2

The Flatlands of Oakland and the Youth Control Complex

The popular demonization and "dangerousation" of the young now justifies responses to youth that were unthinkable 20 years ago, including criminalization and imprisonment . . . and zero tolerance policies that model schools after prisons.

—Henry Giroux, *Youth in a Suspect Society,* 2009

It's like they put a bomb on my back, but I was the one that pulled the trigger.

—eighteen-year-old Flaco, 2003

The Flatlands

On any given sunny afternoon, one can find a concentration of hundreds of young people hanging out along an eighty-four-block span of International Boulevard, the main thoroughfare in Oakland, that streams through the four-mile heart of the poor and working-class districts of the city. This part of Oakland is known by some people as the "flatlands" and is associated by many with crime, violence, and drugs. A 2009 Discovery Channel documentary, *Gang Wars: Oakland,* claims that there are "ten thousand gang members here who rule with lethal force" and labels the neighborhoods that I studied as the "killing zone." In 2008, this part of Oakland made national headlines when a transit officer at a BART (sub-

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way) station was videotaped shooting and killing a young Black man named Oscar Grant. Grant was shot in the back while he was handcuffed and lying on the ground. Some in the community firmly believed that the killing of Oscar Grant was not an isolated incident. Many activists protested and claimed that the killing of Oscar Grant was a consequence of unchecked police harassment and brutality.

A few months later, Oakland again appeared on the national news: this time, a young Black man, by the name of Lovelle Mixon, shot and killed four police officers before police gunned him down, killing him as well. A few of the young men in this study, though they had never before participated in any form of social protest, took part in demonstrations that protested the killing of these two young Black men. Local and national news-media outlets reported these protests as "riots," delegitimizing their appeals for social justice and reinforcing images of wild, criminal youth.[1] Young people from Oakland, in the media and public imagination, seem to be synonymous with violence, poverty, drugs, gangs, and hopelessness. By 2010 an official from California's governor's office had declared Oakland to have a "dire" gang problem.[2]

But far from criminal "superpredators," most youths in Oakland are living productive, normal, everyday lives, surviving and persisting in a city that hosts the fourth-largest violent crime rate in the country. Some gather on street corners looking for excitement. They simply hang out on International Boulevard to pass the time, live, shop, court, work, or socialize. But some of them are active in the informal economy and are on the street to prostitute, sell drugs, or pirate stolen merchandise.[3] Traveling down this street, at the intersection of 14th Avenue and International Boulevard, we begin to find hallmarks representative of much of the flatlands: liquor stores, small businesses, mothers walking with small children, ethnic restaurants, and dilapidated buildings boarded up with plywood. In 2000, the U.S. Census conducted a "case study" in this part of Oakland and found that 33 percent of the population residing "near East 14th Street" (the former name for International Boulevard) lived below poverty.[4]

From 14th Avenue until about 19th Avenue, we find a large number of Southeast Asian businesses and residents. Some of the residents of this neighborhood are Cambodians who arrived in the United States as refugees of the Khmer Rogue and have since developed a strong ethnic enclave

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in the midst of a large Black and Latino/a presence. In this small community, young Asian men have formed gangs to protect themselves from larger Black and Latino gangs and to produce street-based alternatives to their parents' struggles to make ends meet.[5] One of the youths in the larger sample of this study, Sunny, grew up in this neighborhood. His story shows how Southeast Asian boys have also become criminalized when they don't fall into the expectations constructed by model-minority stereotypes.

From approximately 20th Avenue to 54th Avenue, the boulevard features mostly Mexican businesses and residents. This part of the flatlands is the most densely populated area in Oakland, and the level of heavy traffic up and down the boulevard reflects this. Buses pass by, constantly loaded with a multicultural array of passengers traveling to and from school and work. Paleteros, vendors pushing small shopping-cart-sized ice-cream containers on wheels, ring their bells to attract attention and, hopefully, a customer. "Scrapers," late-1980s and early-1990s Oldsmobile and Buick sedans with twenty-two-inch wheels and flashy paint jobs, make up part of the heavy traffic. Trucks and large SUVs, with even larger twenty-four- or twenty-six-inch chrome wheels, also cruise the boulevard. Most of the vehicles that we see are old and dented and appear ready to break down, perhaps explaining why a heavy concentration of mechanics, auto-body garages, and car-audio shops are littered across this section of the flatlands.

Latino/a and Black youth sit at bus stops, stand on corners, walk to and fro, and eat at the many taco trucks, mobile Mexican restaurants, which line the street. In this part of Oakland, the city has placed surveillance cameras on street corners. Police officers drive around on noisy Harley Davidson motorcycles and in patrol cars. The motorcycle officers often hide behind buildings, looking for drivers who appear "suspicious." The victims of these stops are typically nonwhite youths, who "match descriptions of criminal suspects," or undocumented immigrants, and their vehicles are confiscated until they can show up at the police station with a driver's license (which they cannot attain without papers proving citizenship or legal residency). The patrol-car officers stop and search young people, looking for drugs, weapons, or evidence of "gang activity."

A critical mass of Black residents begins to emerge after 55th Avenue and grows the further we travel into East Oakland through 98th Avenue. Black youths bustle through the boulevard in these parts. Some are walk-

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ing to and from Heavenscourt Middle School, the only middle school located on International. Others make their way to Food King, a dilapidated nonfranchise supermarket which has been in business in this community for over twenty-five years; it is the only American-foods supermarket on International. Barbershops, a furniture store, a funeral home, beauty salons, and barbecue restaurants are some of the Black-owned businesses we find along this stretch. Black churches, some in large buildings which take up half the block and others in small storefronts, are scattered around. Liquor stores become larger and more numerous in this area. Recently remodeled, colorful public housing complexes face the boulevard. A large group of Black youths live in these complexes. We will later return to shadow Tyrell, who lived in this area.

An increase in the Latino/a population over the past twenty-five years is signaled by a handful of Mexican food stores and restaurants in the area. Police patrol cars drive around sporadically; young people are often stopped and searched here, as well. In 2009, I witnessed a Highway Patrol officer dragging a teenage Black girl out of a 1970s Chevrolet Caprice in front of Heavenscourt Middle School, over one mile away from the nearest highway. Even though she was in handcuffs and passive, the officer pulled her with enough force to make her scream in pain. As she fell to the ground, the officer continued to drag her as her arms and face scraped on the asphalt.

In this chapter, I argue that criminalization is embedded in Oakland's social order, that it is a fabric of everyday life. To understand why young people are policed, punished, and harassed in this city, we have to gain an understanding of Oakland's historical legacy of criminalizing young people. Oakland has been a pioneer in the criminalization of racialized youth. At one point, during the 1960s, many of the punitive criminal justice policies that would later be implemented throughout the country were created and put into practice in Oakland. Following the national advent of zero-tolerance policing, mandatory sentencing, gang enhancements (an added sentence to felony cases when the court finds a defendant guilty of committing a crime for the benefit of the gang), and mass incarceration, the city developed a powerful youth control complex, which continues to grip the lives of the young men in this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the youth control complex and its effects on young people.

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Why Oakland?

Oakland's large Black and Latino/a communities, pervasive system of policing and surveillance, dynamic youth subcultures, and large working-class and poor populations make it a compelling place for the study of inner-city youth and punitive social control.[6] These factors combine to create a social landscape which epitomizes the sociological circumstances of other cities with large Black and Latino/a populations in the United States. Historian Chris Rhomberg argues in his book *No There There: Race, Class and Political Community in Oakland* that Oakland is an ideal city for the study of urban problems: "[Oakland] is large enough to feature problems of concentration, industrialization, and population change typical of American urban centers, yet small enough to permit observations of its social and political relations as a whole."[7]

Oakland is located in the sixth most populous metropolitan area in the United States, the San Francisco Bay Area. There are 460,000 people residing in Oakland and 7.4 million others living in the greater Bay Area.[8] Oakland is a young city, with 25 percent of its population under eighteen years old and 10 percent of its residents eighteen to twenty-four years old. As of 2006, Oakland's Whites made up 36 percent of its population; Blacks, 30 percent; and Latinos, 26 percent.[9] Despite these fairly equal numbers in population, youth of color are heavily segregated from White youth; over 70 percent of Black children and over 50 percent of Latino children live in neighborhoods which are segregated from Whites.[10] In the flatlands, White youths are a rare population. The majority of Oakland's Whites are middle class and live in the hills or foothills.[11] The city's poverty rates reflect some of this segregation: Black children in Oakland live in poverty at a rate of 30 percent; Latinos, 16 percent; and Whites, 5.2 percent.[12] Oakland has historically been known as the "Detroit of the West," because of its industrial economy in the mid-twentieth century.[13] More recently, since the 1980s, as in Detroit, Oakland residents have experienced massive job losses due to deindustrialization. As of 2010, the unemployment rate for Oakland was 17.7 percent.[14]

One can make a connection between the expansion of punitive social control and capitalist globalization. As industry fled, Oakland experienced massive job losses. This process became one of the contribut-

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ing economic factors in the changing character of social control in the communities from which the young men in this study came. Sociologist William Robinson argues that capitalist globalization has resulted in a vast restructuring of the world economy, integrating all national economies into a transnational global economy.[15] Essentially, the proliferation of neoliberalism in the past three decades has erected a transnational global economy that frees capital to prey on vulnerable populations and resources and facilitates a transition from social-welfare to social-control, security societies. In order to understand the "trouble with young men" which takes place in the new millennium, we must understand how local troubles are often derived from global processes. In examining its effects on young, poor, racialized men in Oakland, neoliberalism has played a contributing role in producing marginalized populations abandoned by the left arm of the state (welfare) and gripped by the punitive right arm of the state (criminal justice). Today's working-class youths encounter a radically different world than they would have encountered just a few decades ago. These young people no longer "learn to labor"[16] but instead "prepare for prison."[17] Although it is well beyond the scope of this book to discuss global processes, the stories in this study may provide insight to how the global phenomenon of punishing the poor and deep investment in security industries have come to impact the everyday lives of marginalized young men, not just in Oakland but around the globe.[18]

Since the 1940s, Blacks have had a strong presence in Oakland. Blacks migrated from the South to Oakland during World War II, attracted by war-industry jobs on the shipping docks of the city. By the 1960s, Blacks in Oakland became heavily involved in the civil rights and Black Power movements.[19] By the 1980s, Oakland's Black communities began to experience an intensifying intersection of heavy unemployment, the "crack epidemic," punitive crime policies, and the influx of large numbers of Latino/a immigrants. Historically, young Blacks in Oakland have faced a lack of economic opportunities and excessive criminalization. Historian Donna Murch, who has written a book on the Black Panthers, demonstrates how this group of young people was criminalized and systematically attacked by the state, by way of crime-control tactics. She explains the impact of the combination of job loss and increased juvenile policing:

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> In contrast to their parents, who entered the San Francisco Bay Area in a time of economic boom, postwar youth faced a rapidly disappearing industrial base along with increased school, neighborhood, and job segregation. . . . In response to the rapidly growing, and disproportionately young, migrant population, city and state government developed a program to combat "juvenile delinquency" that resulted in high rates of police harassment, arrest, and incarceration.[20]

Much of Oakland's Latino/a population arrived during the 1980s and 1990s as immigrants, primarily from Mexico. Attracted to low-income housing in traditionally Black neighborhoods, many Latino/as moved there. Today, many traditionally Black neighborhoods have Latino/a populations constituting up to 40 percent of their residents. These once-Black areas have now become "Blaxican," neighborhoods where Latino/a (specifically Mexican) culture and Black culture continually meet and mesh. The close proximity of Black and Latino/a youth has created common subcultures, interracial relationships, and common institutional experiences, including similar punitive interactions with schools, police, and community members. The majority of the boys in this study analyzed their experiences as a process of collective criminalization and racialization. Young people believed that police, schools, and community members treated both Black and Latino/a youths in the very same ways. Oakland's history may provide an answer for why this belief is prevalent. Criminalization and punishment were practiced and perfected on Black populations. By the time a critical mass of poor Latino/as arrived in Oakland, the community and its institutions had a clear system by which to incorporate this new population: criminalization and punitive social control.

A History of Racialized Social Control in Oakland

Oakland has a long history of controlling racialized populations through punitive force. Criminologist Geoff Ward defines racialized social control as the regulation and repression of a population based on its race.[21] Ward argues that social control becomes a negotiated racial order. In other words, the primary way by which racialized populations are regulated is through punitive social control, which in turn establishes social control

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as a race-creating system.[22] Murch connects race and class with punitive social control in Oakland:

> In Oakland . . . racial anxieties about the city's rapidly changing demographics led to an increasing integration of school and recreational programs with police and penal authorities. In this context, the discourse of "juvenile delinquency" took on a clear racial caste, leading to wide-scale policing and criminalization of Black youth. While extensive police harassment and arrest of Black migrants started during the population influx of World War II, it vastly intensified in the period of economic decline that ensued.[23]

Many noted scholars have argued that today's U.S. criminal justice system has become a central mechanism for controlling and managing unemployed and racialized "surplus" populations.[24] Scholars contend that the civil rights movement, economic crises, and other structural shifts in contemporary society have facilitated the expansion of the criminal justice system and punitive crime-control policies.[25] The civil rights movement of the 1960s provoked mass fear in mainstream America about urban ghettos. Sporadic "race riots" sparked white fright and flight. The call for "law and order" was a response to rising crime rates in the 1960s and signaled opposition to the ongoing civil rights and antiwar movements.[26] The law-and-order campaign of the late 1960s laid the foundation for a "tough on crime" movement in the 1970s and '80s, which became the philosophy of the American criminal justice system for decades thereafter.[27] Ronald Reagan's "War on Drugs" solidified this movement into a mass-incarceration machine.[28]

Also wrapped up in the law-and-order movement was the subtle message to citizens about the supposed rise in Black criminal behavior. By 1969, a Harris poll reported that 81 percent of the public believed that law and order had broken down, with a majority blaming "Negroes, who start riots, and communists."[29] The *New York Times,* analyzing Richard Nixon's law-and-order panacea, announced, "[Nixon] undoubtedly will emphasize order in the cities, for that is his best issue. . . . He thinks he can tame the ghettos and then reconstruct them."[30] Because Oakland was one of the nation's hubs for the Black Power movement, it became a target for politicians such as Nixon and government agencies such as the CIA. The Black

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Panthers—a Black youth organization started in Oakland, California, that worked for justice in the Black community—was labeled a "criminal enterprise" by the CIA and the Oakland police, and, as a result, its members were harassed, brutalized, and incarcerated.[31] Eventually, the CIA developed a sophisticated program known as COINTELPRO, designed to spy on, entrap, sabotage, and incarcerate members of the Black Panther Party.

In Oakland, the person responsible for "taming the ghetto," and specifically the Black Panthers, was Edwin Meese. Meese infamously implemented some of the city's harshest policing policies as Oakland's district attorney during the 1960s. His policies sent many Black Panther members to prison. Meese was also responsible for the infamous crackdown at People's Park in Berkeley, California, in 1969. People's Park was a park near the University of California campus that had been taken over by student and community activists. Governor Ronald Reagan denounced this takeover and chastised UC-Berkeley students, stating that UC-Berkeley was "a haven for communist sympathizers, protesters and sex deviants."[32] Under Meese's advice, Reagan declared a state of emergency and sent in the National Guard. One student was killed by police-inflicted shotgun wounds. Many others were severely injured.[33] Meese later served as Reagan's attorney general during the 1980s, implementing the same criminalization and repression tactics that he developed in Oakland in other Black communities throughout the nation. Practices and discourses of criminalization and punishment of young people in the new millennium could be directly traced to the state repression of social movements of the 1960s.

