarcerated youth.

### *Other Personal Issues*

The Routine Activities Theory framework is helpful for understanding situational violence among incarcerated youth. It is important to comprehend that violence will occur if there is a motivated offender, suitable target, and lack of a capable guardian, but it is also important to understand the situational context. Research utilizing the Routine Activities Theory perspective finds an association between delinquent behavior and the amount of time spent hanging out with friends in unstructured socializing activities (Hoeben & Weerman, 2013; Svensson & Oberwittler, 2010; Anderson & Hughes, 2009; Osgood et al, 1996; Haynie & Osgood, 2005). The results of this dissertation expand on these findings by examining violent incident involvement and its relationship with motivational issue, facility location, and unstructured socializing activities in a youth correctional setting. The findings reveal the

importance of the situation, context, and culture when examining opportunities for violence among incarcerated youth.

Youth most frequently reported being involved in violent incidents that were related to other personal issues. The incident descriptions reveal that these violent situations are distinctly different from gang or race violence. Incidents motivated by other personal issues are more likely to occur in the day room, which is where youth engage in unstructured socializing activities with one another. Youth reported responding violently due to a personal dislike, personal insult, stolen property, or misunderstanding. These are things that occur naturally within the institutional environment that the youth has decided is justification for a violent response. In addition to the complex culture of violence that exists related to gang and race issues, violence is also utilized for personal issues or transgressions, which is recognized as normal among incarcerated youth.

The results also expand on Routine Activities Theory by showing that the violence youth participate in while engaged in unstructured socializing activities in a youth correctional setting is likely to be motivated by other personal issues. Violent incidents motivated by gang or race issues occur less frequently in the day room and are more likely to occur in school when the youth are engaged in routine structured activities. This shows how opportunistic gang and race violence can be. While youth are in school there is minimal unstructured time to interact, so they have developed different cultural practices in which to accomplish an act of disrespect when an opportunity arises. This can include a word that should not be said, or a symbol that should not be written. Therefore violence that occurs during unstructured socializing activities is likely to be significantly different than violence that occurs during structured activities.

### Structural-Cultural Typology

The data for this project are limited to the youth correctional facility, but the findings contribute to the development of a “Structured-Culture” violent incident typology that can be applied in other settings. Understanding the broader context in which violent incidents occur can provide insight into how research in the community and other areas can be effectively approached in the future. “Structured” refers to whether or not the participating youth were engaged in structured or unstructured activities. “Culture” refers to whether or not the motivational issue was individualistic (personal) or determined by the established culture of violence. The presence of staff is closely related to both the structure and culture of correctional violence. Youth may engage in violent behavior whether or not the staff is watching and staff at times may assist with youth violence involvement. Studies looking at structured and unstructured activities in community settings frequently characterize unstructured activities as when youth socialize with peers without adult supervision (Osgood et al, 1996; Bernburg & Thorlindsson, 2001). Within the youth correctional setting, youth are under constant surveillance, so the facility location and activities in which the youth are participating are utilized to determine whether the violence occurred during “structured” or “unstructured” activities. The analyses also reveal that there are established cultural guidelines for engaging in violent behavior. Depending on the situational context youth may participate in violence in front of staff or plan to fight at a different time and location where staff members are less likely to intervene.

The typology proposes four violent incident categories which include *structured-culture*, *structured-personal*, *unstructured-culture*, and *unstructured-personal*. These categories take into

account the fact that a youth's violent incident involvement will depend on the activities in which they are participating, and the cultural and interpersonal context of the situation:

*Structured-Culture:* Violence motivated by cultural norms and values which occurs during structured activities. *Example: A gang motivated violent incident that occurs in school*

*Structured-Personal:* Violence motivated by individual or personal issues that occurs during structured activities. *Example: A misunderstanding about sharing food during meal time*

*Unstructured-Cultural:* Violence motivated by cultural norms and values which occurs during unstructured activities. *Example: A riot that occurs due to a racial insult while watching T.V.*

*Unstructured-Personal:* Violence motivated by individual or personal issues that occurs during unstructured activities. *Example: A one on one fight occurring while waiting to use the phone due to a personal dislike between youth.*

This incident typology can be used as a guide to understanding violent situations within correctional facilities, in the community, schools, and other contexts. Violent incidents primarily fit into one category of the typology. There may be a "cultural-personal" overlap where one category is predominant, but characteristics of others are also present (e.g. a race riot that occurs due to a racial insult, but was also taken personally by the youth that was initially insulted). Due to this overlap, it is best to think of the categories as ideal types. Depending on the typological category into which the violent incident fits, different strategies and methods should be utilized for successful intervention and prevention.

