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Proving Manhood

Masculinity as a Rehabilitative Tool

> Willis too easily converts the culture of these young men into a seamless form of resistance, ignoring or textually diminishing internal contradictions such as the male chauvinism and sexism on which the culture of "resistance" is founded.
>
> —José Limón, *Dancing with the Devil,* 1994

> I'm sicker than SARS, I'm higher than Mars, and I treat my bitch like an ATM card.
>
> —Mac Dre, "Feelin' Myself," 2004[1]

One late afternoon, Spider, Big Rob, and Bullet passed the time behind a warehouse that bordered the neighborhood park. Bullet made fun of Spider's haircut. Spider had shaved off all his hair except for the back end of his head, where he left a long ponytail. The boys referred to this hairstyle as a "mongolian." The style had been adopted by one of the two largest Mexican American gangs in California, the Norteños, or Northerners. Spider had to be brave to wear this hairstyle, because it immediately marked him as a gang member to rivals and police. However, despite his willingness to show his bravado and manhood to his friends, they found ways to challenge his masculinity. "You look like my sister's Barbie doll,

the one that got chewed up by a dog!" Bullet exclaimed, as he covered his mouth. Spider grabbed his pony tail, pumped out his chest, balled his right fist up, and said, "Bullet, why you covering yo' mouth? That's 'cause you got some crack-head teeth." Big Rob intervened: "Remember what the cop said about your hair the other day? He said you look like that bitch that walks around here looking for dope!" The boys' social relations with one another and with community members were saturated with expressions and discourses of manhood.

Criminal justice and disciplinary officials at school often participated in challenging the boys' understanding of masculinity. In this chapter, I argue that beyond the morals and values of manhood which the boys learned from being on the streets, criminalization, specifically encounters with police, juvenile hall, and probation officers, also offered them masculinity-making resources that they used to develop a sense of manhood. One consequence of criminalization and punitive social control for the boys was the development of a specific set of gendered practices. Another outcome of this pervasive criminal justice contact was the production of a hypermasculinity, which obstructed desistance, social relations, and social mobility.

As the boys moved on to another conversation, my mind wandered off, distracted by my thoughts about their future prospects. Perhaps if they were offered another alternative for proving their manhood, this would be sufficient to change their life courses, I thought. My absent-minded moment was quickly interrupted by Big Rob's thick adolescent voice, which occasionally broke into a high pitch: "Here comes those fucking pigs again." I looked toward the park entrance, where a late-model, black and white patrol car rolled into the park toward us. All of us, except Spider, pulled our hands out of our pockets and stood in a position of submission, with our hands open to show that we didn't have a weapon on us, with our eyes looking at the ground to exhibit a nonthreatening stance, and with our bodies slouched over to show that we were not in a position to run away. Spider postured differently. He raised his chest, stared at the officers, murmured curse words at them, and kept his hands in his pockets. He did this to prove himself to his peers and, as I suggested about Jose in chapter 3, in part to intimidate the police officers to avoid future conflicts with them.[2]

This time, Spider's strategy did not work. The officers, one White and one Latino, got out of the patrol car and walked toward us. They said, "Face the wall." The White officer stood by a tree about ten feet away from us, with his hand on his pistol. The Latino officer walked up to each of us and proceeded to search us. He found a knife in Spider's pocket. The officer took him to the patrol car and threw him in the back seat. I intervened, asking the officer why they had stopped us in the first place. After a few seconds of silence, I turned around to face the officer, looking him in the eyes; he reacted by yelling, "Get the fuck back on the wall!" Once I turned around, he handcuffed me and threw me in the car with Spider. Although police officers had the right to conduct pat-downs for weapons if they deemed the boys "reasonably suspicious," they often broke the law by pulling down the boys' pants and emptying their pockets, looking for drugs but under the pretense that they were looking for weapons. They hit boys who disrespected their authority. In my observations, officers constantly violated many of the boys' civil rights. Although I informed the boys that they had the right to report police abuse, many were pessimistic. I learned why, when one day I reported a police officer who had searched my car, ripped part of my door's interior while searching for illegal substances, and then thrown me against his patrol car. When I went to discuss the matter with the officer's superior, he told me, "He has the officers' bill of rights protecting him. I can't tell you what we did with your case." I was never given any further information on the case. The boys often attempted to get legal help for their experiences with the police. However, when they discussed the matter with attorneys, the attorneys would always ask, "Do you have proof?" Besides black eyes and bruises, which were not considered enough evidence, it was the boys' word against the word of the police.

Once in the patrol car, I asked Spider why he was carrying a knife. He told me that Luis, one of the boys in the neighborhood, had disrespected him. Luis had crossed out Spider's name on a wall Spider had tagged up a few days before and then written "*puto*" (fag) over Spider's name.[3] Spider was determined to regain Luis's respect by confronting him. I asked Spider if he intended to stab Luis. He told me that he wanted to "*dale en la madre*" (kick his ass), but his intention was not to stab him. A few days later, I witnessed Spider encounter Luis. Spider went up to Luis and told

him off. Luis told Spider that he was not the person who had called him a *puto*. Spider told him, "The next time I see that shit, I'ma slap the shit out of you." Luis continued walking.

During the three years I spent in the field, I regularly encountered knives and guns, often hidden in paper bags and thrown on the curb five feet away from where the boys hung out. Over the years, I asked youth that I studied and encountered, "If I wanted to purchase a gun right now, how much money would it cost me and how long would it take?" All of them responded similarly. They laughed or looked at me funny, as if I was kidding, because in their minds, I should have known how cheap and easy it was to get a gun. They told me that it would cost $150 to $300, depending on the caliber, and that I could get a gun within a few hours. Although many of the boys had easy access to weapons, they rarely used them. The boys understood the potential repercussions of holding a gun. As Slick described, "If you got a thang [gun] on you, you better be ready to use it, and use it all the way." The boys' clear understanding of the danger of killing, being killed, or ending up in prison for life, along with a strong regard for the life of others, deterred the majority from using the guns that were easily accessible to them. Three of the boys were eventually arrested for gun possession or assault with a deadly weapon, and four self-reported using a gun or knife on someone. Although it was difficult to find out whether a youngster had assaulted anyone with a knife or gun unless he was convicted, after a few months of interviews and observations, I was given signals in conversations about who was "putting in work"—committing violence against rivals. I also found out through community members when youths from rival areas had been assaulted. Overall, relative to the high concentration of guns and knives in the lives of these boys, I found that the youths did not typically take up arms and assault others. In most cases, conflicts usually found resolution—or at least a stalemate—in harsh conversations. Even in Oakland, a city that in 2007 was ranked the fourth-most-violent city in the nation, street-oriented young men often found nonviolent ways to deal with conflict.[4]

Conversations often involved references to guns as analogies for resolving conflict and demonstrating manhood. Some examples: "I'ma pistol whip that mothafucka"; "I'll bust a cap in his ass"; "My gat will do the talking." Although the boys most often avoided guns and only dis-

cussed guns as metaphors, schools and police often suspected that they were carrying guns or that they were ready to use a gun and treated them as if they had guns in their possession. Misrecognition of subcultural style, talk, and gendered practices also often led to criminalization.

As Spider continued his story about wanting to scare Luis, the White police officer sat inside the patrol car to check our records. As we waited for the officer to gather information on Spider and me, he asked Spider, "What the fuck are you doing carrying a knife? Don't you know I can take you to jail for this?" Rehearsed by the reasoning he had given me earlier, Spider told the officer that he had been disrespected by Luis and that he wanted to fight him but was scared he would get jumped by Luis's older brother. The officer turned to Spider and said, "You want to be a man and get some respect? Get a fucking job! You think this stupid shit is gonna make you a man? It's gonna get you locked up." The officer found no warrants for our arrest. He looked at me and said, "I don't know what the fuck you do, but you need to teach these kids how to be men." The officers drove off. We wiped our hands, shook off our clothes, and talked about what had just happened.

This vignette gives a glimpse of the heavily gendered landscape that the boys in this study navigated. Such scenes show how interactions with peers, police officers, and other social-control agents are often about constructing and contesting masculinity. Whether it was Spider's proving his manhood by premeditating a fight to regain respect or his standing up to police or his peers' questioning his manhood because he looked like a doll, or the officers' urging Spider to prove his manhood by getting a job and asking me to teach him how to do so, or my challenging the officer to treat the boys with respect, we all participated in the making of manhood for Spider.

Criminologist and masculinity scholar James Messerschmidt argues that men are constantly faced with "masculinity challenges" and that this process is what leads to crime:

> Such masculinity challenges are contextual interactions that result in masculine degradation. Masculinity challenges arise from interactional threats and insults from peers, teachers, parents, and from situationally defined masculine expectations that are not achievable. Both, in various ways, proclaim a man or boy subordinate in contextually defined mascu-

> line terms. . . . Masculinity challenges may motivate social action towards masculine resources (e.g., bullying, fighting) that correct the subordinating social situation, and various forms of crime can be the result.[5]

Crime is one of the avenues that men turn to in developing, demonstrating, and communicating their manhood. Indeed, criminal activity constitutes a gendered practice that can be used to communicate the parameters of manhood. As such, crime is more likely when men need to prove themselves and when they are held accountable to a strict set of expectations. Furthermore, sociologists West and Fenstermaker contend that this accountability—the gendered actions that people develop in response to what they perceive others will expect of them—is encountered in interactions between individuals and institutions: "While individuals are the ones who do gender, the process of rendering something accountable is both interactional and institutional in character. . . . Gender is . . . a mechanism whereby situated social action contributes to the reproduction of social structure."[6] Conceptualizing gender as structured action, a social process that changes based on interactions with specific types of institutions, in turn, allows us to explore how the criminal justice system shapes the development of specific forms of masculinity.