Given the passion with which the Panthers were pursued, it's easy to forget they were primarily a youth organization. Most members were still in their teens, a neglected fact that emphasizes Oakland's long history of targeting youth of color. The Black Panthers began because Black youth in Oakland grew frustrated with being criminalized in the late 1960s.[34] Ironically, the founding of the Black Panther Party sparked some of the most intense criminalization of Black youth. The FBI, for example, declared the Black Panthers "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country" and used COINTELPRO to set up Black Panther Party members for conflict and incarceration.[35] Such programs effectively diminished the Black Panthers' influence by the 1970s. Left without resources for mobilization amid punitive securitization, deindustrialization and the decline of

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social-welfare programs, gangs and drug dealing became a new modality for some marginalized young people in Oakland.[36]

By the 1970s, conservatives such as Meese latched onto a few studies arguing that rehabilitation did not work and pushed for incapacitation through zero-tolerance policing and longer prison terms.[37] Incapacitation proponents argued that as long as an offender was locked up, he could not commit crimes on the streets.[38] The Reagan administration solidified the "tough on crime" campaign by emphasizing "just deserts" and eradicating what was left of rehabilitation programs. Funding for social programs which focused on rehabilitating convicted offenders or preventing the emergence of new offenders was eliminated.[39]

By 1987, the California legislature declared a "state of crisis caused by violent street gangs whose members threaten, terrorize, and commit a multitude of crimes against the peaceful citizens of their neighborhoods."[40] The legislature claimed that there were nearly six hundred criminal street gangs operating in California; Los Angeles alone saw 328 gang-related murders in 1986.[41] By 1988, California had passed the Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act, which required longer sentences for offenders recognized as gang members. Black and Latino youths made up the vast majority of people labeled gang members in California.[42]

Following the tough-on-youth crime trend, California voters passed Proposition 21 in 2000. Among other strict reforms, this measure made it a felony to cause more than four hundred dollars worth of graffiti damage (before 2000, a felony charge for property damage required fifty thousand dollars or more of damage). Prop. 21 also targeted youth gang members specifically, allowing youth to be prosecuted for crimes committed by peers if the defendant was deemed to be part of the gang. Many of the boys in this study had been sentenced more severely under Prop. 21. These boys, along with many others in the community, had come to use Prop. 21 as a verb. They would say, "I got Prop. 21'd" or "My brother got Prop. 21'd," referring to the added sentence to their transgression. To compound the problem, sloppy gang labeling by law enforcement—which will include young men in the database on the slightest provocation, such as wearing a certain color, dressing a certain way, or associating with known gang members—has become a serious danger for racialized youth.[43] Being placed in this database increases a young person's chances of being tried as a gang mem-

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ber and given an enhanced sentence for committing any crime thereafter. This labeling leads to harsher punishment, a higher likelihood of being tried as an adult, increased surveillance, and a permanent criminal record.

From 2002 to 2005 Oakland continued to focus on punitive social control in attempts to reduce the crime rate. The city prioritized funding for law enforcement, resulting in declines in spending for educational and social programs. In 2002, Oakland spent $128,331 per law-enforcement employee; by 2005, this rate had increased to $190,140.[44] This approach was further evident in the demands made by the Oakland City Council to the city's new chief of police: "You said you can't arrest our way out of this problem. Well, you sure better try. We all have our jobs to do, and your job is to arrest people."[45] As this book went to press in 2010, Oakland's district attorney imposed its first gang injunction on a neighborhood in north Oakland. A gang injunction allows prosecutors and police to impose sanctions on people labeled as gang members for noncriminal acts, such as associating with other labeled gang members or visiting a neighborhood.

Mass Incarceration

Since the 1970s, the incarcerated population in the United States has increased fourfold to over 2.3 million. As of 2007, one out of every one hundred Americans was behind bars.[46] Massive race and age disparities are prevalent in this incarcerated population. One of every nine Black males aged twenty to thirty-four is incarcerated. One of every twenty-five Latino males and one of every fifty-six White males aged twenty to thirty-four are also incarcerated in the United States. Roughly 27 percent of the incarcerated population is Latino, while it represents 15 percent of the total U.S. population. For Blacks, the statistics demonstrate even deeper disparities: roughly 50 percent of the incarcerated population is Black, while it represents 14 percent of the total U.S. population. In 2007, about 16.6 percent of all Black males were or had previously been incarcerated; 7.7 percent of all Latino males and 2.6 percent of White males had the same status. The chance of a Black male going to prison sometime in his lifetime is one in three, compared to one in six for Latino men and one in seventeen for White men.[47] Thirty percent of juveniles arrested for crime are youth of color, yet they make up 58 percent of those sentenced as adults.[48]

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Explanations for why these kinds of punitive and racialized social-control disparities developed are abundant. Sociologist Loïc Wacquant argues that the practices of the punitive state, which have led to mass incarceration, have become the fourth stage of racial domination for African Americans. Following slavery, the Jim Crow South, and the ghetto, the prison, according to Wacquant, has become a central pillar of racial inequality and a space in which to house poor, disreputable, racialized populations.[49] Other scholars argue that conservative politics and a fear of crime led to a "culture of control" whereby mass incarceration became a possibility.[50] Still others argue that economic restructuring and the failure of markets in local and global contexts led to punitive policies and a boom in prison building.[51]

Bridging the material and cultural, Christian Parenti explains that both economic and social crises are responsible for the development of mass incarceration.[52] Wacquant also bridges paradigms by arguing that mass incarceration is a system by which the state deals with the urban disorders brought about by economic deregulation, imposing specific kinds of unsecure and underpaid jobs on racialized and poor populations.[53] In addition, he contends that a "moral theater" is performed by politicians who demonize the poor in order to disguise the state's inability to provide everyday citizens with economic and social protection.[54] Ultimately, Wacquant argues, incarceration has become a core political institution by which poverty has become penalized and a punitive state has developed.[55]

I argue that punitive social control is embedded in the everyday lives of marginalized young males and that the state has not abandoned the poor but instead has punitively asserted itself into various institutions in the community. Ironically, this system of punitive social control, historically developed to control dissent, ends up developing the conditions by which some of these young people become politically conscious and politicized.

Collateral Consequences

While there are many sophisticated explanations for why unprecedented punitive policies and incarceration rates have developed in the United States over the past forty years, few scholars have examined the everyday effects of this phenomenon on marginalized populations.[56] Mass incarceration was an everyday reality for the boys I studied in Oakland.[57]

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Fourteen of the boys in this study had parents in prison or jail during the three-year span that I studied them.[58] Many of the older men in the neighborhood—who often had considerable influence on the youth—were convicts. Often, they would return from prison to the neighborhood, attempt to change, find few alternatives, and eventually prey on young people to make money. This would inevitably lead many of them to return to jail or prison or to influence young people to commit crimes that would lead them to incarceration.[59]

When the forty boys in the main group were asked to write down the names of close friends and family members who were currently incarcerated, all of them knew at least six people. One of them, Spider, knew thirty-two. He wrote down their name and age and rated, from 1 to 5, how close he felt to them. When the boys were asked to respond to the question "From 1 to 5, 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest, how likely do you think you are to get incarcerated in the next few months?" all of them responded with at least a 4, meaning that they all felt that their chances of being incarcerated were high or extremely high. Many of the boys held the same belief that criminologists Mark Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind have articulated: "It is not difficult to imagine that neighborhoods beset by social ills are not well served when boys and girls perceive that going to prison may be a more likely prospect than going to college."[60] The young men in this study discussed prison as a familiar place. Since many of the adults they looked up to were convicts, as opposed to college graduates, and police and school personnel often treated them like prisoners, the youths became familiar with the culture and rules of prison life and even attached a sense of glamour and admiration to it, before ever serving a day in an adult jail or prison.[61]

The effects of punitive social-control policies and mass incarceration are so widespread that scholars have come up with the term "collateral consequences" to describe them.[62] The collateral consequences of mass incarceration are those negative predicaments in which families, communities, and individuals find themselves as a result of their incarceration or the incarceration of their family members or neighbors. Mauer and Chesney-Lind argue that "with the unprecedented expansion of the prison system over three decades has come a complex network of invisible punishments affecting families and communities nationwide."[63]

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Studies have found that the children of the incarcerated suffer psychologically, their families suffer economically, their communities lose adults who would otherwise contribute to incomes and families, and former inmates lose the right to vote.[64] The aftereffects of incarceration include permanent stigma, the loss of opportunities to receive federal and state assistance (e.g., public housing and student loans) or accredited certification in several trades (e.g., automotive, construction, and plumbing), and the loss of one of the fundamental rights of citizenship, the right to vote. These consequences lead to the preclusion of released inmates from positive social networks and to chronic unemployment.[65] Other, more residual collateral consequences are uncovered when we study these marginalized populations at a more in-depth, social relational level.

Very few urban ethnographies have examined punishment as a system that grips the lives of inner-city, street-oriented youths.[66] Sociologist Alice Goffman notes that, "although ethnographic accounts should arguably capture what enhanced policing and supervision has meant for the dynamics of daily life in poor minority communities, most ethnographies were written before the criminal justice system became such a prevalent institution in the life of the poor."[67] In the past, ethnographers reported that police had a minimal presence in the inner city.[68] One exception is sociologist Elijah Anderson's 1990 study "The Police and the Black Male," in which he found young black males encountering constant surveillance and overpolicing: "The police appear to engage in an informal policy of monitoring young black men as a means of controlling crime, and often they seem to go beyond the bounds of duty."[69] In Oakland, policing, surveillance, and criminalization played a major role in the lives of black and Latino street-oriented youths. Street-oriented youths were equally as concerned and impacted by punishment as they were by violence, drugs, crime, and gangs. Not only had the criminal justice system become a prevalent part of the lives of these young people, it had also embedded its logic and practices into other institutions in the community, which then also stigmatized and criminalized the youths. Various institutions in the community became part of a ubiquitous system of punishment that impacted the boys on a daily basis.

These consequences are best understood by taking into account that the criminal justice system has been used as a template for solving other

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social problems, such as poverty, school truancy, school failure, family conflict, and youth delinquency.[70] Legal scholar Jonathan Simon argues that this punitive shift has resulted in a society that is governed through crime.[71] He contends that crime is no longer regulated solely by the criminal justice system but that policing has been extended to other institutions such as schools, welfare offices, workplaces, and domestic spheres. For example, schools deal with "problem students" as potential criminals, sometimes referring them to police before they have even committed a crime. Thus, teachers become like prison guards, monitoring potential threats and making sure students follow strict orders. In fact, Simon argues, the role of government in the new millennium is to govern through crime. From this perspective, the government appeases citizens by giving them a sense of security through harsh criminal sanctions and strict school and workplace regulations. Private companies bolster such arrangements by developing state-of-the-art auto, home, personal, and business security systems. Simon argues that when we govern through crime, ideas about dealing with criminals become embedded in everyday life. Citizens and government alike use these ideas to "frame all social action as a problem of governance."[72]

According to Simon, the language of the criminal justice system has so permeated all aspects of social life that we have come to believe that crime control is the solution to all social ills. He argues that the "technologies, discourses, and metaphors of crime and criminal justice have become more visible features of all kinds of institutions, where they can easily gravitate into new opportunities for governance."[73] One concrete example of this is zero-tolerance policies in schools. Zero-tolerance policies derive from policing strategies, developed in the 1980s, that were designed to crack down on serious crime by punishing small offenses which were thought to lead to more serious crimes. Some schools in my study have implemented "three strikes" programs, in which students are referred to police after their third disciplinary infraction. This policy is modeled on California's "three strikes" law, which requires a mandatory sentence of twenty-five years to life for anyone convicted of a third felony. Simon concludes that "social problems of all varieties are now treated as a crime problem: poverty, adolescent deviance, and workplace and school conflict."[74] In this book, I build on Simon's work by empirically demonstrat-

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ing how governing through crime functions on an everyday level and how this new form of governance creates blocked opportunity, negative credentials, and, paradoxically, a political conscious for the boys in this study.

Sociologist Devah Pager argues that the state serves as a "credentializing institution, providing official and public certification of those among us who have been convicted of wrongdoing."[75] Scores of young Black and Latino men receive credentials from the state that permanently mark them as incompetent and dangerous citizens. Further, Pager argues that "the credential of a criminal record, like educational or professional credentials, constitutes a formal and enduring classification of social status, which can be used to regulate access and opportunity across numerous social, economic, and political domains."[76] I found that the boys in this study experienced the process of receiving negative credentials, even prior to having a criminal record. In the era of mass incarceration, negative credentials go beyond a criminal record; some young and poor Black and Latino boys are conferred with negative credentials from a young age. Negative credentials in this sense come in the form of the criminalization of style and behaviors labeled as deviant at school, by police, and in the community. Institutions in the community coalesce to mark young people as dangerous risks for noncriminal deviant behavior and, as such, deny them affirmation and dignified treatment through stigmatizing and exclusionary practices. As a result, young people strive for dignity, so that their social relations, interactions, and everyday activities become organized around maintaining their freedom and feeling empowered in a social landscape that seems to deny them basic human acknowledgment.[77] While some scholars believe that these kinds of young people are aggressively searching for respect, for others to pay them homage and help them earn their "stripes," I find that these young men are, at a more basic level, striving for dignity, demanding to be treated as fellow citizens who are innocent until proven guilty. Working for dignity has to do more with a sense of humanity than a sense of power. Social psychologists who study the law have found that the way that people experience the legal system has much more to do with whether they feel they have been treated fairly than with the actual legal outcome. "Procedures and procedural behavior that violate basic norms of politeness will be seen as unfair both because the basic normative rules that are violated are valued

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in their own right and because impolite behavior denies the recipient's dignity as a full-status member of the group."[78] In other words, marginalized Black and Latino young men's actions must be understood in the context of wanting to be acknowledged, to feel accepted, to feel human, instead of the typical assessment that they are power-hungry, preemptive, respect-seeking individuals, as most accounts make them out to be. In the era of mass incarceration, when marginalized young people are governed through crime and marked with negative credentials, many strive to maintain their dignity and persist in a social ecology where they are managed by a youth control complex.

The Youth Control Complex

The youth control complex is a ubiquitous system of criminalization molded by the synchronized, systematic punishment meted out by socializing and social control institutions. This complex is the unique whole derived from the sum of the punitive parts that young people encounter. While being called a "thug" by a random adult may seem trivial to some people, when a young person is called a "thug" by a random adult, told by a teacher that he or she will never amount to anything, and frisked by a police officer, all in the same day, this combination becomes greater than the sum of its parts. It becomes a unique formation—the youth control complex—taking a toll on the mind and future outcomes of this young person. This complex is the combined effect of the web of institutions, schools, families, businesses, residents, media, community centers, and the criminal justice system, that collectively punish, stigmatize, monitor, and criminalize young people in an attempt to control them.

The youth control complex is composed of material and symbolic criminalization. Material criminalization includes police harassment, exclusion from businesses and public recreation spaces, and the enforcement of zero-tolerance policies that lead to detention rooms, school suspensions, and incarceration. Symbolic criminalization includes the surveillance, profiling, stigma, and degrading interactions that young people regularly endure. Symbolic punishment, as it relates to race, can be understood as "racial microaggressions."[79] Racial microaggressions are those subtle acts of racism that people of color experience on a daily

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basis, such as being followed by security at a store, being stopped by police for matching the description of a criminal gang member, or being ignored at school by counselors because they are not expected to make it to college. These are microaggressions because at any given moment, the police, security, and counselors can justify their behavior by saying something like, "That was not racist; I was following the law." If a young person complains and calls this racism, authorities often retort by claiming the youth "is playing the race card." Although a few occasional encounters with these racial microaggressions may not prove to be harmful, consistent negative encounters lead young people to become adversarial toward the system, to lose faith in it, to resist against it, or to build resilience skills to cope. As nineteen-year-old Emiliano, a former gang member who became politically active, told me, "Racism makes some people break, but it makes others break records." Emiliano believed that punitive policing, zero-tolerance school policies, and the criminalization of Black and Brown youth in the media are all part of a system of racism that is intentionally attempting to incapacitate young people of color. One result, for example, was Emiliano's understanding of punishment as a central struggle for young, poor people of color and his belief that this is one of the central mechanisms by which they became politically active.