Gang incidents in youth correctional settings are likely to occur when youth are in school where they are engaged in structured activities. These incidents occur due to the cultural norms and values established by the youth when rival gangs are able to interact with one another. Therefore, when a gang incident occurs in school because of an offensive symbol, it is a structured-cultural violent incident. If a gang incident were to occur in the day room due to a verbal insult while socializing it is an unstructured-cultural violent incident.

Incidents motivated by other personal issues tend to be related to problems that occur naturally in the youth's environment. This includes issues such as a personal dislike or a misunderstanding between youth. These incidents are likely to occur in the day room where the youth are engaged in unstructured socializing activities. Thus, incidents that occur due to a personal dislike while youth are watching T.V. or socializing in the day room would be considered unstructured-personal violent incidents. If an incident occurred during meal time due to a misunderstanding about sharing food it would be considered a structured-personal violent incident.

Violent incidents motivated by race issues may occur due to either structural and/or interpersonal issues. An example of a race motivated violent incident that is structured-personal would be a one on one fight occurring during a recreational activity due to one youth calling the other a racial slur. An example of a race motivated violent incident that is unstructured-cultural would be getting ordered by one's racial group representative to fight a specific youth while waiting in line for the showers.

It is also important to understand how this typology can be utilized in other contexts. Structured and unstructured activities may refer to whether or not capable guardians are present. Personal issues among individuals occur naturally in all settings, and the culture of violence may vary across different contexts. This typology can therefore be applied to a variety of situations in order to better understand and more effectively address violence issues.

### **Policy Implications**

The overall findings for this project suggest that methods for violence intervention and prevention in youth correctional facilities should differ for incidents motivated by gangs, race, and other personal issues. By understanding the situational dynamics and characteristics of

violent incidents, it is easier to identify what motivated the youth to engage in violence. This allows for an improved understanding of what can be done to effectively intervene and potentially prevent this type of violent incident from happening in the future.

Gang and race related violent incidents need to be approached differently by correctional staff. Significant differences in participant dynamic suggest that staff could develop schedules for gang youth to minimize opportunities in which they can interact with rivals and agree to engage in violence. Research finds that youth are likely to participate in violent behavior when they are in the presence of their friends (McGloin & Piquero, 2009; Warr, 2002; Gardner & Steinberg, 2005). Staff can therefore develop programs where rivals participate in healthy activities together, while being closely monitored, and in the presence of few to no affiliates or friends. This can potentially help the youth to understand that there is more to someone than their group affiliation, and reduce the amount of violence that occurs due to these issues (also see Eltink, Helm, Wissink, & Stams, 2015).

Based on the finding that race related violent incidents likely involve many racial groups, staff can adjust the schedules for youth and/or staff to prevent racial violence or improve the chances of successful intervention. For example, if there are times where a large number of youth and racial groups need to interact, additional staff can be made available for successful violence intervention. Staff can also discourage racial talk between youth in order to prevent possible victimization and/or a riot.

Staff can also utilize resources more efficiently and effectively when approaching violence related to other personal issues. This can be accomplished by taking into account that they occur most frequently, and are more likely to occur in the day room, as compared to gang and race motivated incidents. For example, since youth spend most of their time engaged in

unstructured socializing activities in the day room, it might be beneficial to add some structure to the youth's activities in this location to limit opportunities for personal issues to develop and violence to occur.

Violent behavior motivated by other personal issues is also more likely to be considered a mutual combat. These violent incidents are more personal and individualistic. Correctional staff should therefore focus more on the activities in which youth are participating and relationships they are developing with one another in order to more successfully address violence. For example, instead of assuming that violent behavior is motivated by gang and race issues when it occurs, staff can consult the youth and determine if the violence was motivated by other personal issues. Structured activities can then be implemented in order to reduce the likelihood of certain personal issues from developing.