The young men in this study faced constant interrogation about their manhood on the streets. Questions such as "Is he really a homey?" and "Is he really a man?" if answered in the negative, typically resulted in stigmatization or victimization. At the core of growing up in their community, the boys felt a constant necessity to prove their manhood. Institutions, also, often challenged boys' masculinity in the process of attempting to reform them. Examples included being told that they were not man enough for having committed crime or that being in the criminal justice system meant that they risked being emasculated. The boys, in turn, responded to gendered institutional practices through their own gendered practices. Young men who did not follow this masculinity code ended up putting themselves in a vulnerable position both on the street and in the institutions they navigated.

Many of the collateral consequences of the criminalization and punitive social control of the boys in this study have already been noted in this book: constant surveillance and stigma imposed by schools, community cen-

ters, and families; permanent criminal credentials that exclude Black and Latino males from the labor market; and the boys' mistrust and resentment toward police and the rest of the criminal justice system.[7] In this study, I found that an additional consequence of enhanced policing, surveillance, and punitive treatment of marginalized boys was the development of a specific set of gendered practices, which were heavily influenced by interactions with police, detention facilities, and probation officers. Interactions with the youth control complex were heavily gendered: encounters with White female teachers created an "angry male of color" attacking a "White damsel in distress" phenomenon; encounters with police were often a contest between who was a "bigger man"; and probation officers interacted in either a motherly or a heavy-handed way. These patterns of punishment provided the young men with meanings of masculinity that influenced their decisions to commit crime and engage in violence.

Whereas race determined how a young person was treated in the criminal justice pipeline, masculinity played a role in whether they desisted or recidivated as they navigated through the system. One of the outcomes of pervasive criminal justice contact for young Black and Latino men was the production of a hypermasculinity. Angela Harris defines hypermasculinity as an "exaggerated exhibition of physical strength and personal aggression," which is often a response to a gender threat "expressed through physical and sexual domination of others."[8] Drawing on this definition, I contend that the criminal justice system encourages expressions of hypermasculinity by threatening and confusing young men's masculinity. This, in turn, leads them to rely on domination through violence, crime, and a school and criminal justice counterculture. In essence, detrimental forms of masculinity are partly developed through youths' interaction with police, juvenile hall, and probation officers.

Masculinity, Criminalization, and Punitive Social Control

Each of us shapes our behavior according to gendered expectations, and each of us is subject to a system of accountability that is gendered, raced, and classed.[9] The boys in this study were inculcated into a set of hypermasculine expectations which often led them to behaviors that conflicted with the structures of dominant institutions. Many of the boys articu-

lated and performed a "man's expectations," based on the environment they were in.[10] On the street, they would take on a tough persona, posing and acting out hyperaggressive behaviors. In their explanations, these acts were an essential tool for surviving on the street: "You can't act weak, or you'll get taken out," Jose explained. "I can't act like a bitch, . . . 'cause if I do, suckas will try to swoop up on me and take me out. So I gotta handle my business. Even if I am trying to change, I can't look weak," Tyrell explained. In front of probation officers and police, the boys had two choices: play out a masculinity battle or submit to their authority and act passively. This led many of the boys to believe that they lived in a lose-lose predicament. If they acted tough, maybe the officers would hesitate to harass them, but, inevitably, the police might arrest them. However, if the boys acted passively, they would develop resentment and end up taking out their frustration about being humiliated on themselves or others, through drug use or violence. Different environments provided the boys with limited and limiting resources with which to construct their manhood. The boys would often have to default to the manhood that they knew best, those masculine resources that the streets had to offer. These forms of masculinity were often the only concrete bricks the boys had to build their houses of manhood.

To be assigned "real man" status by relevant others and institutions, men must pass multiple litmus tests among peers, family, and these institutions. Masculinity tests, or codes, relevant to delinquent boys, were identified by sociologists as early as the 1920s. In 1924, sociologist Edwin Sutherland discussed how boys were taught to be "rough and tough," rendering them more likely than girls to become delinquent.[11] In 1947, sociologist Talcott Parsons noted that at the very core of American adolescence, an aggressive masculinity was at play: "Western men are peculiarly susceptible to the appeal of an adolescent type of assertively masculine behavior, . . . to revolt against the routine aspects of the primary institutionalized masculine role of sober responsibility, meticulous respect for the rights of others, and tender affection towards women."[12] The boys in this study learned early on to prove their manhood using the few resources made available to them in the social contexts in which they persisted.

Elijah Anderson describes the "young male syndrome" as the perceived, expected, and often necessary pressure to perform a tough, violent,

and deviant manhood in order to receive and maintain respect.[13] Psychologist Sandra W. Pyke finds that masculinity is expressed differently by men of varied class positions.[14] While wealthy men can prove their masculinity through the ability to make money and consume products that make them "manly," poor young men use toughness, violence, and survival as a means of proving their masculinity and resilience. Sociologist Nikki Jones has found that young women also use masculinity as a resource for protecting themselves and gaining respect. However, Jones finds that young women are caught in a double bind; they have to act tough on the streets and use masculinity resources, while, at the same time, they have to act "good" in order to meet gendered expectations. They are caught "between good and ghetto."[15] Although these young women are not fighting for "manhood," they are fighting for respect and security, and one of the vehicles to maintain this respect is masculinity. An informal interview with a nineteen-year-old Latina named Kenya, who was previously in a gang but had turned her life around and was now trying to help some of the boys in this study, was representative of the toughness exhibited by the few young women who were visible on the streets where the boys hung out:

V.R.: You work with these boys; they are disrespectful of women at times. How do you deal with it?

KENYA: I . . . had an understanding of feminism before I had a term for it. . . . You see young women in urban areas fighting for it in different ways, without the terms to define it, but it's still the same thing, fighting. . . . I had to fight dudes. . . . I've fought hella dudes. . . . That's what made hella people scared of me. [She fist fought with males to prove herself.] . . . And, even though he won physically, the story got around that he was a punk for fighting a girl. One time, my friend got raped by this dude. So we beat the shit out of him and took a baseball bat with nails in it to his ass, . . . taking justice into our own hands. I mean, not justice, 'cause beating his ass is not enough. . . . It sent a message out there that . . . that shit, it's just not acceptable.

Observing Kenya and other street-oriented young women interact with the boys made me realize that masculinity does not always correspond

to biological sex; instead, it is a resource used by young people in specific settings to accomplish specific goals. Kenya took on the most masculine of boys to gain respect, and she acquired justice by giving a man a taste of his own medicine. In my three years observing the boys, I noticed at least six girls who had taken on these masculinity resources to accomplish their goals. Therefore, although my study was limited in that I did not formally observe young women, I did find that masculinity was indeed used by some young women to survive on the streets and to resist the criminalization that they also encountered.

Toughness, dominance, and the willingness to resort to violence to resolve interpersonal conflicts are central characteristics of masculine identity.[16] Sociologists Kimmel and Mahler argue that most violent youths are not psychopaths but, rather, "overconformists to a particular normative construction of masculinity."[17] I find that by studying these "overconforming" violent and delinquent youths, we uncover clues as to how masculinity is developed in relation to institutional constructions of manhood within the criminal justice system. Mainstream institutions and the criminal justice system expect a masculine conformity that emphasizes hard work, law abidance, and an acceptance of subordinate social conditions. These institutions expect boys to embrace a "positive" working-class masculinity. Many of the boys in this study were familiar with this form of masculinity from growing up with fathers or father figures who worked hard, respected authority, and accepted their subordinate status in society. Some of the young men attempted to embrace this masculinity as a means to reform. However, when they tried to use this form of masculinity in order to transform their lives, they found a dearth of viable jobs in which they could prove they were hard workers. Kimmel explains the context in which proving manhood through work has become jeopardized in times of economic crisis: "Deindustrialization made men's hold on the successful demonstration of masculinity increasingly tenuous; there are fewer and fewer self-made successes and far more self-blaming failures."[18] The boys were consistently told by various adults in the community that a "real man" took responsibility for his own actions. Although this message may have been important for the boys to hear, it seemed that this was one of the only rehabilitative tools that the system used to address the negative behaviors. The boys in turn

internalized this logic and often blamed themselves not only for the "bad choices" they made but also for the structural circumstances in which they lived. In other words, the youth control complex was successful at convincing young men that poverty, racism, and neglect were products of their actions. The boys often blamed themselves for "looking and acting" like criminals even when they had not transgressed the law.