Emiliano and many of the other youths developed political identities based on their resistance to criminalization and the youth control complex. Marginalized young people who encounter racialized punitive treatment are "not just humans-in-the-making, but resourceful social actors who take an active role in shaping their daily experiences."[80] I found that the young men in this study recognized, had a clear analysis of, and were resisting the criminalization they encountered. This resistance came in different forms. Some resisted by committing violent crime, others by organizing themselves and blocking off their streets with stolen cars and concrete slabs so police cars were unable to access them; and others resisted by becoming political organizers and returning to school. Much of the literature on mass incarceration has not been able to account for agency and resistance in the people most impacted by the punitive state. Furthermore, some scholars have assumed that people in the ghetto are socially disorganized and are not able to persist and create their own social efficacy—the ability to take control of their social settings in order to solve social prob-

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lems they encounter.[81] Agency is lost and the ghetto incapacitated. In contrast, the young people in this study were constantly resisting. Some of their deviance was a form of resistance to punitive social control.

Whereas some of the young men attempted to overcome their criminalization by resisting, others embraced the support they received from the few institutional actors who acknowledged them. Youths who encountered less punitive forms of control were able to see themselves overcoming the youth control complex. In this sense, those who desisted did so because they encountered an alternative form of social control, one that was "informal, decentralized, inclusive and non-stigmatic, lying somewhere outside the tentacles of the organized state systems of criminal law, criminal justice, imprisonment, and punishment."[82] But while most adults in the community might attempt to support young people, they may be limited by inadequate policies, philosophies, programming, or financial resources to provide deviant youths with successful alternatives that might allow them to reform. As such, these often well-intended adults often fall back on the dominant resources available to them: zero-tolerance policies, punitive policing, and criminal justice discourses and programs. Oakland has a long history of managing marginalized young people through punitive social control, criminalization, and marking them with negative credentials.

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3

The Labeling Hype

Coming of Age in the Era of Mass Incarceration

> The disparaging view of young people has promulgated the rise of a punishing and (in)security industry whose discourses, technologies, and practices have become visible across a wide range of spaces and institutions.
>
> —Henry Giroux, *Youth in a Suspect Society,* 2009

> Overall, ethnic minority youths, gang or non-gang, resent the "dissing" (disrespect) meted out by patrol officers. . . . Once youths have begun to reject the law and its underlying values, they often develop a resistance orientation and take a defiant and destructive stance.
>
> —James Diego Vigil, *A Rainbow of Gangs,* 2002

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Tyrell, a Black youth, and Jose, a Latino youth, both sixteen years old, sat on a splintered wood bench at the bus stop on the corner of 35th and International, in front of Hernandez Meat Market. Right above them, a pig and the head of a cow, painted on the meat-market wall, stared straight down at them. A street sign, adjacent to the bus stop, read, "All activity on this block is being recorded." I leaned back on the sign, as I observed and listened to Tyrell and Jose. They looked around: Jose stared

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at people in cars, while Tyrell looked at a group of four teenage Black boys walking across the street.

I was shadowing Tyrell and Jose as they made their way home from school. Tyrell lived close to 65th Avenue; and Jose, past 80th Avenue. They were having a conversation about their principal. "Man! Mr. Schwartz is an asshole! He be on one, man [gets crazy]!" Tyrell told Jose. Jose rubbed his head and replied, "Dude just called the police on me today." When I asked why, he answered, "'Cause he said I was threatening him. But all I did was tell him that if he called the police, they had nothing on me. . . . He said, 'Oh, yeah, all right. Let's see.' And then he called them." Jose dug into the baggy black jeans' pocket that sat close to his knee and handed me a yellow citation given to him by the police officer. At the top it read, "Notice to Appear," with the number 0188546XX. In the middle was Jose's violation: "CPC 647 Dist. Peace." "Dude [police officer] came by and just started writing me a ticket. He said he would arrest me, but he had some other shit to do."

"What did you do?" I asked.

"Shit, disturbed the peace at school. . . . I talked back to the principal. That's what I get."

Tyrell responded, "Homey, that's nothing. You should see all the times they've stopped me for little shit, like looking at them crazy or walking down the street."

During three years of observations I counted forty-two citations imposed on the boys. Loitering, disturbing the peace, drinking in public, not wearing a properly fitted bicycle helmet, and violating curfew were among the violations they received citations for. Minor citations for "little shit" played a crucial role in pipelining many of the young men in this study deeper into the criminal justice system. Some of the boys missed their court dates; others appeared in court but could not pay their citations. This led to warrants for arrest or probation. Warrants and probationary status marked the young men for further criminalization. Police, school personnel, and probation officers would graduate the boys to a new level of policing and harassment. Being on probation, for instance, meant that the boys could be stopped, searched, or reported, at any given moment. Probation status provided the youth control complex a carte blanche in its endeavor to

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stigmatize, punish, and exclude young people. When a young person is on probation, he is left with few rights; he can be stopped and searched for no reason, and he can be arrested for noncriminal transgressions such as hanging out with his friends or walking in the wrong part of the neighborhood.

In this chapter, I argue that labeling is not just a process whereby schools, police, probation officers, and families stigmatize the boys, and, in turn, their delinquency persists or increases.[1] In the era of mass incarceration, labeling is also a process by which agencies of social control further stigmatize and mark the boys in response to their original label.[2] This in turn creates a vicious cycle that multiplies the boys' experiences with criminalization, what I call a labeling hype. I found that the boys in this study felt outcast, shamed, and unaccepted, sometimes leading them to a sense of hopelessness and a "deviant self-concept."[3] In addition, I also found that the young men were caught in a spiral of punitive responses imposed by institutions which labeled them as deviant. Being labeled or marked for minor transgressions would place the boys at risk for being granted additional, more serious labels.

Institutions became involved in a spiral of criminalization that began with informal, trivial labels, such as "This kid comes from a bad family and is at-risk." This label alone would sometimes lead to more detrimental labels, such as "This kid is delinquent, and he is a risk." Criminologist Paul Hirschfield argues that labels have little impact on the individual identities of marginalized black males, but they have a big effect on young people's social mobility. He posits that "mass criminalization" is responsible for "social exclusion" and "diminished social expectations."[4] In the era of mass incarceration, labeling not only generates criminality; it also perpetuates criminalization.

Previous studies in urban ethnography have done an exceptional job at describing blocked opportunity and its consequences.[5] However, criminalization as a system that contributes to this blocked opportunity has yet to be analyzed. This system had such an extensive influence on the lives of the boys in this study that many of them were criminalized even when they were victims of crime. Criminalization became internalized by many of the boys, even leading some to believe that they did not deserve protection from the police. Tyrell's and Jose's life stories show the process by which young men come of age in Oakland being labeled as deviant

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and eventually being treated like criminals. In this respect, they are representative of many of the other boys in this study.

Historian Robin Kelley argues that academics have contributed to society's understanding of poor Black populations as pathological and nihilistic, by creating stories that only focus on compensatory behaviors. Sometimes, Kelley argues, researchers overemphasize and exaggerate the resistant and adaptive strategies of the poor and present them to the mainstream world as indicators of pathologies or as negative responses to a system that victimizes them.[6] By focusing on the boys' worldviews about their negative encounters with social control agents and by looking at the creative responses they develop, I hope to move beyond understanding marginalized populations as only victims, or pathological, or compensatory conduct driven. This endeavor begins by paying close attention to the life stories of these young people and their perspectives on the structural predicaments in which they live.

The bus arrived. Tyrell and Jose changed their conversation about police and citations. Tyrell asked me, "So you still wanna go to the Ville?" I told him I did. The "Ville" was a low-income housing project located on 66th Avenue and International. Tyrell spent most of his childhood there. Although he had recently moved out, he hung out there every day with his friends, in an alley that residents refer to as "Death Alley." We got on the bus and remained silent, observing the twenty or so other teenagers sardined inside. Tyrell and I got off the bus and silently nodded to Jose, who remained on the bus heading further down International. When we arrived at the Ville, I asked Tyrell to give me a tour, from his perspective, and tell me about growing up in this environment.

Tyrell's Too Tall

Since the late 1980s, the Ville housing project has been notorious for its crime rate.[7] Famous former residents include Felix Mitchell, who established one of the most influential crack-cocaine gang empires in the country there during the '80s. Mitchell was killed in prison in 1986, but he is still a legend in this community. The 1991 film *New Jack City* used Mitchell's life as the basis for one of its main characters, Nino Brown.

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Tyrell and his friends still talk about Mitchell: "Mitchell was a true G [gangster]. . . . He is like the only role model we got," said Tyrell. This statement is indicative of the lack of programs in schools or in the community, which could have exposed young people to professional and college-educated role models.

The Ville, notorious for its drug trafficking and violence, consisted of rows and rows of two-story, shoebox-shaped apartment buildings, with metal window and door gates—the epitome of West Coast housing projects. The new two-tone light-beige and pink paint and fancy geometric trim on the top of some of the recently remodeled buildings belied the bullet holes in apartment windows, the homemade tin-foil crack pipes laying on the lawns, and the dire poverty of little kids fighting to ride the only neighborhood bike. The city had recently demolished similar buildings down the street and in their place developed modern townhouse-style projects, shaped like squares, with attractive geometrical rooftops and three-tone light-beige, yellow, and green paint jobs. These new housing developments were juxtaposed with drug dealers standing at the corner, with middle-aged crack addicts pacing about in desperation and the bloody street fights that constantly took place in the Ville. The millions of dollars spent on physical upgrades could not bandage the persistence of violence, crime, and criminalization that could only be transformed by implementing programs which could change the social order and social control of the neighborhood, not just its physical appearance.[8] If certain social contexts breed criminality, then certain social contexts breed criminalization. The cycle of crime and violence cannot be addressed by changing the appearance of a place and incarcerating its denizens; we must start by changing the social contexts that provide actors the resources for partaking in specific behaviors and by transforming the ways in which we perceive and treat—criminalize or incorporate—these populations.

As we walked around the Ville, Tyrell pointed to different locations that ignited his memory: where he first got high, where he first witnessed a murder in Death Alley, and where the police brutalized him for the very first time. Tyrell looked at me when we got to "death alley," an alley that residents understood as a space where deadly violence was a regular presence, and asked, "What do you want to know?" The space seemed to spark a desire in Tyrell to share his story. We sat on a giant piece of bro-

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ken concrete which was used to form a retaining wall between the alley and a now-abandoned house.

Tyrell was raised by his father, John. According to Tyrell, his mother had left them for a man who made a good living selling crack. "She told my dad, 'You ain't shit, can't even get a job,' so she bounced." Soon after, she became addicted to crack. According to Tyrell, his mother's boyfriend was also a crack user and passed the addiction on to her. Tyrell's mother showed up sporadically, asking him and his grandmother for money to support her addiction. "She smokes so much crack, she calls herself 'Bubbles,'" Tyrell told me. On another day, when I was hanging out with Tyrell in Death Alley, where he and his friends would convene every afternoon, Tyrell's mother came around the corner. She asked him, "Have you seen Mo?" Tyrell nodded, looking embarrassed. She asked me for money, and I told her I would give Tyrell some money on her behalf. She thanked me for what she perceived as my helping her son and walked off, through an alley onto an adjacent block. This situation was not unique to Tyrell: eighteen of the boys in the study reported having at least one parent who had problems with drugs or alcohol.

Tyrell was homeless for part of his childhood, sleeping in cars, shelters, crack houses, and in the parking lot of the Ville. In Tyrell's account, the housing authority did not want to provide his father housing. "Because he was not a woman . . . they told him that he had no reason for not having a job." Tyrell's dad was a mechanic but could not find work at the time:

> He worked on other people's cars, but they were broke too. They gave him five, ten dollars, but he couldn't pay rent with this. So we ended up at other people's houses or in our car most of the time. . . . One day a crack head [addict] told us she was moving back to Atlanta. She said that we could live in her apartment if we wanted, but we had to pay rent. This is when we got our own place. I was hella happy knowing that I would have my own place. That's crazy, I was happy, 'cause I was gonna live in the projects. . . . It was hella fun living there.

Despite the surrounding violence, drug abuse, and poverty—as well as the consequential trauma, homelessness, and hunger—Tyrell remem-

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bers having a fun childhood. His father taught him about being respectful to others and obeying the law no matter how poor they were. "Pops wouldn't steal from nobody. He would rather starve than steal," Tyrell told me. John attempted to keep Tyrell sheltered from the effects of poverty; sometimes it worked. John taught him that some police officers were good and encouraged him to be the cop when he played cops and robbers. By the second or third grade, all his friends made fun of him for playing the cop. By then, most of his peers believed that the police were a negative force in the community, but Tyrell still believed that police had the power to "take the bad people away from the Ville."

Despite not having the resources to provide "proper" parenting, such as help with homework or money for school trips or work clothes, the majority of the boys' parents attempted to instill positive values in their children, even if some of them did not have a standard definition of mainstream values. Often, parents became desperate in their failed attempts to guide their children. This led some parents to ask probation, police, or school officials to teach them strategies for parenting their children. As these institutions advised desperate individuals on how to parent their children, they passed on their punitive approaches to treating deviant and delinquent behavior. In a sense, they taught parents how to criminalize their own children.

Sociologist Ross Matsueda finds that informal labels, negative treatment, and stigma derived from a perception of criminality are imposed on individuals who have committed crime but also are imposed on individuals who are from a group or community perceived to be criminogenic. Matsueda finds that these informal labels have an effect on the labeled individual's perceptions of how others see him. Matsueda also finds that some parents actively participate in the process of labeling their children.[9] In chapter 4, I discuss the ways in which some parents label and criminalize their children, often under the influence of the criminal justice system.

In fourth grade, an older Tyrell and his homies would walk a few miles to the Oakland Coliseum, located two miles from the Ville, when the Oakland Athletics or Oakland Raiders played games. "We would walk like twenty blocks to the Coliseum to watch the games. They wouldn't let us in, so we stood outside on the very top and looked through the cracks between the fence. The guys [players] were this little [he measures about an inch with his thumb and index finger], but we still got to see 'em, they hit

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a homerun." Police chased Tyrell and his friends off the Coliseum grounds. He could not understand why they were so aggressive toward him, when he was "just trying to watch a game." According to Tyrell, police threatened him and his friends with arrest if they continued to loiter at the Coliseum.

By the sixth grade, Tyrell felt that he could no longer exist outside the violence that defined the Ville. "Sixth grade is where it all went down. Cops started beating on me, fools [peers] started getting hyphy [crazy] with me. I had to get into, um, lots of fights," Tyrell said. He told me that his height contributed to his forced entry into street life. In the sixth grade, Tyrell was the tallest student in school. He remembered going into class on the first day of sixth grade, and his teacher, Mrs. Turpin, would not stop staring at him. Tyrell became bothered and asked her, "What you lookin' at?" She used his comment as a lesson to the class that everyone was to respect the teacher. She kicked him out of class and told the principal she was "threatened" by Tyrell. Twenty-two of the boys reported feeling as if their teachers were scared of them.