Structured activities could include a variety of things, but there are three types of programs that could be especially beneficial to implement. The staff can have youth participate in a conflict resolution program in order to teach them healthy problem solving strategies. This can potentially reduce the likelihood of violence from occurring that is motivated by other personal issues. Conflict resolution programs have been implemented in a variety of ways in different settings, so developing a program to fit the needs of incarcerated youth would be most beneficial (for implementation in other settings see Mauricio, Dillman-Carpentier, & Horan, 2005; Graves, Frabutt, & Vigliano; 2007).

An additional program that would be beneficial for reducing and preventing violence among incarcerated youth would be anger management training. DJJ does provide Aggression Replacement Training for some youth (see Glick, 2003), but it would be beneficial to additional anger management training for any youth that needs it (see Leeman, Gibbs, and Fuller, 1993) .

These resources or programs could be implemented in the day room when youth are engaged in unstructured activities, and may potentially result in reduced violence involvement motivated by other personal issues among incarcerated youth.

Lastly, another program option that would help youth to resort to less violence would be to provide biofeedback training. This type of training would help youth reduce the amount of violent behavior they participate in by training them to be able to monitor themselves so that they would be able to identify physiological signals that occur prior to engaging in violence (see McKinney, Gatchel, Brantley, & Harrington, 1980; L'Abate, 1999). When these potentially violent situations occur it will enable youth to take the necessary measures through conflict resolution, changing their emotional state, or by removing themselves from the situation if necessary.

### **Directions for Future Research**

This project highlights various avenues for future criminological research. There were relatively few violent incidents analyzed in this study that were motivated simultaneously by both gang and race issues. Further examination of the overlap that exists between gang and race motivated violent behavior is therefore crucial for understanding the existing culture of violence among incarcerated youth. There are also significant differences in violent incidents related to issues other than gangs or race. These incidents have unique situational dynamics and characteristics that need to be better understood and examined further in future work.

Motivational issues at the situational level should also be examined in different contexts. This includes other youth institutions, adult correctional facilities, the street, and in schools. Additionally, conducting comparison studies within and between settings would contribute to an improved comprehension of how violence involvement varies across different situational



contexts. Furthermore, analysis of the relationship between the situational context, and the characteristics of the correctional facility, community, or school in which violence occurs would be beneficial.

Lastly, research examining the relationship between situational context and the characteristics of participants should also be conducted. It is possible that individual characteristics such as racial group, gang involvement, length of gang membership, or length of incarceration are related to the violent situations in which youth participate. Routine Activities Theory has been applied to violent victimization and its association with gender, income, and marital status using the National Crime Victimization Survey (Bunch, Clay-Warner, & Lei, 2015), but similar analyses of individual demographics have not been examined in the youth correctional setting. Additionally, length of incarceration and perceptions of prison social climate have been examined among adult offenders (Casey, Day, Reynolds, 2015), and research has found that the level of violent attitudes weakens over time for gang involved incarcerated youth (Scott, 2014). But scholarship has not examined how incarcerated youth perceive their social climate over time and the relationship this potentially has with violent behavior.

### **Limitations**

As with any study, there are various limitations that need to be addressed. The data are cross-sectional and causal effects between variables cannot be determined. It is also important to note that these data were collected at a dynamic time in DJJ with various facility closings and referrals, which led to a population that consisted of only the most serious youth offenders. Future analyses will have to be conducted in similar youth correctional contexts and using longitudinal mixed methods to assist in supporting these findings and improving generalizability.

Another limitation is that the incidents were not directly observed by the interviewers, and they did not necessarily happen recently. The majority of the incidents were the most recent in which the youth had been involved, but the amount of time since the incidents varied and may have influenced how the youth recalled their experiences. There were also some incidents that were very limited in their description and details, which may also be due to the time lapse between engaging in violence and describing it. Future studies examining incarcerated youths' most recent violence experiences would assist in confirming these findings.

An intentional limitation of this study is that it focuses solely on the situational level of violence. This was a conscious decision as this is an area of research that has not been examined in youth correctional facilities. As this dissertation does not take individual or facility level characteristics into account, this is something that will need to be pursued in future work.