The boys also expressed that respecting authority meant accepting their criminalization and, by doing so, giving up their dignity. In addition, they came to realize that embracing this "positive" working-class masculinity did not provide the proper resources to survive on the streets, a place to which they constantly returned. In attempts to manage young men's criminality, institutions developed practices heavily influenced by masculinity. In response, the boys in this study became socialized to specific meanings of manhood that were diametrically opposed to those expected by dominant institutions of control. Thus, gendered interactions with the criminal justice system placed the boys in a double bind. Most bought into the system's ideals of reform by attempting to become "hard-working men." However, frustration with the lack of viable employment and guidance opportunities led them to leap into the seductive arms of hypermasculinity. This double bind was partially generated by the criminal justice system's involvement in the making of hypermasculinity.

Masculinity and Criminalization

Criminalization intensified the boys' conflicts over manhood, and they ran a collision course with the criminal justice system's demands of passivity, compliance, and conformity to a subjugated, racialized social status. Expectations of passivity and compliance, unaccompanied by a change in social conditions, engendered hopelessness in the boys and an inability to function both in mainstream institutions and on the streets, where survival skills were intricately connected to hypermasculinity. Criminalization, policing, and the criminal justice system's pressures on the young men forced them to make a choice: comply or become "hard." The boys, who embraced the system's gendered expectations of them, often experienced a negative change in their social relations with peers. When they complied with authority figures, they felt impotent on the streets, where

they became vulnerable to ridicule or victimization. This vulnerability was created not because the other boys rejected a "hard-working" identity but because these boys observed their peers fail in obtaining employment or becoming a better man. The system had dichotomized manhood. It forced the boys to choose between "good" working-class manhood or hypermasculinity and did not allow them room to shift between the two. The reality was that in order to persist on the streets and to successfully desist, they had to learn to employ both forms of manhood.

Although some boys chose the "right path," they were unable to obtain employment or eliminate the criminal stigma marked onto them by the system. When they failed to comply, they were harassed or arrested. When they complied, they were seen as "snitches" by their friends, because police and probation officers often forced these boys to interact with them in public, as a means of demonstrating innocence and reform. The young men further encountered criminalization through gendered interactions as they were pipelined into the system. The first point of contact with hypermasculinity through criminal justice was with the police.

Police

Police officers are themselves embedded in a logic that embraces masculinity. For example, criminologists Prokos and Padavic have found that police academies train officers to practice a rogue and hostile masculinity. Male officers "equate men and masculinity with guns, crime-fighting, a combative personality, . . . and a desire to work in high crime areas."[19] This positioning reverberates in the inner city. Legal scholar Angela Harris explains, "Police officers in poor minority neighborhoods may come to see themselves as law enforcers in a community of savages, as outposts of the law in a jungle."[20] In this context, punitive police treatment of men of color is not only racial violence; it is also gender violence. Harris continues, "Violent acts committed by men, whether these acts break the law or are designed to uphold it, are often a way of demonstrating the perpetrator's manhood. I call this kind of violence 'gender violence' and assert that men as well as women may be its victims."[21] Young people in Oakland encountered this "gender violence" regularly from police on the street, at school, at community centers, and in front of their apartment

complexes. The boys often became victims of police officers who were attempting to uphold the law. Officers wanted to teach the young men lessons, by effeminizing them: they manhandled them, constantly called them "little bitches," humiliated them in front of female peers, challenged them to fights, and otherwise brutalized them:

CASTRO: Dude [the officer] was pointing his gun. "I give up, I give up." He hit him [Castro's friend] with a stick and broke his arm, and this other fool had his knee on my neck. All 'cause we were smoking some weed. . . . They beat us down and call us "little bitches."

RAFA: They kick your ass, pistol whip you, even try to kill you. . . . Them bustas [cowards] just trying to prove themselves, you feel me? They trying to prove they are more manly than us, but if they didn't have guns or jails, they would end up being the bitches.

Gendered police interactions and gendered violence began at an early age.[22] The boys consistently reported that they had been taught by disciplinary authorities at school and by police, over the years, that to be a man meant to stand up for themselves without relying on the police; to be a man was to learn to take a beating from police whenever they talked back to them or were caught committing a crime; to be a man was to desist from committing crime by being a responsible man and resisting the seductions of street life.

Eighteen-year-old Franky, a young man who was born in San Francisco, who was on the cusp of graduating from an alternative high school, and whose parents were from El Salvador, pinpointed the very moment when he had to demonstrate his manhood to authority figures. He was driving his mother and two sisters from Little Caesars Pizza restaurant. They were celebrating his five-year-old sister's birthday. Franky had played a father figure in the family since he was a little boy; his father had abandoned them when he was five. Since he was nine, Franky remembered dropping off and picking up his two sisters at daycare and school. He cooked for them and protected them when bullies picked on them at school. His mother worked in San Ramon, an affluent city fifteen miles away, over the hills from Oakland. Franky's mother did not drive. Her

daily public-transportation journey took two hours and fifteen minutes, each way. She left home at six in the morning and returned at ten o'clock at night, six days a week. She worked as a house cleaner. The woman for whom she worked paid her sporadically and constantly docked her pay. Franky estimated that, in a good week, his mother made about ten dollars an hour. He decided to work to help his mother with the bills. One summer, he helped an uncle who was a carpenter. At seventeen, he accomplished a lifetime dream: to help his mother with her commute. With the cash he had saved, he purchased a 1988 Nissan Maxima for fifteen hundred dollars. Within a few months, this young man who had been responsible—attending school, caring for his sisters, saving money to buy a car for the family—saw the bounty of his hard work disappear.

> We were coming home from pizza. I parked the car. I turned off the car. I got out of the car, and dude [a police office] turned on his lights. He came up to me, and he pulled out a gun on me. I got out the car and was like, "What the hell?" And then I got back in the car. And he said, "You don't have your lights on." And I said, "Of course I don't have my lights on. I parked the car and turned them off and was about to get out." . . . He's like, "Step out the car." So we did. And my mom stepped out the car. And dude pointed the gun at her. And I was like, "What the hell?" And then I got out the car hella fast to help my mom. I thought she was gonna get shot. And then he tried to grab his gun, but then he grabbed his thing [baton], and he was gonna run up. And I got the adrenaline and pushed him away. He knocked me down hella fast, and he had the stick right here in my neck hella hard. And he arrested me and took me to jail. I had a bruise right here and went to court and told them he hit me, but he told them I pushed him. . . . When I went to the hospital, dude fractured something right here [points to collar bone]. . . . I was in jail for four months, and they took the car away [to impound] for thirty days. I had to leave it there because it cost more to take it out then what I paid—the only car my family had.

Franky's attempt to protect his mother backfired, leading him deep into the criminal justice system. Franky believed that the police officer was wrong in pointing a gun at his mother. Therefore, he was willing to take a bullet or go to jail in an attempt to protect her. In this case, Franky's

attempt to contest the officer's rogue behavior led him to become constructed as an aggressor. The officer's gender violence prevailed.

In my observations, I learned that at the epicenter of police-youth interactions, hypermasculinity prevailed: it was taught and learned; it was challenged and embraced; it was fruitful and poisonous. In attempting to teach the young men lessons on being law-abiding gentlemen, officers used a brutal masculinity that inculcated a toughness, manliness, and hypermasculinity in the boys. This hypermasculinity often influenced the young men to perpetrate defiance, crime, and violence, sanctioning police to brutalize or arrest them. Once these young men were in confinement, they adapted a masculinity that made them feel protected not only from the streets and police but also from violence in confinement.

Incarceration

While the young men were incarcerated, they reported being forced to overemphasize their masculinity. Big Rob illustrated this point. He had been arrested for driving a stolen car. Rob's specialty was stealing cars and selling them to chop shops, garages that dismantled the cars and sold them for parts. Rob was driving a 1987 Buick Grand National when he was arrested. Upon arrival at the county's juvenile-justice facility, Rob was stripped and cavity searched. His possessions were confiscated, and he was provided with a dark-blue jumpsuit with the words "Property of Alameda County" printed on it. "The guard told me, 'Take a shower and make sure you don't drop the soap, boy!' I didn't know what he was talking about. It wasn't until I asked some dude that I figured out what he meant." ("Don't drop the soap" was a reference to rape by other inmates in detention showers.) Rob was placed in a cafeteria where about twenty or so boys were congregated; they stared Rob down, giving him dirty looks. A few boys walked up to him and asked, "Where you from?" Rob told them, "Dirty thirties." They responded with the names of their "turfs." "I had to act hard. I balled up my fist and was ready to knock a nigga out." Rob eventually got into a fight while protecting himself from an attack. He was sent to solitary confinement, allowed outside his tiny cell with a cement bed only to take a shower and call home. The officer who supervised his cell commented, "You gonna learn how to be a man

the hard way." Once released, Rob brought this repertoire back to the streets, as do other young men like him. "Man! They think I got better. Mothafuckas just taught me how to be more violent, steal tighter rides [nicer cars]. . . . I even ended up with more bitch-ass enemies."

Probation

Probation practices subjected the boys' ideas of manhood to strict evaluation. As agents of reform, probation officers attempted to teach the young men how to be "real men," by demanding that they work toward signs of a proper masculinity: to acquire an education, to attain a job, and to support a family. The boys were told to get a job, do well in school, and stay out of trouble. The likelihood of failure was high, since most avenues of legitimate success were out of reach.