Tyrell believes that the teacher was not the only person who saw him as a threat, because of his height, when he was younger. In his account, because he looked like a man by age twelve, he also became a target of constant police surveillance and random checks for drugs or criminal suspicions:

> The five-o [police] stopped me all the time. They checked me for drugs and guns most of the time. At first I was scared and told them I was only twelve. They didn't believe me and kept asking me where I was hiding the drugs. That made me hella mad 'cause I wasn't slanging [selling drugs] or anything. On mama's [I promise] I wasn't slanging. I said, fuck it. So a few months later I started selling weed.

Tyrell's perspective was that he could not control his height, physical appearance, or the perceptions that others had of him. The one thing he could control was making the choice to sell drugs to support himself. Tyrell's decision to sell drugs is representative of the patterns that I found among all the boys during their first arrest. They chose to commit a crime, consciously calculating the potential risk of arrest and incarceration. Many of the boys came to this assessment after believing that they had no other choice, that they had nothing to lose.

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In my observations, I noticed that Tyrell had a compelling presence. Police officers whom he had never encountered before targeted Tyrell more often than the other Black and Latino youths I hung out with. Over the course of three years, I watched or heard from Tyrell about being stopped by police twenty-one times, more than any other youth in this study. Most of the time, these stops ended with just a short conversation. But sometimes, police officers seemed threatened by Tyrell, and they either handcuffed him, pulled a gun on him, or put him in the patrol car.

Meanwhile, according to Tyrell, his father increasingly took his stress and anger out on Tyrell. John grew frustrated at his inability to find a steady job. Despite his charisma and exceptional mechanic skills, he could not find regular work. He was only able to find employment in the local informal economy: poor local residents would bring their cars to him for repairs but were not able to pay enough for him to make a living. In the Ville, no matter what time of day, I always saw John working on someone's car. He was always cheerful and joked around with everyone in the neighborhood. While John had all the characteristics of a supportive father, his lack of economic resources led Tyrell to realize that he would have to "hustle" for his own money:

> I told him I had a little money, and he knew where I got it from. He got hella mad and beat me down. He told me he did not want me selling that shit. I told him it was only weed, but he didn't care. He told me that I would end up selling crack. I think he didn't want me to start smoking that. . . . I stopped selling it for a while, but we both were broke. This is when I started selling at school again but just didn't tell him.

In Tyrell's worldview, he made a conscious choice to commit crime within the context of the limited resources available to him and the vilification he encountered at school and with police. To the extent that material resources became scarce, and he became constructed as a deviant, he calculated that his only choice was to sell drugs. His father's inability to provide for him, and the stigma that school officials and police officers imposed on him, left Tyrell feeling trapped. In this constricted location, Tyrell's options were few, and one of the only lucrative options available at the time was to sell drugs. He dropped out of school and dedicated

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himself to making money on the streets. Breaking the law was his decision, yet his hand was largely forced by overdetermined structural conditions. In Tyrell's perspective, poverty and criminalization "pushed" him into selling drugs, but he also consciously took this "jump," knowing that this was one of the only ways he could make some money.[10]

Tyrell had agency to decide whether he would commit crime or not. But a system of punitive social control established a context for Tyrell in which he felt disconnected from his community, stigmatized, and socially outcast, leading him to see criminality as almost inevitable. As such, Tyrell was punished into believing something external to his sense of self: that he was a criminal, that he had nothing at stake, and that he "might as well handle business"—sell drugs and victimize others—since he has "nothing to lose." All the young men in this study believed that they were inherently criminal: their interactions with the world around them had led them to internalize a foreign concept, that criminality was part of their persona. Tyrell, like many other marginalized youth, experienced a life-course process in which he was systematically punished into believing that he had nothing to lose. In the context of punitive social control, some marginalized boys are fostered by punishment, at every stage in their development, encountering a social world that, in their account, treats them as suspects and criminals.

Although I was not present during the boys' various stages of childhood development, the three years I spent in the field taught me that their perceptions of a punitive social order were rational and reasonable. One only needs to spend a few hours with marginalized young people in their everyday settings to realize how much they are policed, stigmatized, and treated differently from other citizens. Their stories were corroborated by observations of similar events that took place during my time in the field.

Jose Learns the Code

Three days after that day with Tyrell, I repeated my bus-stop routine of catching up with Jose and Tyrell. I met them at the same bus stop, conversed with them, and rode the bus. This time, I got off the bus with Jose. We walked to a liquor store on the corner of 80th and International, purchased two Coca-Colas and two bags of Flamin' Hot Fries, and leaned against the

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store's wall outside, staring at a 1980s white delivery truck that had been used as a canvas by the neighborhood youth to tag their street names and territories. Jose proudly stared at his tag name, "Topo," written in black spray paint on the belly of the delivery truck. We walked a few blocks to his apartment complex, where we sat on the concrete steps. After we sat idly for about twenty minutes, I asked Jose to tell me about growing up there.

Jose had lived his whole life in the heart of the neighborhood that hosted one of Oakland's largest gangs, which I will call the East Side Gangsters (ESG). A few times in his early teenage years, his mother attempted to move him to Berkeley, a neighboring city she thought might be safer. However, the high rent prices always forced the family to return to the same apartment in Oakland. Their apartment complex was the main hangout for the gang. The complex sat adjacent to a neighborhood liquor store, where drug dealers, drug addicts, and gang members congregated. The apartment complex was shaped like a horseshoe, with three floors on each of the three sides. Clothes were hung to dry on the building's loose metal rails; old tennis shoes hung from the electric lines that ran in front of the complex; and the small parking lot served as a soccer field for little kids, a car-repair area for unemployed men, a drug-stashing area for dealers, and, on the weekends, a dance ballroom for families celebrating baptisms, birthday parties, and quinceaneras.[11] For as long as Jose could remember, the gang loitered in the parking lot of his apartment complex, often blocking the steps that led to Jose's apartment. "They would, like, just do stupid stuff, like scare us [the apartment-building families], like shoot their guns and break shit and fight. I used to be hella scared of them," explained Jose.

Jose remembered being terrified of the gang at age six or seven. He yearned for the police to protect him and his family from the gang. One day, when he was about ten years old, a teenage gang member pushed him as he returned home from buying a gallon of milk from the liquor store for his family. Jose fell back, landing on the gallon of milk. White fluid splattered everywhere. The teenage boys laughed at him. He began to cry. Soaked, he returned home to tell his mother. She yelled at him, "Pendejo [idiot], don't you know we don't have money for more milk?" Jose wanted the gang members to pay for another gallon of milk. He left the house and walked the neighborhood, looking for a police officer. When he found a patrol car, he told the officer about the incident and

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wanted the officer to talk to the gang members and ask them to buy his family another gallon of milk. According to Jose, the officer laughed at him and told him, "I got better things to do."

In my observations, I counted twenty-two instances when police were called to solve "minor" community problems such as disputes, bullying, harassment, and vandalism. In these twenty-two instances, police were only able or willing to intervene in these "minor" issues one time. In the other twenty-one cases, the officers either ignored residents who called or took down information and left the scene. This is indicative of the underpolicing that I found in this study. It may seem contradictory to say that young people are hypercriminalized by law enforcement but that their communities are also underpoliced. However, Jose's experience and my observations confirm what many of the other boys reported: officers consistently police certain kinds of deviance and crime, while neglecting or ignoring other instances when their help is needed. One reason for this may be that officers follow the path of least resistance. They police easy targets, such as youth who visibly display their deviance and delinquency. These kids, whom police have come to criminalize, are sometimes the same ones who need help when they are victimized. Officers may be less sympathetic to those populations that they have rendered criminal. This process I refer to as the overpolicing-underpolicing paradox. Policing seemed to be a ubiquitous part of the lives of many of these marginalized young people; however, the law was rarely there to protect them when they encountered victimization.

Jose remembered the milk incident as a moment when he decided he would begin to take justice into his own hands.[12] Jose recounted that after this incident, he began to develop a tough demeanor and increasingly turned to violence in an attempt to prevent victimization.[13] He even joined the same gang that harassed him as a child.

> VR: Being tough at a young age, did that protect you from being attacked?
>
> JOSE: [Smacks his lips] You know, Vic, I tried to be hella hard, and I ended up getting beat down even more.
>
> VR: Like, what were some things that you remember happening to you after trying to be tough?

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JOSE: So, that one time with the milk, I went and got a bat and went up to the dude that pushed me. He grabbed the bat from me and pushed me to the ground. I thought he was gonna crack me in the head. But he thought I was too little. I went home hella pissed off.

Sociologist Elijah Anderson finds that appearing aggressive and willing to commit violence is a self-defense process for some inner-city residents, part of what he calls "the code of the street." This code offers individuals a way to protect themselves from victimization in violent communities and to build respect from others: "In service to this ethic, repeated displays of 'nerve' and 'heart' build or reinforce a credible reputation for vengeance that works to deter aggression and disrespect, which are sources of great anxiety on the inner-city street."[14] Anderson goes on to show that the code of the street is embedded in everyday interaction across various institutions in the community: "The 'code of the street' is not the goal or product of any individual's actions but is the fabric of everyday life, a vivid and pressing milieu within which all local residents must shape their personal routines, income strategies, and orientations to schooling, as well as their mating, parenting, and neighbor relations."[15] Preemptively attacking an enemy to prevent future victimization is a key element of the code.[16] Jose's story is representative of the other boys who reported using the code in attempts to protect themselves. The code became amplified when Jose joined the gang, because now he became part of a group whose central motive was to collectively attack others to prevent and avenge victimization. Jose joined because he wanted to prevent being victimized by the neighborhood gang. A double bind became apparent in Jose's endeavor to protect himself: while the gang protected Jose from specific kinds of victimization, such as being attacked by non-gang members, he experienced more victimization by rival gang members after joining the gang. The boys seemed to understand that preemptively attacking others would lead to further victimization. However, they chose to do so as a means of feeling a sense of justice for crimes that had been committed against them and gone unresolved. The code of the street was used as a form of street justice when the formal justice system had failed them.

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Some of this victimization was at best ignored and at worst condoned by the police. Jose explained, for instance, that when he was a child he could not understand why the police wouldn't just take all the gang members to jail since they all carried weapons. When he became a gang member, he came to his own conclusion. Jose explained that the police allowed them to loiter and sell drugs within the confines of their apartment complex because they were not visible to the public and therefore were not a problem the police would be held accountable for. During my time observing the complex while hanging out with Jose and his friends, I found a pattern that affirmed this assumption. Police were often stationed at the street corner but would never enter the complex, even when fights and drug use were clearly visible. However, once young people walked to the street corner, police would proceed to harass and arrest them, as is evident in the following story from one of the forty boys in the study, J.T., whom I met through Jose and who lived in the same complex: "When I was young, we didn't know nothing about the laws, so they always tried to scare us when we were little, telling us they would take us to juvenile hall. 'Cause, like, we would throw rocks at cars or do lil' things or even just hanging out on the corner. They would tell us to go home, and they would handcuff us if we didn't listen. . . . We were like six [years old]." Thus, in this apartment complex, young boys, as early as age six, learned from police the spatial terrain in which they could be deviant and commit crime. Criminalization created spatial demarcation; police set parameters for where individuals could loiter or commit crime. The consequences of "playing" or "hanging out" beyond the established limits of invisible and marginalized spaces included brutalization, harassment, and arrest. For the older boys, this spatial demarcation structured the rules governing the code of the street: gang members were allowed to commit violence and victimize others, as long as the acts were committed within the confines of the apartment complex, which law enforcement underpoliced.

Residents suffered from the concentration of gang members who had been contained in these invisible spaces by police.[17] Often, families—women and children—became the victims of a small handful of predatory gang members whom police neglected to apprehend. In this apartment complex, out of a group of about thirty boys, two of them were the ones that incited, provoked, and caused most of the assaults and crimes that

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occurred while I was there. Everyone in the complex knew who they were, and many residents seemed anxious when these two boys came around. A mother who lived in the complex told me one day, as one of the boys, nicknamed Psycho, greeted us and walked up the street with a sharpened, broken metal table leg in his hand, “When that boy is locked up, the whole neighborhood is at peace. But now that he is out, all the boys have gone crazy.” The only party that did not seem to know that these two boys were responsible for most of the havoc in the complex was the police. By criminalizing all of the boys, the police, it seemed, could not tell the difference between predatory criminals and innocent young people trying to live their lives. By policing and harassing youth who stepped into the public sphere looking like a “gang member” or a “drug dealer,” and not learning from the community about the small group responsible for most crimes, police allowed a few predatory criminals to reign inside the marginalized space of the apartment complex. Police failed to intervene in crime that took place on the property, as if this area were outside their purview.

Police in School

For all the boys in the study, negative encounters with police were not restricted to the streets. When asked “What was your first experience with police?” all the boys commented that their first encounters with police took place in or near school. In Oakland, probation and police officers were stationed at or near many schools. A few of the boys attended a middle school that I visited while I shadowed them. On a few occasions, when I was invited to talk to some students about college, I noticed a police officer advising parents and students on academic matters, including courses to choose in preparation for high school, studying strategies, and career options. This example is representative of some of the many ways in which police and probation officers became involved in non-criminal-justice matters at school and in the community.

For Jose, police seemed to always be part of his school experience. His first encounter happened at school when he was eight years old. “The first time was in third grade. I had set the bathroom garbage can on fire. We ran away, and they caught us and handcuffed us. . . . I was just trying to do something funny. Police came and arrested me and my friends.

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They only had a pair of handcuffs, and they handcuffed me and my friend together. This is the first time I got arrested. I also flunked that year." Jose was not taken to jail; instead, his mother picked him up from the custody of the police office. However, his parents, his friends, and the school staff started to view him as a kid who had been arrested. Jose returned to school after the incident and remembers being treated differently by teachers and friends: "Teachers would tell me that if I kept messing up, they would have to call the cops again. I was really scared, so I tried to do good, but then [long pause] I don't know what happened. I just started messing up anyway. . . . My friends started to respect me more, and they looked up to me. That kinda felt good. . . . That is probably why I messed up even more."[18] From fourth to sixth grade, Jose consistently failed in his academic endeavors. He spent most of his time in detention rooms and "opportunity" classes designed to house the most disruptive students at school: "I would just sit there and stare at the wall or lay my head down to rest. The teacher would give me good grades just as long as I didn't flash [go crazy]." The school-stationed police officer regularly checked on Jose. Over time, Jose says, school began to serve as a site of punishment and control, a space where teachers, police, probation officers, and administrators alike "just waited" for him "to fuck up."

Jose believed that school served as a space that systematically denied him what sociologists call a "positive rite"—the universal human need to be perceived by others in a positive light, with consideration instead of degradation.[19] In other words, in Jose's account, school functioned as a space where his personal need to feel acknowledged and respected was systematically denied, and instead he was treated with indignity and disdain. In the context of juvenile crime, researchers have found that shame is an integral component of criminalization and is part of the vicious cycle that creates lifelong lawbreakers.[20] Being shamed and feeling stigmatized often leads young people into crime.[21] For Jose, this cycle may have begun when he was taken through the ritual of being handcuffed and walked out of school at eight years of age, an event that publicly identified him as a criminal. The stigma produced by this ritual helped to generate a self-fulfilling prophecy that shaped his ensuing relationships with teachers, police, and probation officers. Because Jose believed they were all collaborating to criminalize and punish him, he treated them with hostility, an attitude that led adults to

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act punitively toward him. I noticed similar events countless times during my observations at Jose's middle school and continuation high school.

I observed Jose react to teachers, school security officers, and police with defiance, and in return they responded by intensifying their punitive treatment of him. One day, I asked a school security supervisor why she treated Jose so "tough." She replied, "Listen, man, when these kids get to the point where they start talking back, you gotta regulate. You gotta make sure they know that you're in command—no matter what it takes." I later asked Jose what he thought about this statement. Jose was not surprised. He told me that most security guards, school police, and school officials had treated him with this attitude. In this context, Jose recalls losing interest in school by the time he started fifth grade.[22] He stopped wearing a backpack, stopped actively participating in class, and eventually received an "age promotion" into middle school. Jose failed fourth and fifth grade, but the school promoted him because he was too old to stay in elementary school.