## **Conclusion**

This dissertation utilizes invaluable data in order to provide a unique look at the situational characteristics and dynamics of violence from the incarcerated youth perspective. The incidents provide detailed, fascinating, and useful insight into how incarcerated youth perceive the violence in which they have been involved. This is a severely limited and neglected area of scholarship, and the results contribute to both theory and policy. This research highlights the importance of understanding the situational dynamics and characteristics associated with the motivational issue in a violent incident, and the relationship between routine activities and the culture of violence that exists in the youth correctional setting.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

**1. What**

**Happened**    Victimization Only    Offending Only    Mutual Combat    Riot

?

(sequence  
of events)

**Probe:**

**What**

**started it?**

<p><b>2. What</b></p> <p><b>do you</b></p> <p><b>believe</b></p> <p><b>this was</b></p> <p><b>mostly</b></p> <p><b>about?</b></p> <p><b>Probe:</b></p> <p><b>Was this</b></p> <p><b>connected</b></p> <p><b>to a prior</b></p> <p><b>conflict,</b></p> <p><b>fight or</b></p> <p><b>argument</b></p> <p><b>?</b></p>	<p>Prior <input type="checkbox"/> Personal involvement in prior <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p><b>3. When?</b></p>	<p>Mont h</p>	<p>Year</p>	<p>Time of Day (early morning, late morning, noon, afternoon, early evening, late at night)</p>

4. In what facility? Name:  DJJ  Juvenile Hall  Jail  Adult State Prison

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Where in facility? Room /Cell, Dorm/Bunk, Shower, Day Room, Field/Rec/Yard, Kitchen/Dining, Hospital/Clinic, School, Work, Other

6. Besides you, how many people were involved? →	# others on your side	# on opposing side	7. Race/Ethnicity of opposing person/people?	Asn	Blk	Hisp	White	Other (What?)

8. Was it about race/ethnicity? YES [If yes] How did you know?

NO

9. Were they a gang member? YES [If yes] Which gang?

Street

Institutional

NO

10. Was it about a gang issue? YES [If yes] How did you know?

NO

11.	YES	[If yes] What	12. Did	YES	[If yes] Did	YES	[If needed but not received]
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Was there a weapon involved?	NO →12	weapon(s)?	anyone need medical attention?	NO → 13	they get medical attention?	NO	Why not?
13. Was staff aware of the event?	YES	13a [If yes] Was an official report taken?	YES	13b [If yes] Did you get to read this report?	YES	13c [If yes] Was the report generally accurate?	YES
			NO→13d		NO		
	NO →14	13d What happened to you and the other person/people? Anyone punished? Probe: Anything else happen?  <b>YOU</b> <span style="margin-left: 200px;"><b>OTHER(S)</b></span>					

14. Is there anything else you can tell me about this incident that can help me understand it?

Interviewer's Assessment of Events		
Gang related	Race related	Other type of violence:





<u>School</u>	-0.45	-0.2	-0.23	<u>School</u>				
<u>Other Area</u>	-0.31	-0.14	-0.16	-0.26	<u>Other Area</u>			
<u>Prior Issue</u>	-0.12	0.05	-0.001	0.13	-0.04	<u>Prior Issue</u>		
<u>Opposing Latinos</u>	-0.04	0.05	0.03	0.04	-0.05	-0.03	<u>Opposing Latinos</u>	
<u>Opposing Blacks</u>	-0.01	-0.01	0.005	0.02	-0.01	0.05	-0.06	<u>Opposing Blacks</u>
<u>Other Opposing Groups</u>	-0.05	-0.005	0.01	-0.04	0.11	-0.02	-0.05	0.03