When they failed, the boys abandoned attempts to achieve a "proper" masculinity—the decent, hard-working manhood that authority figures expected of them. Instead, they became significantly more connected to hypermasculinity. Whenever the young men got into trouble, their probation officers threatened them with incarceration to teach them how to be real men. The young men often felt strain from not being able to become the men that the institution expected them to become, because they could not find work—the central vehicle for demonstrating manhood. When the Black and Latino males abandoned these false expectations of obtaining a job, instead of becoming hopeless, they adopted a hypermasculine ideal of survival. In a social context in which jobs were scarce, traditional working-class notions of manhood were nearly impossible to accomplish; in lieu of this gender accomplishment, the boys adopted hypermasculinity to prove themselves.

The boys held a contradictory understanding of the masculinity that they confronted. Jose's statement is representative of many of the boys' perspectives:

> They [probation officers] tell us to be "real men," to show respect, but they don't see that if we show respect, we'll get treated like punks. . . . Being a man out here is different. It means smashing on a scrub [beating up an enemy] if he breaks your respect. . . . It means handling your business in order to get paid, . . . not being a bitch and shit. It means going to jail if you have to.

From Jose's perspective, and that of many of the other youths whom I studied, it was extremely self-defeating for probation officers trying to reform them to attempt to do so by teaching them how a "real" man should act. These messages did not provide the boys with tools to navigate the streets, to do well at home and in school, or to succeed at a job and make an income. Instead, the youths saw two extreme worlds of manhood, where only one was accessible: hypermasculinity. At this point, the boys made their decisions to affirm, develop, and demonstrate a manhood that appeared to offer respect, economic gain, and social status, instead of hopelessness.

The ideal of manhood that probation officers tried to inculcate was also one of responsibility. For these officials, the responsibility of a young man was to follow his "program" and not to violate probation. The message became, "A real man does not belong in jail." Once a male enters jail or prison, he is at risk of becoming emasculated. According to Jose, his probation officer, Mr. Bryan, explained the emasculation process of men in confinement: "You want to go to prison, where everybody is gonna pimp you? The guards are gonna run you like a little bitch. The murderers and rapists are gonna make you bend over; they gonna treat you like somebody's wife." In trying to teach a "proper" masculinity, as a set of ideals, probation officers unintentionally pushed young men of color further into hypermasculinity.

T, a sixteen-year-old African American boy from Oakland—after being arrested and placed on probation, unable to continue selling drugs or stealing cars for income and unable to secure a job because of his record—resorted to using women as a central source of income. When T was asked, "Where do you get money from?" he replied, "Pimp a bitch, you know, let that bitch come out her pocket, . . . act like I like her so she'll give me money and shit. . . . Most bitches will give me whatever I need: . . . shoes, shirts, food, bus pass, whatever. . . . Or make her sell shit for me." T made the decision to no longer commit crime. However, his solution was to fully embrace hypermasculinity and dominate women to accomplish what the criminal justice system expected of him—to desist from committing crime. In the process of attempting to reform and resist his criminalization, T adopted a chauvinistic masculinity that called on him to abuse young women, to use them as objects and as a source of income.

Hypermasculinity influenced the criminalized boys to embrace gendered practices that further limited their futures and harmed those around them. The boys reported trying to be "good men," following the criminal justice system's ideals of manhood by being passive, trying to do well in school, or looking for work. However, these strategies often placed them in a double bind such that they were not able to succeed at work or in the streets. When these strategies failed, a seductive alternative surfaced in times of crisis: hypermasculinity.

As adolescent boys practiced masculinity on the street, the institutions of control that managed the boys also generated meanings of manhood, which correlated with the damaging identities these youth formed on the street. In this case, the criminalization of Black and Latino males and the criminal justice system's expectations of masculinity provided the young men with gender resources which often limited their mobility, interrupted their social relations, and pipelined them deeper into the criminal justice system. The gender ideals purveyed by police, probation officers, and others did not translate adequately into the realities of the boys' lives. In this context, hypermasculinity served both as resistance and as a resource for self-affirmation. The criminal justice pipeline imposed gender practices fraught with failure and insolvable contradictions. While hypermasculinity may have been in disrepute, it made its practitioners feel self-fulfilled. This survival strategy, in turn, impeded the youths' desistance and social mobility and entitled the system to further criminalize and punish them. In sum, then, gender is one of the processes in which the criminal justice system and the youth control complex are involved in the reproduction of criminalization, social exclusion, and racial inequality.

7

Guilty by Association

Acting White or Acting Lawful?

> Children can't achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white.
>
> —Barack Obama, DNC Speech, 2004

> The problem is that parents, shopping-mall security, police officers, grocery-store clerks, and even other youth have a hard time distinguishing the delinquents from the wannabes. . . . The many lawful youth take on the stylistic affections of true "wild children" even though they infrequently, if ever, cross the line in their behavior.
>
> —Mary Patillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences,* 1999

J.T., an African American sixteen-year-old, was a good student: "I get like A's and B's and sometimes C's, but I try to stay on top," he explained. I saw two of his report cards to verify this. His mother worked for the City of Oakland as a clerk. He described what she does: "The kind of person that checks yo' papers to see if you legit. Like, she'll put the rubber stamp on your paperwork if you paid your taxes, yadadamean [you understand]?" J.T.'s father had moved to Chicago when J.T. was eight years old, and his

mother kept him disciplined: "She'll make sure I am doing good, and if I ain't, she'll pull out the whip. . . . One time, when I was little, I stole some shit from the store. My mom found out, and she made me take it back. And she ask the man [store clerk] if I could work to pay him back. He said no. My moms made him give me a job! He made me scrub the piss outside the store. . . . I never stole again." His mother, Angela, worked until 5 p.m., arriving home by 6 p.m. J.T. got out of school at 2:45 p.m.; he had three hours to kill. These three hours, between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., were often the most dangerous hours for young people in Oakland. This is when most youth crime, violence, and victimization took place. To prevent J.T. from getting into trouble, his mother ordered him to attend one of the few afterschool programs in the community, at the East Side Youth Center (ESYC).

J.T. had never committed a crime or been arrested, despite growing up in a neighborhood where crime was rampant and having an older brother who had been arrested several times. J.T.'s brother, cousins, and childhood friends were involved in gangs and drug dealing. Despite actively avoiding delinquency and never being arrested or suspended, J.T. believed that sometimes he was treated worse than his delinquent peers. He told me that even though he tried to stay away from trouble, authority figures often implicated him in the deviance and crime that his friends committed. "I just always knew it was stupid to do crazy shit, so I just stayed away from stupid niggas. . . . The only thing I did was not go to school. I was just taking care of my lil' sister and trying to make some money cleaning people's yards." Although J.T. claimed that he stayed away from the guys who committed crime, six out of eight of the people he hung out with on a regular basis had previously been arrested. I believe that what J.T. meant when he said he stayed away from guys who committed crime was that he had the unique skills to navigate between what authority figures expected of him and what the streets expected of him. J.T.'s story is representative of the nine other non-delinquent boys in this study. They all reported being and were observed to be treated similarly to the delinquent boys.

Out of the forty youths I studied, ten had never been arrested but came from the same neighborhood, schools, family background, and subculture as those who had been. Four of the youths I studied were siblings of delinquent boys I had observed and interviewed. The other six

were close friends with some of the boys who had been arrested. These non-delinquent youths also felt deeply impacted by punitive social control and the youth control complex. An example was Jaime, a sixteen-year-old Latino who received A's and B's at school and who had one brother incarcerated for attempted murder and another brother in a gang. He explained, "School has been very hard. It's like the teachers don't care if we make it or not, and the police is off the hook at the school. They treat us like if we were animals or criminals." At the same time, the boys who had previously been arrested resented the boys who had not been arrested, not for doing well in school but for becoming inculcated in the discourses and practices that criminalization agents—school personnel, police, and other punitive social-control practitioners—had imposed on them. In other words, non-delinquent youths had to prove their innocence by embracing the logic and practice of the youth control complex.

In a study of Black and Latino students, sociologist Prudence Carter found a group of "cultural straddlers," young people who had developed the skills to straddle two worlds, meeting the "expectations of the school's cultural codes" and "co-creating meaning with their peers." These cultural straddlers, Carter argues, "hold on to their native cultural style but also embrace dominant cultural codes and resources."[1] Similar to Carter's cultural straddlers, all of the non-delinquent boys in this study knew how to navigate multiple worlds. Although these boys were not honor students, they received decent grades, stayed away from drugs and crime, and found strategies to avoid police contact, while at the same time knowing how to "keep it real" and use the skills required to persist on the streets, among their primarily delinquent peers.

The non-delinquent boys engaged creative responses to punishment in a different manner than the delinquent boys. The delinquent boys consistently worked at fighting for their dignity, while the non-delinquent boys consistently worked at fighting for their freedom. Fighting for dignity, as discussed in previous chapters, entails being willing to take the risk of harsh discipline or arrest, in order to expose the contradictions of the system and achieve acknowledgment and a feeling of dignity. Dignity work involved acts of resistance that often placed the boys at risk of punishment. The delinquent boys calculated that it was worth taking the risk of losing their freedom in order to gain some dignity from the system.

The non-delinquent boys worked at fighting for their freedom by evading situations in which they might encounter school discipline, police contact, or targeting for criminalization. These boys found creative ways to avoid criminalization. However, despite their hard work, many of the boys encountered contradictions with school officials and police officers: they believed that if they followed the rules, they would not be targeted or harassed; however, despite knowing how to straddle, these boys found themselves treated similarly to their peers.