Jose recounted being beaten by police a week after he started middle school. He was twelve years old. The same police that patrolled his neighborhood since he was a small child, the same officer who had refused to help him recover his family's gallon of milk, gave him his first police beating:

> Sometimes, they be trying to jack me and stuff. Like they be trying to mess with us, like play around. They'll . . . they'll try to play around with us: "We got calls saying that you guys are doing this and that." 'Cause sometimes we wouldn't be doing nothing; they would just blurb us [light and siren signals of police vehicles]. One day they just got me for doing too much [messing around]. I was looking at the cop like crazy and stuck my tongue out him. He got out and whipped my ass.

By sixth grade Jose began to flirt with gang life. Middle school provided him with the resources to become a "wannabe," a youth who has displayed interest in becoming part of the gang. A major reason for wanting to join the gang, at least initially, was for protection from violence.

> I was . . . was by the house. . . . So some, uhh, Sureños [Southerners—rival gang members] . . .—I seen them when they were in the car—they had a gun. I was walking. I was by my house [apartment], and I see my lil' sister in

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> front of the house; my older sister, she was walking on the other side. And then out of nowhere they just like started shooting. And I told my sisters to duck. I started ducking. And then I . . . I . . . I hopped over the fence, and they left. I wasn't really scared to get shot, but I was scared for my sisters.

No one was hurt that day. Jose, however, knew that, based solely on the apartment building he lived in, he had become a target for other gangs. Based on previous experience with the police, he believed they were not going to find the shooters. When officers asked him for information, he did not say a word. Jose explained that he was afraid that telling the officers would lead to the people who shot at him finding out and retaliating. Jose had good reason for these suspicions, as many young men in this study provided stories of police officers giving them information about rival gang members. I myself witnessed this process three times. During one observation, an officer arrived at the street corner where we were standing. He called us over and got out of the car. He told the boys, "You know, the Scraps [derogatory name for Sureños] just ratted one of your boys out. They say that he was involved in a shooting on Friday night. Where is he?"

The culture of criminalization that affects many communities of color has created a corresponding culture that forbids "snitching." In this study, the sense that community members and homies were regularly incarcerated through false accusations, police "setups," entrapment, and forced testimonies led many of the boys to declare a vow against ever providing information to police, even when they were the victims. The "don't snitch" campaign among the boys in this study was not a commitment to allow murderers to remain free; it was an attempt to avoid further criminalization and unjust arrests and sentencing and to protect themselves from being "ratted out" by police. One can make sense of the perceivably senseless "don't snitch campaign" as a collective attempt to resist the overpolicing-underpolicing paradox and mass incarceration. At such a young age, Jose already had a keen sense that the police would do more harm than good with the information he provided. Meanwhile, another cast of characters provided Jose with the support denied by law enforcement that he felt he needed: the neighborhood gang members.

The older gang members from the neighborhood acknowledged Jose for having experienced an attack on his family. They told him that they

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would back him up. "Even though I was little, they was like, 'You got a lot of heart.' I told them, 'Yeah,' and they said, 'All right then, you gotta put in work.'" For Jose, putting in work meant attacking rival gang members to avenge the attack on his family. At the time, Jose was fourteen years old and had unofficially been accepted into the gang for taking a hit from rivals. Jose went on "missions" with his homeboys to find and beat up rival gang members. He also began to smoke marijuana and to "love it." This led to his first stint in juvenile hall.

One day, an officer stopped him in front of the neighborhood liquor store, searched him, and arrested him for a ten-dollar bag of marijuana he had in his pocket. After two days in "juvy," Jose returned to his neighborhood. This time, he figured that if he was going to take risks and be arrested for minor drug possession, he "might as well grind big thangs and make some money." He attempted to become a crack-cocaine dealer.[23] He had big dreams that he would become rich and buy his mother a house so that he could move away from the apartment complex. He learned how to cook up powder cocaine with baking soda to produce crack rocks. He learned how to wrap the rocks in balloons and keep them in his mouth. This way, if the police stopped him, he would swallow the rocks to hide the evidence. Jose even shadowed a group of older guys from six in the morning to three the next morning, twenty-one entire hours, just to learn how "business was handled." Sixteen of the youths in this study had sold drugs at one point, and all these boys described making a lot of money while they sold drugs. After more probing, I realized that their notion of "lots of money" was relative. Some of them made five hundred dollars in one day. However, there were also days when they only made twenty dollars. Overall, their "salaries" averaged out to less than forty dollars a day. However, their working day sometimes lasted up to twenty-one hours. In other words, it is quite possible that the majority of drug-dealing young people in Oakland make less than minimum wage, all while risking incarceration, violence, and addiction by selling drugs on the street.[24] Despite all Jose's hard work and training, on his first day selling crack, the police arrested him.

> I was about like at East 15th, and five-o [police] blurbed me. And . . . I was by myself before they grabbed me by my neck. And, like, they tried to make me spit out the, um, rocks. And, like, I didn't want to spit them out.

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> They, like—he was holding my neck for like . . . for like twenty seconds or less. And after that, I spit them out myself. 'Cause, I thought he was gonna choke me, hard, harder.

The police arrested Jose and placed him in a gang database, CalGang, a statewide documentation system that officers use to maintain information on people they deem gang members.[25] I later verified that Jose was in the database when he and I were stopped and they conducted a search on our records. One of the officers said to another, "Yeah, he's in the database." He turned to Jose and, referring to his nickname, "Topo," said, "Tapo, Tipo, Taco? What is your nickname?" Jose ignored him, knowing that he was being mocked. The officer turned to me and told me, "Jose is a crazy little dude. He's been a player ever since he was little, . . . no trouble, but we got him in the gang database just in case."[26] Being placed on the gang database can add five, ten, fifteen, and even twenty-five years to a felony sentence, since under the 1988 Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act, a prosecutor can charge a youth for committing a crime to further a gang's criminal activity. Six of the boys in this study were eventually charged with gang enhancements.

Soon after I met Jose and interviewed him about his life story, he was arrested again. This time the police spotted him in the middle of a street fight and found a knife on him. Jose explained that while he was fighting, his opponent pulled out a knife, and he knocked the knife out of the other kid's hand and grabbed it, with no intention of using it. He claimed that he had the knife on him for a long time before the police arrived, just trying to keep it off the street. Jose spent three weeks in juvenile hall following this arrest.

A few months later, Jose was arrested again for stealing a bicycle. The officer arrested him even though Jose did not have the bicycle in his possession. According to Jose, he knew the group of Black youths who had stolen the bicycle, but he did not want to "snitch" on them. When the judge told Jose that he was not going to lock him up but that he would have to follow a strict program with his probation officer, Jose thought that he might get help and turn his life around. His main concern was to stay away from the people he associated with on the street, because he wanted to escape the pressures to prove himself through violence and criminality:

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> I just wanted to start doing better, so I told my probation officer to help me. He said that I had to stay away from all those crazy kids I hung around with. He also told me that if I got caught with them, I would go back to jail. He told me to tell them that I would go to jail if I talked to them, but they didn't believe me. . . . I think that for Mr. Bryan [his probation officer] it is easy to tell me to change, but I hella try and he doesn't see what happens when I try.

At first glance, one might believe that Jose was a violent, drug-pushing thief. However, when we take a closer look at Jose's understanding of his environment, we uncover the process by which Jose was criminalized; his interactions with authority figures set part of the stage on which he performed illicit activity, and this illicit activity generated further punitive treatment. Jose's criminal trajectory may have been instrumentally determined by his negative interactions with agents of social control.

Tyrell Gets Marked

Eventually, Jose and Tyrell became marked as criminals. When Tyrell was fourteen, he was caught with an ounce of marijuana and spent three weeks in juvenile hall. When he returned home after release, his father attempted to beat him. Tyrell fought back, wrestling his father to the ground. After the fight, his father disregarded him, saying that if Tyrell thought he was a man, he should take care of himself. He refused to speak to Tyrell for weeks at a time, and, as a consequence, their relationship more or less shifted to that of roommates: "I do my own thing, and he does his own thing. He can't say shit to me anymore, and I don't trip off of him."

The combination of stigma at school, harassment from police on the street, and Tyrell's resentment of his defunct relationship with his father may have led him to develop the attitude to "not give a fuck." In Tyrell's frame of reference, the implications of breaking the law were imposed on him daily. In such situations, getting incarcerated might begin to feel like a viable option. The irony of Tyrell's mentality was that the stress of being criminalized in the neighborhood led him to believe that juvenile hall might serve as an escape. In some sense, he was willing to trade one punitive community for another: "In juvy," Tyrell explained, "at least if I follow the rules, I'll be left alone."[27] When incarcerated, Tyrell could predict

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when he would be treated punitively: if he broke the rules. On the street, however, even if he followed the rules, he felt he would still be punished. For Tyrell and many of the boys, detention facilities became preferred social contexts because they provided structure, discipline, and predictability—rare attributes in the punitive context of the streets. Although the boys did not want to be incarcerated, detention facilities were the only spaces where they felt that they could predict cause and effect. Tyrell described it this way: "If I do my program, then I know I will be straight [good]. . . . If I don't follow directions, then I'll be stuck." We can make sense of why many young people who decide to violate their probation or parole do so, to seek shelter from a punitive social order, a youth control complex, that to many is worse than being incarcerated.

Hypercriminalization creates conditions in which young people actually seek more predictable, albeit more restrictive, forms of punishment. Many of the boys talked about liking the structure of incarceration because it dictated a clear set of rules. In the community, police, probation officers, schools, businesses, and families were perceived as unpredictable; the youths reported frustration with not knowing when their teachers, parents, or police would criminalize them.

Compelled to become a man on his own, to act and maneuver as an adult, and to take responsibility for himself, Tyrell faced the wrath of peer violence and police oppression. By the time he was fifteen, Tyrell became a bona-fide target for police. The police could pick him out easily because of his height, and they harassed him every time they saw him: "Man, they wouldn't stop messing with me. One day I pushed a cop, and he fell. They grabbed me and whooped my ass. They beat me so bad that they let me go. They felt bad for me. I have a scar here and here [he points to two small scars on his scalp and forehead]." Instead of dealing drugs in fear of being arrested again, Tyrell chose a different specialization. He went to the drug dealers in the neighborhood and offered to collect from people who owed them money. The drug dealers began paying him to recover debts. With this work Tyrell became extremely violent, as he recovered amounts owed that ranged from ten to five hundred dollars:

> I had to send the message that I was not fucking around, so I ran into a crack head that owed my nigga [friend] some money. I grabbed his ass and

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> whooped him so hard he's been limping ever since. . . . That was all I had to do. Most of the time people paid me what they owed. One day, though, I had to whoop some fool's ass. I hit him on the leg with a golf club, so they charged me with aggravated assault and assault with a deadly weapon, but they dropped the deadly weapon charge. I still did three months in juvy.

At sixteen, Tyrell was placed on two years' probation. He was also placed on electronic monitoring (EM) as a condition of his release. EM is a program that probation officers use to keep track of juvenile offenders. A black, square-shaped device, about the size of a large cellular phone, is strapped around the youth's ankle. Whenever Tyrell went over a few hundred feet from his house, the device would send a message to his probation officer. The probation officer then could arrest him for violating probation. In the beginning, Tyrell was arrested and held for two days for going outside his area limit. Afterward, however, he got the hang of the monitoring device and completed his six-month program:

> I did it, but it was hecka hard. I couldn't leave home, and then that shit started itching me all the time. [He shows me his leg, scarred from the scratching.] My boys thought that shit was tight [appealing], but I told them it wasn't cool at all. They would come visit me and kick it at my house, since I couldn't go anywhere. We set up shop [a hangout space] there and just chilled there until they let me off.

Tyrell and his friends were confined to a small apartment because of his requirement to remain at home. The consequence of the electronic monitoring device was that it created a new "kick-it spot" for the boys in Tyrell's apartment building. This new hangout concentrated a large group of delinquent boys in a private space where they became invisible. The possibility of their receiving support or services from adults in the public sphere who wanted to help them was now diminished. Yet Tyrell and his friends believed this to be a safe haven from the criminalizing interactions they endured in the public sphere: suspicion in stores, automatic searches by police and probation officers, denial of employment for having a criminal record, and stigma imposed by school authorities and other adults.

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Jose Internalizes Violence

One day I caught up with Jose at his apartment. When I arrived, his mother told me that he had taken off to the Indoor Flea Market, a popular warehouse with twenty or so booths, where residents found cheap clothing, expensive tennis shoes, and jewelry. I drove down International to go look for Jose. Halfway to the "Indoor," I noticed Jose standing at the corner of International Boulevard and High Street, one of the busiest intersections in Oakland. I parked my car and walked over to Jose. Smacking meat out of his teeth, Jose told me he stopped there to get a taco from his favorite truck, El Taco Zamorano. We sat on a cement divider in front of All Mufflers, a mechanic shop situated on the corner. The hot yellow color of the square concrete building served as a canvas for Black and Latino bodies, painting a picture of local residents as they stood waiting for the bus to make their way through town. An old, white pickup truck, with an open hood and a Latino mechanic hunched over the engine trying to fix it, sat adjacent to us.

I started asking Jose about his week. He seemed distracted. He looked around and ignored my questions. And then it dawned on me: we were in the heart of rival gang territory. As I started asking him another question, he interrupted me and said, "Hold up, hold up, man!" I turned in the direction he was looking and noticed another young man walking toward us. Jose ran up to him and, without warning, punched him in the face and knocked him down. When he hit the ground, Jose started kicking him in the stomach. I yelled at Jose, "Get off!" but he did not listen. The young man on the ground looked at me with despair, his head leaning on the concrete. I wrapped my arms around Jose and pulled him back. He forcefully shook me off and went back to kick his rival. I rolled my wrists into the kid's XXL-size white T-shirt and yanked him up from the ground and away from Jose, who followed us, shouting, "You little bitch! . . . Punk-ass coward!" I told Jose to go home, and I drove the beaten kid home. The boy refused to answer any more questions after telling me, "I'm okay."

I found Jose a few days later and asked him about the assault. He told me that the other kid, Puppet, a member of a rival gang, 37th Street, lived in Jose's neighborhood. Jose and the rest of his gang were upset about this and were determined to drive Puppet out of their neighborhood. Every

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time Jose or his friends saw Puppet, they immediately attacked him. Jose was also upset because Puppet had, in his view, caused him to go to jail.

> Like, we were on International [Boulevard], and we seen Puppet. I chased him on a bike and pulled him off the bike. And, uh, he started running; he got away. I guess the Black dudes that kick it at the corner, they took his bike. And I got, like, at the park, 'cause I ran to the park because I seen a lotta po-police! So I ran to the park, and they got me at the park for robbery, me and another homey.

Jose served two weeks in juvenile hall and afterward was sent to a group home (a reform program managed from a private residence) for six months. Some of the youth at the group home did not like him, and Jose made more enemies during his stay there. Jose described getting into a fight with two youths from San Francisco because they picked on him.

> So I'm not no punk. I just told them I went to the garage, and they told me it was gonna be a one-on-one [fight]. And I was winning, so they jumped me. . . . The people from the group home, they called the police. They was like, "You gonna . . . you gonna do a couple months in the hall." This is just a punishment. I didn't want to do that. So I just grabbed my stuff, and I left. And it's a regular house; you can just leave from the front door. So I just grabbed my stuff, and I ran out. And I got caught a month later.