**Appendix C – Variable Descriptives of Motivational Issues and Key Conceptual Measures**  
**(N = 740)**

	<b><u>Gang Related Incidents % (n = 287)</u></b>	<b><u>Race Related Incidents % (n = 117)</u></b>	<b><u>Other Incidents % (n = 336)</u></b>	<b><u>Total %</u></b>
<b><u>Total Individuals % (n = 715)**</u></b>	(n = 280)	(n = 116)	(n = 319)	
2	57.9	23.3	76.5	60.6
3 to 5	12.5	13.8	10.7	11.9
6 to 10	10.7	15.5	4.1	8.5
11 to 20	9.6	12.1	3.1	7.1
greater than 20	9.3	35.3	5.6	11.9
<b><u>Total Racial Groups % (n = 713) **</u></b>	(n = 273)	(n = 116)	(n = 324)	
1 Group	60.4	6.9	37.6	41.4
2 Groups	38.5	90.5	59.3	56.4
3 Groups	1.1	2.6	3.1	2.2
<b><u>Physical Seriousness %Scale 1 to 3, low to high (n = 708)**</u></b>	(n = 277)	(n = 108)	(n = 323)	
1	54.2	29.7	57.6	52
2	41.2	54.6	39.6	42.5
3	4.7	15.7	2.8	5.5
Mean	1.51	1.86	1.45	1.54
(SD)	(.587)	(.662)	(.552)	(.599)
<b><u>Incident Type % (n = 662)**</u></b>	(n = 257)	(n = 109)	(n = 296)	
Mutual Combat	56.8	26.6	65.5	55.7
Offending Only	10.9	14.7	17.6	14.5
Victimization Only	8.2	4.6	8.1	7.6
Riot	24.1	54.1	8.8	22.2
<b><u>Institutional Seriousness % Scale 1 to 4, low to high (n = 662)*</u></b>	(n = 258)	(n = 108)	(n = 296)	
1	28.3	27.8	28.7	28.4
2	26.7	16.7	31.8	27.3
3	27.5	42.6	28.4	30.4
4	17.5	12.9	11.1	13.9

Mean	2.34	2.41	2.23	2.3
(SD)	(1.07)	(1.03)	(.986)	(1.03)
<b><u>Incident Location %</u></b>				
<b><u>(n = 710)**</u></b>	(n= 275)	(n = 112)	(n = 323)	
Day Room	27.3	27.6	41.2	33.7
Dormitory	7.6	6.3	13.3	10
Recreation Area	12.4	16.1	13.6	13.5
School	33.1	33.9	17.6	26.2
Other Area	19.6	16.1	14.3	16.6
<b><u>Number of Opposing</u></b>				
<b><u>Latinos** (n = 740)</u></b>	(n = 287)	(n= 117)	(n = 336)	
0	30.3	59.8	49.7	43.8
1	46.3	18.8	41.7	40
2 to 9	15.7	9.4	5.6	9.1
10 or greater	7.7	12	3	6.2
<b><u>Number of Opposing</u></b>				
<b><u>Blacks** (n = 740)</u></b>	(n = 287)	(n= 117)	(n = 336)	
0	72.8	41.9	61.3	62.7
1	23.3	25.6	34.5	28.8
2 to 9	3.5	19.7	2.7	5.7
10 or greater	0.4	12.8	1.5	2.8
<b><u>Number of Opposing</u></b>				
<b><u>Other Racial Groups**</u></b>	(n = 286)	(n = 117)	(n = 335)	
<b><u>(n = 738)</u></b>	(n = 286)	(n = 117)	(n = 335)	
0	95.1	94	84.8	90.2
1	4.5	4.3	14	8.8
2 or greater	0.4	1.7	1.2	1

\*\* p < .001; \* p < .05; † p < .10

## **Appendix D-Frequency of Gang and Race Specific Themes**

<b><u>Gang (n=287)</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency</u></b>	<b><u>Race (n=117)</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency</u></b>
Gang Dislike/rivalry	104 (36.2%)	Racial Dislike/Intent	43 (36.8%)
Rival Disrespect	78 (27.2%)	Racial Slur/Disrespect	42 (35.9%)
Gang Loyalty	33 (11.5%)	Race Loyalty	36 (30.8%)
Gang Dynamics	60 (20.9%)	Racial Politics	14 (12%)

**Appendix E: Frequency of Themes Unique to Incidents Related to Other Personal Issues**

**Code**

Minor Personal Issues	108 (32.1%)
Verbal Insult	52 (15.5%)
Friendly Assistance	33 (10%)
Over escalation/Misunderstanding	49 (14.6%)
Just Fought	25 (7.4%)