I found that despite having the skills to navigate between two worlds, the non-delinquent boys often found themselves in a Catch-22: even when they followed the rules, authority figures still criminalized the boys because they lived among the delinquent boys. Like the delinquent boys' parents discussed in chapter 4, the non-delinquent boys who lived in high-crime areas were also granted courtesy stigmas. Even if the boys attempted to adapt to school or police norms and codes, they were still treated with the suspicion that they might commit crime like their peers. The non-delinquent boys held the conviction that they had been criminalized in the same systematic way as their delinquent peers. On the other hand, their peers sometimes accosted them for appearing to have become part of the system that was criminalizing them. The delinquent boys perceived the non-delinquent boys as part of the system that governed them through crime, as snitches who would tell on them not for committing violent crime but for not complying with authority, as individuals who also participated in the stripping of their peers' dignity. The delinquent boys were not disappointed with the non-delinquents for wanting to do well in school or for dreaming of being successful one day; they felt tension with these boys because school officials and police had pitted them against each other. The non-delinquent boys had been told to stay away, avoid, and reject the delinquent boys, who were considered risky and dangerous. Schools and police had imposed a dichotomous identity on the non-delinquent boys. In order to be perceived as "good kids," these boys were expected to relinquish hanging out with neighbors and family members, to embrace a style of dress and talk that was foreign to them, and to keep officials informed of the whereabouts and activity of their "criminal" peers.[2] The message was, as J.T. reported a police officer telling him, "Either you stay away from those punks, or you're going

to get picked up just like them." This "either you're with us or against us" mentality placed many of the non-delinquent boys in a precarious situation: they could easily be identified as snitches or cowards on the streets and become vulnerable to victimization. While having the skills to straddle two worlds sometimes paid off for the boys, it also took a toll on them. Many felt that they were betwixt and between, accepted neither here nor there.

The non-delinquent boys, who consciously chose to do well but who had a network of friendship and family with the delinquent boys and, likewise, encountered punitive social control, also had to deal with the wrath of their peers, who saw them as outsiders. In the end, J.T. and the nine other non-delinquent boys attempted to become "code switchers," kids who could navigate both the streets and mainstream institutions.[3] However, they had to constantly perform as if they were not connected to the delinquent boys, which placed a huge stress on the non-delinquents and impacted social relations between delinquent and non-delinquent youths in the same neighborhood. The delinquent boys often chastised the non-delinquents, not because they were "acting white" but because the youth control complex had coerced them into "acting lawful."

Acting Lawful

The non-delinquent boys displayed a strategic approach to avoiding contact with police. For example, when I shadowed J.T., he often abruptly left the park or street corner where he hung out with his delinquent friends and cousin. I asked him, "Why do you leave in the middle of a game or a conversation?" He replied, "You know what time mothafuckas get scraped; you know what time fools get arrested. It all happens at the same times. When I'm feeling it, you know? I start feelin' myself, and I say it's time to run." J.T. seemed to display strong navigational skills necessary to avoid victimization and criminalization. However, despite his attempts at "being legit" and avoiding criminalization, he still encountered stigma, exclusion, and punishment.

The non-delinquent boys felt the weight of punitive social control on their shoulders, and, in response, they developed a navigational skill that

I call *acting lawful.* Acting lawful is the process by which individuals who experience punitive social control attempt to avoid becoming victims of criminalization and punishment. The boys acted lawful by following school rules, complying with police officers, and avoiding situations in which they might be suspected of breaking a rule or violating the law. "Knowing how to talk to police," as J.T. explained, means "saying shit like, 'Yes, sir,' 'No, sir,' 'Please, sir,' and making sure you don't act like you got contraband on you. . . . It means making sure you riding legit, like letting them do their stupid shit and just keeping your mouth shut." In order to avoid further harassment, brutality, or incarceration, J.T. learned not to question police officers when they searched or questioned him, even if he felt that they were violating his rights. When J.T. was stopped and searched by police when he was with his peers, many of them responded negatively to this strategy. They thought that J.T. was being a "coward" for not standing up to the police. This led some of the boys to suspect J.T. was "working for the police" and giving them information about the boys.

Punitive social control impacted social relations between delinquent and non-delinquent youths living in the same neighborhoods in Oakland. While criminal justice officials punished those youngsters who had broken the law, this system and other institutions played a role in making non-delinquent youths feel punished, as well. It was not success in education that led delinquent boys to "hate" on their non-delinquent peers. Instead, the delinquent boys resented their peers for participating in the perpetuation of their criminalization, for becoming inculcated in a system that saw much of marginalized youth culture and action as crime. In addition, the non-delinquent boys had to demonstrate their distance from deviant youths, and deviant youth culture, in order to prove themselves not guilty. In order to gain legitimacy from the youth control complex, from school authorities, police, and other authority figures who constantly scrutinized them, non-delinquent boys had to overcompensate in their behavior. They had to relentlessly prove to authority figures that they were not criminal, that they were acting lawfully. This, in turn, created resentment in the delinquent boys, who then took out their frustrations with the youth control complex on their peers and their relatives who attempted to comply.

The Criminalization of the Non-delinquent Boys

One of the ironies of the conversations and observations I held with those boys who had not been arrested was that they expressed the same feelings and experiences as the boys who had been stigmatized, disciplined, and arrested. Paul, an eighteen-year-old Latino from Oakland, attended City College of San Francisco and had recently moved to San Francisco's Mission District. He described his experiences as a youth who was never involved in criminal or deviant activity: "Even though I have never got wrapped up [arrested], I still get treated like I am about to commit a crime every day. Everywhere I go, from the store to school, I got people sweatin' me 'cause they think I'm gonna steal something or whoop somebody's ass. I mean, I will if I have to, but most of the time I am a cool cat."

Despite never having been arrested, Paul has faced many encounters with police officers that have led to negative consequences. At one point, an officer physically brutalized him:

> The cop, Officer Gonzalez, that was watching me whenever I left the house, grabbed me one day and asked me if I knew which gang member in the neighborhood had shot someone else. I gave him attitude and told him, "How the fuck I'm s'posed to know? I'm not in the gang. Go ask the gang. Oh, I forgot: you're scared of them." He grabbed me and started to choke the shit out of me.

According to Paul, this interaction led him to move to San Francisco, where he thought that maybe he could start over and find a space where police would not harass him. He also reported that he no longer talked back to the police, and this helped him negotiate police officers' orders. Remaining passive when encountering police aided Paul in avoiding an escalation. Paul seemed to embrace the idea that he was working to remain free, even if it meant giving up some of his dignity. "Even in the Mission, I still get hit up by cops. I just stay quiet and let them do their thing. . . . It's just life, man. You got to deal with it. Part of growing up is knowing when to choose your battles."[4] I observed Paul in his new neighborhood in the Mission District of San Francisco and witnessed

him encounter police two times there. Both times, he was told he "fit a description." Both times, Paul shrugged his shoulders, remained passive, and allowed the police to run a check on his record. I believe that the police were thrown off by Paul's presence in the neighborhood and had decided to check him out and keep track of him as a new, young, baggy-clothes-wearing community member.

Despite acting lawful, the non-delinquent boys experienced guilt by association. For example, police harassed J.T. for interacting with his childhood friends. One day, J.T. was walking home from school with one of his best friends, Larry. Larry had dropped out of school and been arrested for drug possession a few times. As Larry and J.T. parted ways, J.T. continued walking toward his house. A police officer stopped him. J.T. described the encounter: "He searches me, makes me feel like shit in front of my little cousins. He says, 'Oh, you one of them dope-dealing gang bangers.' He did it to scare my little cousins."

In the three years that I observed and interviewed J.T., he constantly displayed an interest in demonstrating his innocence, in acting lawful. A myriad of opportunities to steal, sell drugs, beat up other teenagers, and be confrontational with adults presented themselves to him. But J.T. lost his cool only one time, when he talked back to a police officer, and the officer responded by gripping his hands on his neck as if prepared to choke him. Although he did not commit crimes, he believed that he was still treated as a potential threat, or a criminal, by police and school officials. J.T., like many of the non-delinquent boys who were imposed with courtesy stigmas, was on his own, with no supportive peer networks he could rely on and with adults who imposed punitive social control on him, despite his innocence and his persistence to do well in school.

Rejecting Criminalized Peers

One day, as I shadowed J.T., we ended up at his afterschool program at the local community center. We were standing outside watching a group of seven Black teenage males play a game of basketball about thirty feet away. One of them was J.T.'s cousin, Ronny, one of the delinquent boys. The boys called each other names and joked about each other's mothers as they took shots. A heavy-set kid, wearing a XXL-sized Ecko sweater

with a picture of a rhino on it, ran, dribbled, stopped, and held the ball. He eyed the basket and called out, "If I make this shot, Dante's mother sucked my dick last night." He missed the shot. Dante ran for the ball, cleared the three-point line, and took a shot. He made it. "Nigga, yo mama sucked my dick for a rock last night," Dante proclaimed. A few minutes later, the game ended and the group dispersed. They walked toward us. One of them yelled, "There goes that bitch-ass nigga J.T. Wassup, gay-ass nigga?" His cousin Ronny, walking behind them, began to laugh. Before J.T. could respond, one of them ran up to him with his arm out parallel to the ground. He caught J.T. in a "clothesline," forcing his extended arm into J.T.'s neck. J.T. fell, hitting the back of his head on the concrete. I got in between J.T. and the rest of the group, who ran up to J.T. to kick him. I crouched over him and then tried to help him up. "Come on, fellas, cut this shit out!" I yelled at them. They marched into the community center, laughing and joking about J.T.'s fall. "They mad at me 'cause I don't want to act stupid like them," J.T. exclaimed with frustration, and a few tears on his face. "Mothafuckas think I'm a bitch 'cause I don't want to be stupid."