Jose served two months in juvenile hall and then was sent to another group home. He ran away once more. I checked on Jose a few weeks later. His mother told me he'd been arrested and was facing six months in the California Youth Authority (the state prison for minors) for carrying an unloaded gun.

Jose's mother, Rosario, was in despair. She was an undocumented, single mother of two, Jose and his thirteen-year-old sister, Rosa. Rosario worked as a maid in Walnut Creek, an affluent suburb on the other side of the hill from Oakland. She was paid sixty dollars a day, working ten- to twelve-hour shifts. Her employer officially paid her as a part-time worker but pressured her to work more hours for no pay. She left home at six in the morning, and after taking a BART train and two buses—a

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three-hour commute in all—she arrived at work at nine. By the time she returned home, it was eight o'clock at night. Rosario had received welfare to help her with the rent. However, after being pressured to obtain a job by her social worker at the welfare office, she took the house-cleaning job. The family continued to struggle financially, despite Rosario's employment. Rosario told me that she made less money when working than when she was receiving welfare. She was stressed because she could no longer be there to watch over her children. During my observations at the apartment complex, I often found Rosa sitting on the steps talking to a nineteen-year-old gang member.[28] Rosario's absence exposed Rosa and Jose, even more, to the vulnerabilities and vices of the streets. Punished and abandoned by the welfare state for being poor, Rosa was forced to work and abandon her own children, leaving them vulnerable to the violence of the streets and criminalization of the state (and civil society).

I went to Jose's court date with Rosario. The judge made it clear to Jose that if the gun had been loaded, he would have sent him to be tried as an adult, where he would face a minimum of five years in prison. The judge said to Jose, "You are living on the brink of self-destruction. This is probably your last chance in life. If you don't follow your program at camp, and I see you in here again, I will make sure you never get out again. You understand?" Jose nodded and looked down. He looked ashamed and scared. After the judge's statement, Jose turned and looked at his mother and me with a slight smile, celebrating the fact that his fear of being sent to adult court did not materialize.

Jose's Life at Age Seventeen

By age seventeen, Jose had served time at Camp Sweeney, an Alameda County juvenile justice facility which detained young offenders during the week and attempted to provide them with a structured, camp-style program that included academic courses, counseling, and health-awareness workshops. Despite Camp Sweeney's ideal of rehabilitating nonviolent criminals, Jose understood it this way: as a place where they "put all the crazy fools together and makes us fight or plot some shit that will get us in hella even more trouble."

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Jose was allowed to leave the camp on weekends and return to his family, as long as he did not leave home. When I visited him over the weekend, Jose told me he felt ashamed of himself. He said that he wanted to change but did not know how. "Being locked up, even at camp," he explained, "was making me have to do crazy shit to put my name out [to gain a reputation] even more." Jose felt that he had to prove himself to his peers at camp or become a victim. If he did not act tough and get into fights, he might be seen as a punk and face attacks from the rest of his camp mates. Three of the boys in this study had been to this same camp. They all reported that the guards at camp did not protect them from victimization, that the guards even encouraged a culture of street justice in which young men who were victimized had to learn, as Jose described one of the guards saying, to "be a grown man and defend yourself."

Once released, Jose inhabited the same streets; this time, however, he claimed to have an understanding of his environment. He now articulated a deep desire to change his life around, whereas in the past, he saw his environment only as a place in which to prove his manhood. But the streets were not forgiving, and Jose had to pretend that he was still street oriented and that he was willing to continue to put in work: "If I go out there and pretend to be someone else, they [friends and peers] won't look at me the same way. They will see weakness in me and try to take advantage. That's why its hella hard to change." I followed Jose as he attempted to find support for his endeavor to change, and I witnessed as school and community centers were unable to provide him the support he believed he needed: help looking for a job, a mentoring program, and somewhere to hang out where he did not have to feel forced to prove himself.

Jose's probation officer served as the only possible source of support for change. Mr. Bryan talked to Jose repeatedly about finding a nonviolent way to manage conflict and told him that only "silly little punks" folded to the pressure of peers. According to Jose, Mr. Bryan expected positive behavior from him regardless of the situation he was in. "What if I get messed with, and other kids try to beat me up?" Jose asked. "You just tell them that your PO is gonna kick your and their ass," Mr. Bryan responded. Jose realized that this kind of response was unrealistic and that it did not help him. Not having a realistic and viable alternative to resolving conflict on the street, Jose defaulted to the only skills he

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believed were proven to work in the past in managing conflict: posturing as if he was ready to commit violence and "flash" in response to any threats posed by peers. Although Jose reasoned that he no longer wanted to participate in this ritual, the streets reminded him that following the "code of the street," despite its many drawbacks, was the only problem-solving and survival strategy available to him. For many of the boys in this study, using the "code of the street" was like flipping a coin. Sometimes their gamble paid off, and the code would protect them and make them feel protected. Other times, the wrong side of the coin appeared, and their confrontational demeanor would render them victims.

Many of the young people in this study said that they expected probation and police officers to help them find alternative ways of coping with violence but that these adults did not realize their advice had little practical application on the street, as Mr. Bryan's perspective on Jose suggested: "Jose is a good kid, but he folds to peer pressure really easy. As soon as one of his friends tells him to do something, he does it. He just has to be strong and tell his little friends that he is not messing with negativity anymore. He needs to be responsible for himself and show his friends that he can be a man and not fold to peer pressure." When I asked Jose about peer pressure, he told me that it had an influence but that he was his "own man." He articulated a desire to change yet acknowledged that his friends would be an obstacle. I asked him, "What would you do if you had all the resources you needed to change?" He replied,

> If I could, I would finish my diploma and go to community college and get some kind of certificate to work on cars. I want to own my own shop one day. I am already good with cars, and I think I would be a good mechanic. But I don't know, I still got a long ways to go. . . . Maybe a lawyer, maybe helping the community, those in my position now or those who will be in my position. People who get in trouble, I like to help them. I wouldn't be doing half of the shit I'm doing now, if I had a better environment. . . . I think I need a program that comes to me, you know, like, you—like, people that call you and come over and check up on you. Sometimes I don't have money to take the bus to go to a program, or the programs they have are whack [inadequate or boring]. You know, like, "Don't do drugs—this is your brain on drugs—just say no" type of shit.

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The disjuncture between Jose's expectations of a supportive, nurturing, resource-savvy probation officer and his negative interactions with his probation officer's unrealistic expectations of him resulted in a belief that resources to change were not available, despite his aspiration to do so.

To make matters worse, Jose's commentary on wanting to change and his actions sometimes did not correspond with one another. For example, one afternoon Jose told me that he would no longer hang out with his homies; later that night, he called a few of his friends to visit him at his house, despite being prohibited to hang out with them, according to the terms of his probation. Sociologist Elliot Liebow calls the difference between what people say and what they do a "half-truth."[29] Jose's half-truth was this articulation of wanting to change but acting in ways that would limit his ability to do so. I don't believe that Jose was attempting to "play the system" when he began to articulate that he was ready to change. Instead, Jose had developed an illusion of change in which he thought that wanting to change would translate into real change. Jose's belief in change did not necessarily mean that he would receive the necessary resources—help with job applications, help reenrolling in school, mentoring, counseling, and so on—to change his life around.

Sociologist Alice Goffman argues that young, Black, male felons "maintain self respect in the face of failure" by telling "half-truths," by using their wanted status as an excuse not to provide for their families or show responsibility: "Being wanted serves as an excuse for a variety of unfulfilled obligations and expectations."[30] I did not find this to be true with the boys in my study, even when they were "on the run." The boys in my study did not blame the system to maintain self-respect or to create excuses for their unfulfilled obligations and expectations. These boys were more than willing to confess that they had "fucked up," that they were responsible for their social conditions. While the boys believed that the police beatings, excessive sentences, harassment, and heavy surveillance were unjust, they also acknowledged that they had made some wrong choices and that they were accountable for not completing school, not providing for their children (six of the boys were fathers), or not having a job. In an era of "personal responsibility" when schools, police, and community members could not guarantee the boys success, nurturing, or security, the one thing that these agencies of social control could do

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was to inculcate in the boys a sense of self-blame. The boys were taught that poverty, victimization, criminalization, and neglect were products of their own actions. The boys internalized these messages, and in turn they all reported feeling personally responsible for their plight.

Code of the Street, Code of the State

Schools, police, and probation officers helped to perpetuate the code of the street. They did so either by assuming that all the boys were actively engaged in criminal and violent activity or by providing the boys little choice but to engage in the code. In refusing to protect residents, and in encouraging young men to take care of themselves, authority figures, including police and probation officers, explicitly encouraged young men to engage in the code. In Oakland, police officers encouraged young men to apply the code of the street in two main ways. First, officers purposely refused to provide protection. Second, the police diverted resources to policing youths who were easy targets in the public sphere and often ignored predatory criminal activity that happened right below the surface, in areas that they had chosen not to police, such as apartment complexes, parks, and "death alleys" that they might have perceived as dangerous. Police operated under a demographic rather than a criminological model of threat. In doing so, they missed countless opportunities to protect innocent people from being victimized.

Many events in this study demonstrated that police were involved in magnifying the code of the street. Another example is Slick, who, like Jose, reported that police encouraged residents to take justice into their own hands. Slick was brutally attacked by a group of gang members during the time when he became a "wannabe." When the police showed up to conduct an investigation, Slick and his friends told the officer the name of the gang members who attacked them: "The pigs told us where we could find them. They told us they had just seen them hanging out at the corner of 9th and e-one-four (East 14th). They said to us, 'You gotta do what you gotta do.' So we did."

The code of the street allowed the police to justify harassment and arrest, schools to punish and suspend students for defiance, and community members to fear young people. In responding to the code of the

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street, authority figures in Oakland created a labeling hype and culture of punishment that criminalized young people's everyday style and pursuit of happiness, even when these did not involve breaking the law. I found that it was not only important to understand how the boys used the code of the street but also to understand how the community responded to young people who were associated with the code of the street. Seeing how others responded to the code of the street allowed me to understand how institutions such as the criminal justice system and schools were also responsible for creating a social order, a code of conduct that inculcated criminality and victimization among marginalized youths.[31] By operating in the belief that the code of the street was rampant among marginalized youths, despite the fact that a minority of these youths lived by this code, institutions created a social order that managed every young person it encountered as a threat who followed a code that victimized others. Alford Young argues that social scientists have focused too much of their attention on marginalized black men's behaviors on the streets.[32] This has enabled schools, law enforcement, and policy makers to treat marginalized young black men as if the streets determine all of their codes of conduct and worldviews. The boys in this study believed that some agents of social control, the family, school administrators, and police, interacted with them as if at any given moment they would engage in crime or violence. As the boys came of age, they experienced being treated as criminal risks in need of constant, ubiquitous surveillance and control across social contexts.

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4

The Coupling of Criminal Justice and Community Institutions

> No public safety officer shall be prohibited from seeking election to, or serving as a member of, the governing board of a school district.
>
> —California Government Code, "Police Officers Bill of Rights," 1977

> In its function, the power to punish is not essentially different from that of curing or educating.
>
> —Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 1977

I drove to Spider's house late one afternoon after a long day of discussing inequality with urban sociologists at the University of California, Berkeley. Some claimed to have found answers to the problematic questions they asked: "Why do African Americans commit disproportionate crime?" "Why does the inner city produce a culture of violence?" and "Why do immigrants become involved in gangs?" As these, primarily White, male, and middle-class, graduate students and faculty continued to dissect the ghetto from the comfort of the university, it dawned on me that I had to hit the streets and catch up with Spider, who had recently been stabbed. While I would be asking Spider about violence and gangs, an equally pressing topic, in his mind, was that of criminalization and

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police misconduct. I knew I had a short window before Spider decided to leave his house. I grabbed my backpack, ran to my car, and drove to his house. As I left Berkeley, majestic oak and redwood trees faded from my rearview mirror, replaced by old cars, dilapidated Victorians, and track houses that had been turned into multiple apartments by slumlords.

So far, from youth accounts and my observations, I had discovered that school personnel, police officers, and other adults in the community had created an environment that made these young people feel criminalized from a young age. Although I had encountered a few racist cops and even a few racist teachers, I knew that most people in the community were well intentioned and had a genuine interest in the well-being of boys. How was it possible that all the young men whom I followed believed wholeheartedly that most adults in the community worked to ubiquitously punish them? In the minds of these young men, the community had conspired to impose detrimental sanctions on them. My observations led me to uncover a complex process by which even well-intentioned adults participated in the criminalization of the boys. Some people in the community did believe that the boys were irreparable criminals and needed to be locked away. But others, those who cared dearly for these boys, did not conspire to criminalize them. Instead, these caring adults were caught up in a system of imposing punitive social control, which influenced their actions despite their having a genuine interest in the well-being of the boys.

Criminologist David Garland reminds us that "punishment does not just restrain or discipline 'society'—punishment helps create it." He contends that punishment is one of the many institutions which helps construct and support the social world by producing the shared categories and authoritative classifications through which individuals understand each other and themselves.[1] I use Garland's analysis of punishment as an institution to understand the role that criminalization, as a form of punishment, plays in the lives of the boys in this study. Garland argues, "Like all social institutions, punishment interacts with its environment, forming part of the mutually constructing configuration of elements which make up the social world."[2] If Garland is correct, the workings of punitive social control set the stage for the development of specific meaning-making and cultural practices among youths who encounter criminalization. Their subjectivities are partially constructed by punishment. But young

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people also have agency and develop systems of interaction and resistance to cope with these patterns of punishment and to create an alternative world, an escape from their punitive reality.

Labor historian Robin Kelley argues that young people become involved in "play"—the seeking of personal enjoyment despite their detrimental circumstances. Social scientists, according to Kelley, have confused this "play" for a form of social disorder: "The growing numbers of young brown bodies engaged in 'play' rather than work (from street-corner bantering, to 'mailing' [hanging out at shopping malls], to basketball) have contributed to popular constructions of the 'underclass' as a threat and shaped urban police practices. The invention of terms such as *wilding,* as Houston Baker points out, reveal a discourse of black male youth out of control, rampaging teenagers free of the disciplinary structures of school, work, and prison."[3] In 2010, groups of Black youths in Philadelphia were placed in the national media spotlight when the city called in the FBI, made student transportation passes invalid after 4 p.m., and implemented a policy to cite parents when their children broke curfew laws. This crackdown occurred in response to "flash mobs," large numbers of people who gather after being organized through text messaging.[4] Although the majority of these gatherings did not involve delinquency, a few events, where violence and vandalism took place, led to the criminalization of young Black people gathering in groups in downtown Philadelphia. These flash mobs can be analyzed as creative responses to social isolation and a lack of recreation spaces. According to Kelley and consistent with my findings, marginalized young people's "play" has become criminalized.

Criminalizing the Victim

I pulled up to Spider's house, a two-story Victorian. The house looked as if it had not been maintained since it was first built in the early 1900s. Bare, splintered wood protruded through the flaking khaki paint. The gutterless roof had allowed rainwater to seep through the wooden paneling on the house, creating warps and cracks on the surface as if an earthquake had shaken the house from its foundation and dragged it from its original location. His mother rented a one-bedroom apartment conversion in the rear of the house. The side of the house had a driveway that had been

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fenced off. This is where Spider kept two dogs he owned, a red-nose pit bull and a small mutt. Both dogs looked malnourished, with their ribs visibly showing and their stomachs tucked deep into their hind legs. I knocked on Slick's metal gate door. After a few knocks, Slick answered the door. "Wassup, Vic?" "Wassup, Slick?" I replied. I had not seen him in two weeks, and the last time I saw him he was in a hospital bed.

Spider was fifteen years young when he was brutally attacked by gang members on a night when he sat on his front door steps talking with friends.