J.T. believed that part of the reason that his close childhood friends and cousin bullied him was because he had recently joined the program about drug awareness and anger management sponsored by the Alameda County Probation Department. Even though J.T. was not on probation, he had gotten involved in this program because it had been recommended by a community-center worker. It was one of the only programs available for older teenage boys; the center had run out of funds for their D.J. program that J.T. had been in the previous year. The D.J. program taught young people about mixing, writing, and producing hip-hop music. Although he had never demonstrated any anger issues, J.T. decided to participate; his only other alternative was to hang out with the boys who were getting into trouble.

After joining the program, J.T. became stigmatized by his peers; they rendered him a "snitch" who would tell probation officers everything they did. On one occasion, the probation officer who taught the program, Mr. Taylor, encountered J.T., his friends, and I standing outside the community center, and he told J.T. that manhood was about being responsible and denouncing "gangster" practices such as "wearing your pants like you want some guy to come and hump you . . . or acting like an animal

when you think someone disrespected you." Pointing to the other boys, Mr. Taylor said, "You gotta stay away from these knuckleheads, man! You want to go to prison?" The other boys looked down. When the probation officer went back into the building, Ronny looked at his cousin with disgust and walked away. The rest of the boys followed.

The threat of going to prison was a recurring strategy used by teachers, probation officers, parents, and police to discipline the boys, and the non-delinquents were constantly told that if they associated with the delinquents, they would likewise go to prison. The boys grew frustrated hearing this discourse repeated across a spectrum of institutions. While they all agreed that this "boogey man" threat did not deter them from hanging out with individuals who were actively engaged in crime, it did create a clear division between them. The non-delinquent boys wanted to do well in school and avoid police harassment, so, in public, they were forced to avoid and reject their friends and family members who were marked as criminals or gang members. The boys had to overcompensate in order to demonstrate to authority figures that they were not criminals. For example, at school they would have to pretend in front of teachers and administrators that they did not hang out with the delinquent boys. This created a strain in social relations between delinquent and non-delinquent youths from the same neighborhood and often resulted in "bullying" and the victimization of the non-delinquent boys. This finding may help us shed light on bullying and analyze it as a response to the resentment that develops from strict rules and punishment. In other words, schools and specific neighborhood effects may very well be responsible for some of the conditions that lead some young people to bully others.

The non-delinquent boys also had to constantly prove they were not criminals. In the store, for example, J.T. stayed away from the candy section until he was ready to purchase a piece of candy. When he walked to the candy aisle, he made sure to reach for the candy he wanted with his arm extended and to keep his body away. "This way," he told me, "the fool doesn't think I'm trying to steal his shit." In the previous chapter, I showed how the delinquent boys interacted at a store, how they sometimes played games with the clerk to send a signal that they were aware that the store clerk believed they were going to steal candy. The non-delinquent boys, on the other hand, kept their distance from the candy, yet, in my fourteen

observations with non-delinquent boys at stores, all of them were closely scrutinized by store clerks, regardless of the distance they kept from the candy. The non-delinquent boys grew up forced to overcompensate and to constantly prove to others that they were law-abiding citizens. Their actions and demeanor was adjusted accordingly, to satisfy the system. However, despite acting lawfully, the boys still faced criminalization.

J.T. was trapped in a double bind: if he followed in his cousin's footsteps, he would end up getting "wrapped up" in the system; if he attended the probation program, his peers saw him as a "snitch." While the streets and his peers were a powerful force, J.T. opted to "go legit" and follow what sociologist Martín Sánchez-Jankowski calls a "security-maximizing value system."[5] Sánchez-Jankowski argues that some individuals living in poor neighborhoods choose to "deprive themselves today to avoid future suffering."[6] In other words, J.T. understood that the delinquent boys, as a group, were setting themselves up for failure. Their defiance of criminalization allowed the system to impose the harshest sanctions on them. Although J.T. might suffer stigma at the moment, he believed that he might have a better future if he proved his lawfulness over time.

Acting White or Acting Lawful?

In popular discourse about "minority failure" in the education system, low-achieving students are often blamed not only for their own failures but for developing a culture of opposition that rejects learning and achievement. These students are also held responsible for putting pressure on their high-achieving peers by accusing them of "acting White." Contrary to this widespread belief, all the boys in this study placed a high value on education. They all had dreams of one day having a college degree and acquiring viable, professional employment. However, many had not yet developed the specific skills needed to attain passing grades, graduate from high school, or attend college. Low-achieving students did not "hate on" their high-achieving peers for doing well in school; as a matter of fact, many of the delinquent boys gave their peers "love" for making it in school, getting good grades, and graduating. The delinquent boys were much more interested in "hating on" peers who they perceived had become part of the system that criminalized them; the boys who cooper-

ated with police or school administrators, who rejected their delinquent peers, or who attempted to follow unrealistic advice given to them by police officers were often the targets of chastisement and violence. Much has been written about the "acting White" stigma.[7] However, in this study, I found that when delinquent Black and Latino boys chastised peers who had gone "legit," it was because of the belief that they had become part of the system of punitive social control. They had participated in stigmatizing and excluding their delinquent peers, and this, in turn, earned them "snitch" status, one of the worst labels given by the delinquent boys.

Education scholars Fordham and Ogbu coined the term "acting White" and argued that African American students did not succeed to the best of their potential for fear of being accused of "acting White" by their peers. They argued that cultural attitudes hindered Black students in academic achievement:

> Learning school curriculum and learning to follow the standard academic practices of the school are often equated by the minorities with learning to "act white" or as actually "acting white" while simultaneously giving up acting like a minority person. School learning is therefore consciously or unconsciously perceived *as a subtractive process*: a minority person who learns successfully in school or who follows the standard practices of the school is perceived as becoming acculturated into the white American frame of reference."[8]

Ogbu and Fordham further suggested that it was racist society that led young people to chastise their peers for acting White. Because of racism in White America, Fordham and Ogbu argued, "Black Americans subsequently began to doubt their own intellectual ability, began to define academic success as white people's prerogative, and began to discourage their peers, perhaps unconsciously, from emulating white people."[9] Conservative scholars took this idea and argued that it was this "victimization" ideology that led minority students to act this way toward one another. Linguist John McWhorter argued that some immigrant groups managed to survive because they did not blame the system for their failure, and, as long as Blacks saw themselves as victims of oppression, they would continue to feel the wrath of acting White.[10] By 2004, senator and

later presidential candidate Barak Obama jumped on the bandwagon: "Children can't achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white."[11]

In 2006, economist Roland Fryer attempted to demonstrate that "acting White" was still prevalent among Black and Latino students. He found that as White students' grades went up, their popularity in school also increased. This was not the case for Black and Latino students; their popularity diminished as their grades went up. Fryer suggested that peers began to dislike "good" students in their racial group because they demonstrated "White" characteristics. Fryer determined popularity by counting the amount of friends students had. If a student was listed by other students as their friend, this student rose up in the "social hierarchy." Black and Latino high achievers were less likely to be chosen as friends by other Black and Latino students. From this data, Fryer concluded that "acting White" was alive and well, since the "smart" kids were disliked by the low achievers.[12]

Other scholars have argued that it is not "White" characteristics that students of color reject but, rather, middle-class standards and culture.[13] Prudence Carter has argued that Black and Latino students do not reject academic achievement and that they do not develop an oppositional culture to it. Instead, she argues that these young people struggle to embrace multiple forms of capital, some of which are used in the social order of their communities.[14] In this study, I found that the delinquent boys did not reject middle class standards; nevertheless, they rejected those practices, discourses, and individuals that treated them as failures, risks, or criminals. Students rendered as "failures" and therefore deviant at school may reject their high-achieving peers not for acting White but for appearing to have turned against their own communities and embraced punitive social control.

Institutional Aggression

I found that the boys who chastised their high-achieving peers did so because they believed that those peers had accepted the criminal label that the system had given them; the delinquent boys felt that the nondelinquent boys had become part of this system. These findings indicate that institutions such as schools are implicated in the process of creating

tension between young people. I found the delinquent boys' primary reasons for humiliating their non-delinquent peers was the latter's decision to participate in their stigmatization. Being from a community where most of the residents were imposed with punitive stigmas (e.g., welfare queen, absent father, criminal youth, etc.), the non-delinquent boys felt the weight of this punitive social control pressing down on them. Some took on an identity that attempted to prove to the system that they were "diamonds in the rough." The young people in this category believed that if they could prove to police, teachers, and the community that they were not criminals, then they could enjoy the spoils of being a good citizen. However, three of the ten non-delinquent boys, despite acting lawfully, graduating from high school and attending community college, were eventually arrested. James was one example.