> I was kicking it in front of my house with some homies and stuff, and then a few of them were wearing red. And they thought we were claiming [members of a gang]. And they rolled by and passed once and came a second time. And we was fighting. And I was running by myself, and my brother went that way [pointing to the right]. Then I came down this way [pointing to the left], and they caught me. And they just shanked [stabbed] me. They shanked me four in the stomach, one in the chest, and eight in the leg. They were like twenty-five years old. . . . You don't feel nothing, but then, after, I just blacked out and woke up at the hospital. My mom came, and I told her I was OK and blacked out.

Spider nearly died. He was hospitalized for three weeks. The detectives who investigated his case paid him a visit a few hours after the incident:

> When I woke up, that's when they came, the detectives I mean. Molina [the detective investigating his case] and shit came to the hospital. And they tried to see if it was Sureños that stabbed me and tried to label me as a Norteño [rival gang to Sureños]. No! But I am not Norteño, I don't gang bang, but when I was there, they tried to make me say that I was Norteño and stuff. I couldn't remember who stabbed me. I just know it was Sureños 'cause they kept yelling MS [Mara Salvatrucha, the name of another gang]. Yeah, and, you know, you gotta make a police report and shit. But they arrested a juvenile, and then they tried to make me testify, but I didn't want to go to court. I already know they didn't got the dudes that got me 'cause those dudes were grown men and stuff. And I wanted to be left alone. And then that's why we dropped the charges, and all that. And then the DA wanted me to go to court.

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After this near-death experience, Spider was registered by the Oakland police as an active gang member. Prior to this event, he had never been arrested or registered by police as a gang member. During his stay at the hospital, one of the gang detectives asked his mother for his personal information and asked her how long he had been in the gang. His mother insisted that he was not in the gang. The officer told her, "That's the reason your son got stabbed. You're ignoring his gang involvement."

During my time in the field, I verified that Spider was not in the gang. It was not difficult to find out who was actively gang involved. There were many indicators: whom the young person hung out with, who self-identified as a gang member, and how the young person interacted with known gang members. Community workers were also good sources. Most gang members were honest, because if their homies found out that they had negated the gang, the consequences could be devastating. I had found no signs that indicated that Spider was involved in the gang. However, the gang detective came to a different conclusion and placed him in the gang database.

The rampant use of the gang database was an additional factor which accentuated the criminalization process. Police officers constantly placed young men in this database, allowing any other officer who came into contact with the boys to have detailed information about what "turf" they belonged to or where they were last stopped or when they were last questioned. It appeared that the police classified young people as gang members in order to benefit from the ability to keep track of them and impose harsher restrictions and policing on them. This categorization later affected Spider during a criminal case, in which he was charged with assault with a deadly weapon, for the benefit of the gang, after he got into a fight with a guy who was making fun of him for getting stabbed. The gang enhancement carried an added five-year sentence.

When the police classified Spider as a gang member, school staff, community workers, and other adults in the community also adopted this categorization. The punishment that Spider encountered, after being viciously attacked, was not an isolated case of individual rogue gang detectives: there was a recurring pattern of criminalizing the victim in the lives of these young men. Meanwhile, police officers, school personnel, probation officers, and even community workers supported the labeling of Spider as a culprit, despite his being the victim who had been stabbed.

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Spider's School

Two months before Spider was stabbed, I visited the East Oakland Continuation School (EOCS),[5] which Spider and six other boys in this study attended. The EOCS was a school for those students who had already been officially labeled as deviant and delinquent by the Oakland Unified School District and who were no longer allowed to attend the "regular" high school. The school welcomed me in as a community member who could mentor some of the youth at the school. The first person at the entrance of the school was a security guard named Shirley, a short, chubby Black woman who looked about thirty-five years old. She spoke with a deep voice and always seemed to stand on her toes. Her modus operandi was to "mean mug" (stare down) every student who walked in through the gate, as if to remind them whom they would have to face if they were defiant that day. Once the students were inside the school, another security guard checked them with a handheld metal detector to make sure they did not bring a weapon to school. As Spider dragged his left leg across the school yard to keep his baggy pants from falling, the middle-aged, six-foot-tall, White, male school principal walked by us. "Mr. Juarez!" he called in a deep voice. "You're not going to give us any trouble today. Right?" "I'm cool, Mr. Ellis," replied Spider. The school was small, made up of three dilapidated World War II–era bungalows placed perpendicular to one another to form a courtyard. The courtyard was all cement, with a few benches and two basketball hoops. On rainy days, Spider and the other students wore their hoods in class, in case the roof started leaking on their heads.

Spider and I walked into class. Although class had already started, the teacher was missing. Students sat in groups of four, facing each other. The class was composed of seven Latinos and eight Blacks. One of the students played a rap song on his cell phone's speaker: "I'm raw, I'm raw, I'm raw . . ." the song continued, then the sound was interrupted by a young Black lady who talked on her cell phone: "Yeah, bitch. You crazy bitch . . . Yeah, bitch . . ." One of the Latino males, Julio, looked at his Black classmate, Jason, and said, "You got some coke?" "Coke? Nigga! Is you crazy? You do it all?" replied Jason. Julio looked at him with a serious look and said, "Everything: pills, crystal, smoke, drank. Tienes de la negrita? [You got some little black stuff?] You know, heroin?" I found that the boys I observed often pre-

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tended to use more drugs than they were really using. Julio was always at school, and rarely on the streets, during the times I conducted my observations. He was headed for graduation and never displayed any signs of major drug use such as being on the streets, not attending school, or being distracted in the classroom. I believe Julio was pretending to use various drugs in order to appear "crazy" around the other boys and possibly to gain their respect. The school later suspended Julio and reported him to the local police officer for asking other students if they had drugs to offer.

The teacher finally walked into the classroom. He was a substitute. The school had trouble finding permanent teachers. One possible reason was the school's notoriety: recently a student had placed a chokehold on the principal. As the substitute, a fifty-year-old, light-skinned Black male, walked in, a seventeen-year-old Black male, Deandre, said to him, "Hey, bra [bro], what's up with it, bra." The substitute ignored him and turned to the girl who was using her cell phone: "Hang that up." She told her friend, "I'll call you back, bitch. My teacher wants me." The teacher told the students to open their Earth Science books to page 223. "Today's lesson is about rocks," he told the students. Deandre grunted, "I don't care 'bout no rock." The substitute responded, "You will when it starts shaking!" Deandre replied, "That's when niggas start running!" The teacher dropped the book and scolded the students, "You know where you are headed? . . . Narcissism is gonna lead you to prison." The students all looked down. At this point, I turned to Spider. He gave me a look, raising his right eyebrow, as if to tell me, "I told you so." I looked down. The teacher finally convinced another student to read to the class.

A few minutes later the bell rang. I asked the substitute about his narcissism remark. He replied, "You know, these students have some internalized nihilism [*sic*]. They are just here out of the rain from the streets. They come here wanting you to bring them up-to-date. What causes unconformity? That is what we have a lot of here." Spider walked into the classroom to check on me and overheard the last part of the teacher's remarks. "You saying I'm slow?" he asked. "No, I'm saying that if you keep acting slow and continue gang banging, you going to prison," the teacher replied. Spider insisted, "I ain't no gang member. You trippin', cuz." The school had a high turnover rate with teachers and substitutes. When new teachers arrived, they attempted to use

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their unique pedagogical approaches to connect with students; some of them were really nice, others really mean, and many in-between. But all the teachers had one practice in common: whenever any student misbehaved, the teachers would threaten either to call the police, to send them to jail, or to call a probation officer (sometimes, even for those students who were not on probation). In the school's attempt to maintain order, it used the full force of criminal justice institutions to regulate students' behavior. Although this school was for students already labeled delinquents, these boys reported receiving the same treatment at the "regular" schools they attended as well.

Later on in the day, Spider and I walked outside the school gate. As we walked past the security guard, I heard a walkie-talkie buzz, and the guard said, "Officer Miles, we have a few of them walking your way." We walked a few blocks to International Boulevard, and an all-black patrol car, with no police markings—what the kids referred to as a "Narc"—turned the corner. The officer stared us down. He drove down the street, made a U-turn, and drove slowly right behind us. "Shit! That's the mothafucker that beat down Marquill the other day in front of McDonald's, remember?" I remembered: two weeks before, a Black male student walked into the school at the end of the lunch period, his extra-long white T-shirt soiled with black tar and his lip busted open, with red flesh showing. One of his friends asked him, "What happened?" "The Narcs, they beat my ass." He replied in monotone, with little emotion as he walked, head bowed, to the boys' bathroom. Slick had witnessed the beating. According to Slick, Marquill had talked back to the police officer. The officer got out of the car, grabbed Marquill by his T-shirt, and slammed him onto the grunge-covered cement parking lot of the McDonald's. The White officer stood over Marquill for a few minutes. Then Marquill was released and returned to school.

I had never seen Slick display so much fear, even when he recounted his stabbing story. I turned to Slick and told him, "Let's just keep walking. We'll be fine." The officer continued to follow us, driving slowly behind us. Slick became paranoid, turned around, and gave the officer a dirty look. I turned to look. The officer, a White man with a shaved head in his late thirties, looked at us, grinned, and drove off. Police officers played a crafty cat-and-mouse game in which the boys remained in constant fear of being humiliated, brutalized, or arrested.

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This officer often stationed himself at the McDonald's parking lot. Most of his work appeared to revolve around looking for traffic violations or waiting for the school to call when a student misbehaved. The school had impeccable communication between the security officer, the administrators, and this police officer. I witnessed eight events when police were called by the security officer for students talking back, cursing, or other minor school-rule transgressions. At EOCS, stigma, labeling, detention, harassment, and humiliation were just about the only consistent experiences that young people could count on as they entered the school. If students attempted to resist this criminalization by acting up, a violent police officer lurked.

For the boys, the school represented just another space where they were criminalized for their style and culture. The school, in the eyes of the boys, was indistinguishable from the police officer stationed at McDonald's, the adults in the community who called the police on them, or the community-center staff who ousted them. Jose, who also attended the school, put it into perspective: "Man, it's like every day, teachers gotta sweat me, police gotta pocket-check me, mom's gotta trip on me, and my PO's gotta stress me. . . . It's like having a zookeeper watching us at all times. We walk home, and we see them [probation officers and police]; we shoot some hoops, and we see them; we take a shit at school, and we see them."[6]

After school, Jose would take a two-hour bus ride to Berkeley to visit his cousins and attend a court-mandated community-center program facilitated by his probation officer. Since Jose lived in Berkeley at the time of his last court hearing, he was assigned a probation officer stationed at a Berkeley community center. Jose was required to check in with him once a week.

Parents

The young people I interviewed also perceived themselves to be criminalized by parents. School personnel, police, and probation officers provided the boys' parents with "courtesy stigmas." A "courtesy stigma" is a stigma that develops as a result of being related to a person with a stigma.[7] The conversations that school personnel, police, and probation officers had with one another about troubled youths almost always followed the

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same trajectory: "These parents need to learn how to discipline these kids"; "It's their parents' fault for letting them do whatever they want"; "It's no surprise that they're this way—look at their parents." These are just a few examples of countless depictions of parents as deviants, like their children. Authority figures often attempted to intervene and teach parents the "right way" to parent. For instance, a probation officer periodically visited Jose's mother in Oakland and attempted to influence how she parented. Jose's mother, Rosario, explained, "The [probation officer], he frightens me. He comes over and tells me, 'Why don't you learn to be a mother? Take away all this gangster stuff from Jose. You are at fault for what he does.'" This process sometimes changed the relationship that youths had with their parents. Some parents came to have similar perspectives as police and probation officers. Fourteen of the boys reported not having trusting relationships with their parents and believed that their parents would turn them in to authorities for arguing with them. Parents felt compelled to obey the discourse provided by the youth control complex: "Your child is a deviant, your child needs to be scrutinized and policed, and when your child acts negatively in any kind of way, such as dressing like a 'thug,' you need to call probation and police."

For Jose and most of the other boys, their perceptions of being watched, managed, and treated as criminals began at a young age and became exacerbated after their first offense, in most cases, a misdemeanor. Their minor transgressions branded them with a mark that would make their one-time criminal act into a permanent criminal identity. Part of the process of making Jose feel that he was constructed as a criminal was his mother's participation in his criminalization. He believed that she was forced to listen to school and criminal justice authorities' agendas on how to parent, especially after his first arrest. According to Jose and his mother, he was first arrested for carrying a ten-dollar bag of marijuana. They found that everyone in the community treated Jose differently after his first arrest. Jose began to feel watched, police began to randomly stop and search him, and his teachers would threaten him with calling his probation officer if he disobeyed at school. And, despite his mother's empathizing with the negative treatment he was now receiving, she constantly reminded him that he would end up in jail if he misbehaved, and she used these threats as a means to discipline him.[8]

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Probation

According to the boys I interviewed, probation officers served the purpose of punishing them by branding them criminals in front of the rest of the community and by marking their territory in the settings through which the boys navigated. Community centers made office space available for probation officers.[9] Parents were constantly interacting with probation officers and were often being chastised and influenced by them. Teachers had direct contact with probation officers, in order to inform them when boys misbehaved. Schools also provided office space for police and probation officers to check in with trouble students.

The probation experience varied for the boys. Some of the boys had probation officers that required them to check in once a week. Others knocked on doors at 7:45 in the morning once a week to make sure the youngster was getting ready and planning to go to school. Most, however, had high and unrealistic expectations of the boys but did not play a role in aiding them in meeting these expectations. For example, Deandre's probation officer, Ms. Moore, wrote a contract for him, full of unreachable goals, which he showed me soon after meeting with her: "Find a job. Pass all your classes. Do not get caught hanging out with your old friends." Weeks went by, and Ms. Moore did not check in with Deandre. Although he attempted to "stay legit," he found no work. I watched and helped him apply to twelve jobs. After a few weeks, he had not received one call. Meanwhile, he did not pass all his classes because the two weeks he spent in juvenile hall led to a failed semester at school, and he could not stay away from his old friends because they all lived in the same apartment complex and went to the same school he attended.

While Deandre seemed like a victim of his circumstances, I also noticed that he developed creative ways to walk the tightrope between the contradictory expectations of the streets and those of his probation officer. I observed Deandre's crafty strategy to avoid trouble around his friends. After being placed on probation, Deandre took a passive role in his "crew." He shied away from partaking in visible activities, such as walking in a large group or playing dice on the sidewalk. Instead, he "chilled," mostly on his front steps, and avoided joining the crew when they talked about fighting. Despite strategic attempts to stay out of trouble, the sys-

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tem caught up with him, as it does with the majority of youths on probation. No matter how crafty a young person was at attempting to stay away from trouble, his probation officer found a way to "violate" him, arrest him again for the smallest of infractions. While probation generated a desire to change in many young people's minds, the resources to produce outcomes in their attempts to change were not provided. Probation was successful at forcing young people to discuss personal responsibility and reflect on their own actions, but it completely failed at providing young men the resources necessary for desisting from crime. The criminalization process was already in motion, leading probation officers to overlook this desire to change and instead to focus on minor transgressions, such as violating curfew or hanging out with known gang members, many of whom were family or next-door neighbors.

It would have taken consistent case-management work to help Deandre meet Ms. Moore's requirements; however, she did not meet with Deandre again until three months after his release. When she finally met with him, she arrested him because he had violated his probation: a police officer had caught him hanging out with his friends, and he had failed all his classes. After being released, Deandre believed that his probation officer was teaching him a lesson. "She be doing too much, man. She don't help a nigga out, but then she lock a nigga up for stupid shit, yadadamean [you know what I mean]?"