James was a young African American man whose story was very similar to that of many young Black men in poor urban areas of the United States. He grew up in poverty, was criminalized at school and on the streets, and, despite receiving a high school diploma, had no job opportunities. By the end of the three-year study, James was arrested. He had stayed away from trouble and negative peers, had received good grades, and aspired to attend a four-year college. According to James, while growing up, he first experienced police harassment beginning in grade school, when, at the age of ten, his teacher called in the police because James had called her a "bitch." The police officer showed up in his class, pulled James out, handcuffed him, and gave him a scare: "He told me, 'I'm gonna take you to jail, boy. You better respect that teacher.'" For years, as James walked home from school, this same police officer stopped him and searched him for drugs. Eventually, James became accustomed to routine police stops, and he normalized police harassment and brutality, despite the fact that he had never committed a crime. "Police are always gonna be here to make sure you don't get out of place. That's just life. Even if you don't got nothin' on you, you still gotta deal with it." The same officer who had handcuffed James at age ten, and who had systematically harassed him for seven years, arrested him when he was seventeen, a few months prior to graduation. James was walking home from school when the officer stopped him, searched him, and found a rolled-up marijuana cigar in his pocket. James was booked, released, and placed on probation.

Eventually, the probation process facilitated further arrests that led James to felony convictions. From that point on, James was granted a negative credential by the state and civil society. This mark of a criminal record became a central obstacle in James's ability to acquire a job, even though he had a high school diploma. Because he had received an adult drug conviction, he was not eligible to apply for financial aid, which ultimately discouraged him from applying to college. James continued to look for work, but his criminal record limited his ability to obtain one of the few low-wage, low-skill jobs for which many working-class people competed.

To argue that socially marginalized youth do not succeed because their culture teaches them that education is a "subtractive process" is the equivalent of saying that tomato seeds do not sprout in the winter because the soil they are planted in is too acidic. The reality is that cold weather and little sun keeps the tomato from growing in the winter, not just acidic soil. In order for the tomato to thrive in a cold climate, we have to provide it with surrogate conditions such as a greenhouse. Similar to a permanent winter, criminalization and punitive social control provided the youths in this study with perpetually infertile conditions, robbing them of the opportunity to sprout, let alone flourish. Even when non-delinquent young people developed skills to learn how to grow, even when they learned how to "straddle," criminalization became a central obstacle, which still rendered them as threats and as unworthy of positive credentials.

CONCLUSION

Creating a Youth Support Complex

> It would seem that sanctions imposed by relatives, friends or a personally relevant collectivity have more effect on criminal behavior than sanctions imposed by a remote legal authority. . . . Repute in the eyes of close acquaintances matters more to people than the opinions or actions of criminal justice officials.
>
> —John Braithwaite, *Crime, Shame and Reintegration,* 1989

> All students cringe under the scrutiny, but those most harshly affected, least successful in the competition, possess some of our greatest unperceived riches.
>
> —Mike Rose, *Lives on the Boundary,* 1989

Social Incapacitation

On a hot summer day in the Bay Area in 2006, I found myself at San Quentin State Penitentiary, infamous for hosting California's only execution chamber. I stood between two rusty iron gates, anxious and claustrophobic, as the bars appeared to inch closer toward me. The guards sat comfortably on the other side of the gate, at the control station, shooting the breeze about football, their kids, and the inmates. Finally, one of the gates opened up, only to dump me deeper into this final frontier of punishment. As I continued walking, I felt the debilitating weight of the prison's iron cages. Now I could begin to imagine the

pain that Jose, who had been here for three months, must have been feeling.

Jose was sentenced to five years after being charged with assault with a deadly weapon and a gang enhancement. A gang enhancement is an added sentence to felony cases when the court finds a defendant guilty of committing a crime for the benefit of the gang.[1] A person can receive an additional two to fifteen years' sentence for having participated in a crime to benefit the gang. Jose was arrested because he was present when one of his friends shot a gun at gang rivals. According to Jose, and other young men I interviewed who witnessed the event, he had not instigated the event, nor was he involved in the acquisition or handling of the gun. When prosecutors threatened him with a fifteen-year sentence, Jose accepted a five-year sentence, in a heartbeat, because, he said, "I did not want to spend the rest of my life in jail."

I finally made it to the booth where I was to meet Jose, and, finally, he arrived. But he did not look like the Jose I knew; he looked very different. He was as skinny as a sick pit bull, his eyes full of gloom, and his skin chalky pale. Staring at Jose through a glass window in that cold cell filled me with sorrow and anxiety. I had followed some of the boys through a major part of their journey through the school-to-prison pipeline, and now, as I stared straight into the final destination, I became filled with pessimism. I thought, at this moment, that for a young man like Jose, his destiny had already been chosen for him, that the youth control complex had set him up for failure and incarceration from a young age.

Being criminalized from a young age had devastating consequences for the boys in this study. As I observed and interviewed them, I uncovered a youth control complex made up of punitive interactions between young people and authority figures, where punishment threaded itself into the fabric of everyday social life in an array of institutions; marginalized young men's behaviors and styles were criminalized and subjected them to shame, exclusion, punishment, and incarceration. This hypercriminalization of young people was composed of exclusion, punishment, racialization, gendered violence, harassment, surveillance, and detention by police, probation officers, teachers, community program workers, and even parents. This system shaped the ways in which young men developed worldviews about themselves and their social ecology. Despair and

politicized identities became fused together as two dominant responses to the punitive social control that the boys encountered. At the moment, Jose remained in a state of despair.

The thick plexiglass that separated Jose and me was sticky with greasy residue from the many stressed foreheads that had rested there. "How are you, Jose?" I asked. Then I thought to myself, "How stupid of me to ask; of course he's not doing well caged up in here." But he responded, "I'm a'right. Shit's fucked up here, but I'm doing okay." He gave me that same charismatic childish smile, showing his entire set of shiny teeth and a big dimple on his left cheek—the same smile that he'd given when I first met him, back when he was a budding adolescent. "Where do you think you'll go from here?" I asked. He replied, "Man, I gotta live it one minute at a time. I'll get out of here and do good." He dropped his head and stared at the ground as he said this; he didn't seem to believe what he was saying. I asked him what he thought he might do when he got out. He replied, "I don't know, but I think I know I'll be here forever." Even though "forever" referred to his five-year sentence, Jose seemed to believe that he had become a perpetual part of the system. He also talked about the pressure of proving himself inside, of participating in the code of the prison, of having to constantly protect himself, of having to "handle business"—attack other inmates—in order to survive.

Jose's journey through the school-to-prison pipeline had ended. Criminalization and punishment had accomplished themselves: stigmatizing Jose at a young age, excluding him from productive activities as he matured, brewing a resentment and resistance in him that would lead him deeper into criminalization, marking him with negative credentials, preparing him for prison, and ultimately ingesting him into its punitive carceral abyss. Jose and six of the other young men in this study, all ultimately ending up in prison, experienced what sociologist Orlando Patterson calls "social death."[2] "Social death" is the systematic process by which individuals are denied their humanity. Despite being biologically alive, they are socially isolated, violated, and prevented from engaging in social relations that affirm their humanity. Ethnic studies scholar Dylan Rodriguez argues that incarceration is a form of social death. This social death, he argues, is "the political and organizational logic of the prison."[3] But beyond finding that incarceration produced a certain kind of social death, I also found that social death began at a very young age in the form of punishment and crimi-

nalization. Growing up, the boys were injected with consistent microdoses of social death. This microaggressive form of social death I refer to as *social incapacitation.* Social incapacitation is the process by which punitive social control becomes an instrument which prevents marginalized populations from functioning, thriving, and feeling a sense of dignity and humanity in their daily interactions with institutional forces. Culture scholar George Lipsitz reminds us of Malcolm X's brilliant analysis of racism: "Racism is like a Cadillac, they bring out a new model every year."[4] Malcolm X might agree that if race and class stratification form the highway by which marginalized populations are excluded from important material and symbolic resources in American society, then punitive social control is the Cadillac that cruises them deeper into social exclusion, marginalization, and ultimately social or physical death (as was the case with young Oscar Grant, shot in the back by a police officer, while handcuffed, in Oakland).

As the boys came of age, and were almost always treated like criminals, they believed, and were often correct, that they were being systematically punished for being poor, young, Black or Latino, and male. In the era of mass incarceration, when punitive social control has become a dominant form of governance, some young people are systematically targeted as criminal risks. "Under this insufferable climate of increased repression and unabated exploitation," Henry Giroux argues, "young people and communities of color become the new casualties in an ongoing war against justice, freedom, social citizenship, and democracy. Given the switch in public policy from social investment to containment, it is clear that young people for whom race and class loom large have become disposable."[5] This process has created a generation of marginalized young people, who, by way of social incapacitation, are prevented from engaging in a full affirmation of their humanity, let alone from gaining entry into roles that might give them social mobility. The logic and practice of punitive social control has prevented many marginalized young people from gaining acceptance, affirmation, and achievement in school, landing a job, or catching a break or learning a reintegrative lesson for minor transgressions from police and probation officers.