Probation meetings are one-on-one meetings, often mandated at least once per month, in which a young person is asked by his or her probation officer a series of questions centered on desisting or "staying straight." According to the boys, a good probation officer could provide access and connections to programs and jobs. Out of thirty boys on probation, only five believed that their probation officers were helpful. The other twenty-five boys reported having probation officers who spent less than twenty minutes talking to them and who were obsessed with hearing a confession of the boy's violation of probation. I rode the bus to downtown Oakland with three of the boys on three different occasions. All three of the boys were in and out of their appointments within fifteen minutes. "What did he tell you?" I asked. "Nothing," they responded and proceeded to describe the probation officer's lecturing them about doing well in school. At community centers, this also seemed to be the case.

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While probation officers did not give good advice or connect youths to programs, they did maintain close contact with police and community workers. The overpolicing-underpolicing paradox existed here: probation officers were rarely around to help young men through the process of staying free but were consistently there to chastise or arrest them when they were purported to have violated the law.

At the end of the boys' initial arrest, all of them were placed on probation and required to report to their probation officers. The meetings would sometimes take place at neighborhood community centers located near the youngsters' homes. The boys did not like the community-center arrangement because everyone knew when they were checking in with their probation officer. Although at one point, some of the boys believed this to be "cool," after a while, boys such as Deandre became frustrated and felt stigmatized by the reality of having to walk into a community center to check in with a probation officer in front of the entire community. Theoretically, this kind of shame might help someone like Deandre "reintegrate" into the community, by feeling ashamed to have committed a crime due to the public shaming, which held him accountable to the entire community for his misdeeds. However, the community seemed to respond to Deandre and the other boys not through an "I will help you learn your lesson," "tough love" perspective but through an "I hope you get arrested again" punitive perspective.

From the perspective of juvenile probation and many school personnel, the point of the probation officer's being present at community centers and schools was to make sure that youths who were on probation did not commit another crime. Often, the probation officer served as a coercive force, which constantly reminded youngsters that a pair of handcuffs was waiting for them as soon as they committed their first infraction. Fourteen of the boys were released from probation during the three-year study. Twelve of the boys were arrested soon after. Their violations, all minor, included being drunk in public, violating curfew, being suspended at school, and hanging out with old friends. Despite being off of probation, the boys continued to be tracked.

Probation officer–youth relations were overwhelmingly negative and punitive, with probation officers being a disruptive control force in the boys' lives, waiting for them to, as Jose put it, "fuck up."[10] By being pres-

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ent in all aspects of the youths' lives, probation officers could potentially have a positive impact on the boys' rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Often, the boys did follow the strict orders of the probation officer, but only in the direct presence of the officer. Probation officers' punitive approach failed to teach young people how to desist on their own, through self-control instead of through external threat. This threat often developed resentment in the boys and led to resistance, which was sometimes articulated through deviance and criminality.

While direct punitive control kept many of the young men from committing crime, many of them ended up being arrested anyway, for the most minor of infractions, which were no longer independent crimes but "crimes" of violating a probation contract. This occurred because the young men resisted many of the unrealistic expectations which probation imposed, including being home by 8 p.m. and checking in with the probation officer at the local community center, where peers would see them interacting with law enforcement and sometimes ask them if they were "snitches." Probation placed the boys between a rock and a hard place; if they followed their probation program, they ran the risk of being victimized by others who saw them as snitches. This, in turn, led many of the boys to be rearrested for simple infractions. Probation created a magnifying-glass effect for the boys, which led them deeper into the criminal justice system for the most minor of infractions, violations which were often outside of criminal code and fell under the purview of school or community rules and norms, such as being suspended, having an argument with parents, or cursing at a store clerk.

Slick's probation officer, Mr. Johnson, a Black man in his forties, always wore a cowboy hat and cowboy boots. He was about six feet tall. His demeanor was gruff. He reminded me of characters that actor Clint Eastwood played in vigilante Wild West movies. When I first introduced myself to him, he asked me what I was going to do to keep Slick off the street. "Either you are helping him, or you are in his way," he told me. On another occasion, I was at Slick's home talking with him and his mother. Mr. Johnson paid a surprise visit, pounding Slick's metal door gate. Slick knew it was Mr. Johnson by the way he knocked. As he heard the pounding he turned to his mom and said, "Ese cabron ya llego a cagar el palo. Me va querer llevar a la carcel." [That asshole is here to harass me. He is

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going to want to take me to jail.] Slick had been scared into following his probation program by Mr. Johnson. However, fear tactics generally did not work with the boys, since the effects of such tactics were short-lived. Sure, Slick was afraid of being arrested the first few times that Mr. Johnson yelled at him. But after a while, Slick began to resist this punitive treatment, sometimes even purposely breaking probation rules.

Philosopher Michel Foucault argues that the practices and architecture of constant surveillance, what he calls "panopticism," makes individuals internalize their punishment and become self-disciplined, docile bodies.[11] But in Oakland, young men were not being taught this self-discipline. Instead, the criminalization which existed in this context led the boys to manipulate the system, by agreeing to obey under coercion and, at the same time, resisting this coercion by breaking the rules which they had agreed to follow. In Foucault's formulation, the disciplined subject sits at the periphery of the panopticon, with the disciplinarian power at the center, keeping a constant gaze on the subject. This soft surveillance is intended to reform the soul and produce an obedient subject. The ultimate goal of the panopticon, according to Foucault, is to create self-discipline in the prisoner. This process is scientific, neat, and controlled. The kind of discipline I found in the streets of Oakland differs drastically. The boys in Oakland were placed at the center of the panopticon. Punitive treatment surrounded them, beaming itself in high intensity, from multiple directions. Different from Foucault's panopticon, the punishment I found in Oakland was aimed at controlling and containing the young men who were seen as risks, threats, and culprits. The boys in Oakland were not seen as souls that needed to be disciplined but as irreparable risks and threats that needed to be controlled and ultimately contained. The discipline imposed on the boys in Oakland did not do much to reform the soul. Instead it incapacitated them as social subjects; it stripped them of their dignity and humanity by systematically marking them and denying them the ability to function in school, in the labor market, and as law-abiding citizens. The boys did not learn to self-discipline; instead, they resisted, became incapacitated, or both. The boys knew they were being watched, and so they resisted; they created a spectacle of the system, exposing its flaws and contradictions, which in turn led to an altered sense of having recovered some dignity. In a secu-

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ritized Oakland, Foucault's panopticon had been flipped on its head: it had become inverted, placing the boys at the center of the complex, with forces of punitive social control surrounding them, delivering them constant ubiquitous punishment and criminalization, leading many to resist.

Although direct threat and coercion from probation officers worked well in changing youth behaviors, it was only a temporary fix. As soon as the boys were taken off the intensive probation program of electronic monitoring, weekly meetings, and home arrest, they began to commit acts which further criminalized them and which often led to a second arrest. They often expressed that being contained, monitored, and threatened for so long made them unable to control themselves when the direct authoritative treatment was removed. They had been trained to live under forceful supervision and sanctions from the state, and, now, there was no other mechanism by which to regulate their behavior or to teach them how to function as healthy young adults.

The boys had not been able to find positive, informal social control based on nurturing, guidance, and support; instead, they had encountered a system of control which disciplined them through punitive force.[12] The system may have been fooled by the fact that the boys followed orders when they were under direct supervision. In Slick's case, the immediate threat of violence and incarceration led to short-term desistance. However, once the threat was removed, Slick was left with no guidance to continue to avoid crime. This punitive approach did not work, because the boys did not develop navigational skills necessary for becoming productive citizens. The boys needed to learn how to desist on their own behalf, through internal controls, so that a punitive and highly expensive system of control would no longer be necessary. Criminologists John Hagan and Bill McCarthy explain the difference between debilitating social control and rehabilitative social control: "Normal shame and shaming produce social solidarity, whereas pathological shame and shaming produce alienation."[13] Normal shame is the process by which a community member is held accountable for his or her transgressions by way of shaming, so that he or she learns, makes amends, and becomes reintegrated into the group or society. Pathological shaming is the process by which the transgressor is permanently stigmatized, shamed into feeling like a permanent outsider, and perpetually humili-

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ated for his or her negative behavior. This in turn leads the transgressor to become disintegrated from the group or society. When young people are integrated back into society and "taught a lesson" through self-reflection and the development of internal controls, they see themselves as part of the community and hence hold themselves accountable. When they are shamed through criminalization, young people resist and lose hope, often leading to more crime or criminalization.

Eighteen of the youths in this study had probation officers who placed the burden on them to immediately change their social worlds by avoiding their friends or to face further punishment and criminalization. They all felt that their probation officers had given them advice which did not work on the streets with their peers. And many of the youths did attempt to use the threat of probation or juvenile hall as an excuse to stay away from some of their old peers, in order to avoid being stigmatized for attempting to improve in school, avoid drugs and alcohol, and avoid committing violence. However, because many of their friends had already been to jail, they knew the storyline: probation officers exaggerated their threats, and youths who began to hang out again with old friends did not immediately go back to jail. Probation officers had minimal credibility with the boys. Peers who had been to jail would simply explain to their friends that the probation officer was exaggerating and that most of the time they would not get caught if they broke probation. "Come on, fool, just kick it with us," I heard Slick's friends tell him one day at the park, "That busta' ain't gonna arrest you. They just tell you that to scare you." Because probation officers often tested the boys for marijuana use through a urine test, some of the boys became cocaine users after they were placed on probation. "Cocaine," as Slick described, "stays in your system for two days. Dank [marijuana] stays in your system for thirty days." This obsession with finding marijuana use in young people is indicative of how cracking down on less harmful offenses often led young people to "graduate" into more harmful yet less targeted offenses.

Police and probation officers often communicated with shopkeepers and community members about the "criminals" whom they should look out for. Ronny, a Black youth who moved back and forth between Oakland and Berkeley, began to realize a few weeks after being placed on probation that everyone in the community knew about his arrest and

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probation program. "I walked into the liquor store, and the Arab told me, 'I know the police are after you, so if you do anything, I'm gonna call them.'" I asked him, "Did you steal anything? Had you ever stolen anything there?" "No. I just talk shit to him because he won't front me a soda when I'm broke."

Community Centers

Eight of the boys who had been previously arrested and four of the boys who had not been arrested were enrolled in community-center programs. Two were enrolled in a community center in Berkeley, because they had previously lived there. The rest of the youths were enrolled in two different organizations in Oakland. Each center claimed to serve between two hundred and seven hundred youths per year. Community workers estimated that over ten thousand young people lived in the neighborhoods which their centers serviced. The lack of community programs for young people, in all the neighborhoods where the boys lived, was observable. When the boys were asked, "Would you join a program that took you on field trips or where you could play sports or talk to a mentor or get a job?" all of them responded, "Yes." However, only four of them were able to enroll in community programs without any strings attached. The other eight enrolled because they were mandated by probation. This was a common pattern: criminal justice institutions sometimes held a stake in youth programs. During the three years of this study, I noticed that funding for case workers from foundations and non-criminal-justice government agencies declined, and funding from criminal justice entities became available. At one point, a former gang member turned community worker, Joey, had been funded through various grants to provide mentoring for gang youths in the community. As the money for this position expired, the community center turned to the county probation department to continue to fund the position. The county agreed but wanted direct oversight of Joey. Over time, youths who had grown to trust Joey and respect him came to see him as a "snitch" for the probation department and the police. Eventually, Joey lost the boys' respect, became ineffective in the community, and was laid off by the community center.

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Although these organizations claimed to serve "at-risk" youths, very few of the boys in this study were accepted or invited to enroll in programs. Instead, the community centers focused on youths who they thought would respond to their programming. This made sense, because their funding was dependent on their "numbers." Angelo, a youth-programs director at Communities Organizing Youth (COY), explained:

ANGELO: You see, I try to help the at-risk ones, you know, the ones that are on the street. But they [his boss] tell me, 'If you help them, we won't get funded,' because, as you know, when you put time into the crazy youth, they take up a lot of time.

VR: So, are you able to give programming to any of the street youth?

ANGELO: The one, two programs we have for them come from probation. One is anger management, and the other is life skills.

VR: What do they do?

ANGELO: They learn about controlling their anger and about living a healthy lifestyle.

VR: Who runs the programs? Counselors? Community members?

ANGELO: POs [probation officers] mostly.

Although the community centers hired some charismatic individuals with transformational skills, people who in the past had helped to transform the lives of some of the toughest youths in the community, their hard work and youth-development approach was rarely institutionalized. Charismatic individuals were given a large caseload and were burdened with high expectations from many people in the community. This led many of them to burn out. Nene, another former gang member turned charismatic youth worker, explained, "Man! I like working with the youngsters, but this red-tape bullshit of having to feel like a snitch for probation is getting to me. . . . The other day I caught myself threatening one of the boys to call the police if they kept talking in my workshop." Although many youth workers did not use this approach—to contact a police officer or to report an incident to a probation officer—many of the boys reported having this experience when the community center called probation or police for non-criminal activity.

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In recent years, an influential program known as Cease-Fire has been implemented in communities across the country, including in Oakland. The Cease-Fire project calls for identifying hard-core community members who may potentially commit violence, calling them in for a meeting with law enforcement and community workers, threatening the potential transgressors that they will be watched and punished if they commit a crime, and offering programs to them if they choose to "go legit." Although this study did not document Cease-Fire because it started after I left the field, a program such as this may pose the risk of entangling law enforcement with community workers even further. Dire consequences result from this process. Community centers sometimes seemed like criminal justice centers to some of the boys, places where programming was provided by law-enforcement officials, instead of youth-development workers. However, if police stick to their terrain to protect the community, and programs are created to help young people who have expressed an interest in change, then a program like Cease-Fire may prove promising. The key is to invest enough resources in social programs which are independent from, and set clear parameters between, themselves and criminal justice institutions. Otherwise, young people perceive the various institutions in the community as accomplices in a plot to criminalize them. The young men in this study compared encounters with police, probation officers, and prosecutors with interactions they had with school administrators and teachers who placed them in detention rooms; community centers that attempted to exorcise their criminality; and even parents, who felt ashamed or dishonored and relinquished their relationship with their own children altogether. It seemed, in the accounts of the boys, that various institutions were collaborating to form a system that degraded them on an everyday basis. As such, these young men's understanding of their environment as a punitive one, where they were not given a second chance, led them to believe that they had no choice but to resist.

These institutions, though independently operated with their own practices, policies, and logics, intersected with one another to provide a consistent flow of criminalization. The consequences of this formation were often brutal. Young Ronny explained,

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> We are not trusted. Even if we try to change, it's us against the world. It's almost like they don't want us to change. They rather we stay crazy than to try to pick ourselves up. Why they gotta send us to the ghetto alternative high school? We don't deserve to go to the same school down the street? . . . And when we try to apply for a job, we just get looked at like we crazy. If we do get an interview, the first question is, "Have you been arrested before?" . . . We got little choice.

Ronny understood his actions as responses to this system of punishment, which restricted his ability to survive, work, play, and learn. As such, he developed coping skills that were often seen as deviant and criminal by the system. Sociologist Elijah Anderson reminds us that young men, in these kinds of situations, react by demonstrating mistrust of the system: "Highly alienated and embittered, they exude generalized contempt for the wider scheme of things, and for a system they are sure has nothing but contempt for them."[14] Spider's experiences with police not protecting him and instead marking him as a gang member solidified his mistrust and contempt for the police. In addition, his experiences in a school where teachers warned him about his inevitable entry into the criminal justice system and where security guards reported students to police for minimal transgressions led Spider to believe that he was caught in the center of a web of punishment, which consistently and ubiquitously constrained him. This web of punishment, the youth control complex, added to the boys' blocked opportunities but also generated creative responses, which allowed the boys to feel dignified. Sometimes these responses even led to informal and formal political resistance.

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PART II

Consequences

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