The youth control complex is not a new phenomenon. Poor and racialized populations have been criminalized and violently punished in the United States since its inception.[6] The black body has been a target on which criminalization, punishment, social incapacitation, and social

death have been executed and perfected. The transatlantic slave trade, savage whippings by slave owners, lynchings, and police brutality have been a few of the many historical forms, often state sanctioned if not state imposed, of violent punishments executed on the black population. Punishment of the brown body has been executed through the genocide of indigenous populations; violent appropriation of Mexican territory by the United States; and vigilante and police brutality against "bandidos," "illegal immigrants," zoot-suiters, and gang youths.[7] In an era of mass incarceration, developed over the past thirty years, punitive social control has fed an out-of-control minotaur, allowing it to expand its labyrinth by embedding itself into traditionally nurturing institutions, punishing young people at younger ages, and marking many for life.

Criminalization is well disguised as a protective mechanism: zero-tolerance policies at schools are declared to provide the students who want to learn protection from bullies and disruptions; increased punitive policing is sold as protecting good citizens from violent gang members; longer incarceration sentences and adult sentencing appear to keep the bad guys from victimizing others and send a clear message to potential criminals; and so on. In order to transform punitive social control and to help young people like Jose live more productive lives, we have to unveil the reality of mass incarceration: it is expensive, financially and socially, for all of society, and it specifically denies many innocent, marginalized young people their humanity. While this study might lead us to believe that marginalized young men are perpetually trapped in a system that slowly shapes them into incarcerable subjects and that they are therefore doomed, victims to the historical tsunami of mass incarceration, there is a beacon of hope, a light that shines, capable of creating a more just way of nurturing marginalized young people—the youth themselves.

Building a Youth Support Complex

Although punitive social control had a debilitating impact on many of the boys in this study, there is a way to short-circuit this system. My personal story of growing up in poverty, being in a gang, going to juvenile hall, and then turning my life around, acquiring a higher education, and becoming a college professor may seem like an anomaly—I was at the right place at

the right time and stumbled on resources, such as people who believed in me, academic and cultural programs, affirmative-action programs, and many mentors along the way. But this does not mean that other marginalized young people cannot do the same. My time in the field taught me that if we provide them the right resources to catapult themselves out of marginalization, young people will deliver. Politicians, schools, criminal justice institutions, and community members must create a youth support complex, a ubiquitous system of support that nurtures and reintegrates young people placed at risk. This system must find creative ways to teach young people when they have made mistakes. Healthy adolescent development requires that young people make mistakes and that they learn from their mistakes. Middle- and upper-class children are given ample opportunity to learn from their mistakes. In a survey I conducted with 550 of my "Introduction to Sociology" students, I found that those young people who came from families who made above seventy thousand dollars a year and reported that at one point during their adolescence they were caught getting drunk, smoking a joint, or committing statutory offenses overwhelmingly reported feeling that they had been given an opportunity to learn from their mistakes. The boys in my study never had a chance to learn from their mistakes.

In this study, only three of the forty boys found long-term, meaningful connections with non-criminal-justice programs or mentors who attempted to support them. An intriguing finding was that all three boys reported feeling that these programs and mentors had made a significant difference in their ability to transform. These programs provided these three boys with genuine caring relationships with adults who advocated for them and helped them develop their everyday resistance and resilience into navigational skills, to transform organic capital into social capital, which allowed them to desist, complete high school, and attend college. These three boys found one thing in common—access to resources that allowed them to move from negative credential status to positive credential status. These resources included college-prep programs, youth leadership organizations, mentors, and teachers and law enforcement officers who acknowledged them as young people capable of reaching the peak of human possibility.

As the system punished and entrapped these young people, and developed a reproductive resistance that pipelined many deeper into the sys-

tem, it also developed within them an oppositional consciousness, as they became well aware of the process by which they were punished.[8] These boys all demonstrated a clear understanding of the process of punishment described in this book. In addition, their deviant and delinquent actions, except when they were drunk or high, served as an attempt to act in their own rational interests. While some of what the boys told me was one-sided, full of half truths, and with a clear bias and misrecognition of their social conditions and the intentions of most social-control institutions to genuinely help them, these young people could clearly articulate the mechanisms by which they ended up marked and tracked into the criminal justice system. Many of their actions, subcultures, and worldviews were developed in direct opposition to punitive social control. This resistance carried the seeds of redemption, self-determination, resilience, and desistance. Embracing the positive aspects of this resistance, teaching young people how to use it to navigate in mainstream institutions, and granting more productive consequences for young people who break the law are all endeavors we must undertake if we are to dismantle punitive social control and help young people who society has rendered as risks, threats, and criminals become productive citizens.

Facilitating Dignity and Freedom for All Young People

Eight of the young men in this study, who desisted from criminal activity for one year or longer, reported that their freedom depended on their ability to recognize that the system was against them, and, therefore, they needed to be strategic in their actions. The actions of those youths who desisted were premised around the notion that by remaining free, they were resisting the system. They analyzed the system's punitive treatment against them and responded by deploying everyday actions aimed at maintaining their freedom.

In the context of an era of mass incarceration, the boys in this study demonstrated the possibilities of political mobilization among marginalized populations. Their preoccupation, their movement, was centered around unshackling handcuffs, prying open prison bars, and shaking iron cages off their backs. I believe that the social movements of the new millennium among the most marginalized classes will be centered on

dismantling punitive social control. The ideology of this control is constantly contested and challenged by marginalized young people. Because ideology is always political, ideological change occurs in the everyday interactions that youth have with dominant forces.[9] If policymakers, scholars, program workers, or activists are to find viable ways of working with those populations most affected by punitive social control, they will have to be willing to hand over some bolt cutters: they will have to be willing to take the "risk" of proposing and implementing policies and programs that provide more reintegration and less disintegration, they will have to be willing to join the movement to dismantle punitive social control and the criminalization that keeps it company.

Urban ethnographer Nikki Jones demonstrates that formerly incarcerated young people have to constantly "work" at maintaining their "freedom." "The intersecting structural, cultural, and personal challenges facing young people who are released from detention facilities, jails, or prisons complicate pathways to freedom in ways that are not reflected in traditional desistance models. . . . 'Freedom' [is] not a static outcome but rather, a dynamic, on-going accomplishment that occurs within a particular structural, cultural, and historical context. . . . Freedom is work."[10] The young people in my study also worked hard at maintaining their freedom. Some of this "hustle" to stay free consisted of young people's maintaining resilience and self-determination by analyzing their condition as a struggle against a system that ubiquitously attempted to incarcerate them and socially incapacitate them. A youth support complex that facilitates marginalized young people's social mobility will have to embrace and legitimize the hard work that young people engage in as they survive the streets, work for their freedom, and strive for their dignity.

One Youngster at a Time

One of the ways in which policymakers, schools, criminal justice institutions, and social programs can help young people desist from crime and become engaged in their education is by finding ways to respect and embrace the work that young people do for dignity and freedom. This entails decriminalizing young people's style and noncriminal actions, listening to young people's analysis of the system, and asking them how to

develop programs and policies that can best help them. Asking their perspectives about the system and how the system can be changed to address their needs, and the needs of those in similar conditions, can become a way to empower these young people. In addition, their recommendations, if taken seriously, can lead the system to become more efficient, effective, and egalitarian when it comes to addressing school detachment, juvenile deviance, delinquency, and crime.

When a young man becomes self-empowered and believes he can change his marginal conditions and his environment, his ability to engage in his education and civic participation increases, leading to personal and social transformation. Young G, one of the young men in this study, who by the time this book is published will have already received his Bachelor of Arts degree, serves as a prime example. Young G is one of the forty youths in this study who, thus far, has attended a four-year university; he attends a small liberal arts college. He has been in college for three years, has a 3.0 grade point average, and aspires to attend medical school. When asked, "What were the conditions that helped you turn your life around, from being a gang member whose house got shot at and who witnessed a few murders, and from being someone who participated in crimes that may have led to decades in prison?" Young G replied, "As I was getting close to being eighteen, I started to recognize I could get more heavy into it, or this is my last opportunity. I met this math teacher who really turned backwards and forwards for me. He knew I had potential. He would visit my house. He wrote me letters of recommendation. Even when I cussed him out and threw a desk on the floor in his class, he gave me another chance." Young G found a teacher who broke away from the mainstream of punitive social control at his school. This support, combined with Young G's awareness that he had to work hard to avoid being punished, to break away from, and dismantle, punitive social control, led him into higher education and activism on campus.

> Later on, I established a sixty-member student organization. We had our first protest against the messed-up graduation rates at the college. Forty percent of us [that dropped out] were Black, fifty percent Latino. By age thirteen, I learned that the system did not want me to spend my eighteenth birthday free. The system was trying to teach us to be docile, versus rich

> people taught to be creative. When I was little, before I even joined a gang, I had heavy surveillance of gangs, gang task force on me all the time. Even in middle school, police would search us for marijuana, cocaine, stuff I didn't even know existed. . . . And my teachers were telling me that I wasn't gonna make it. So I always had a political consciousness, because I saw I was oppressed. Being in the gang has to be political. The gang is about principle, loyalty, commitment; we fit in because it serves a purpose. Society don't give us a purpose, so we create a purpose for ourselves. Now I want to be able to have my actions speak louder than words.

Although Young G is the only one of the forty boys in this study who made it to a four-year university, all the other boys shared similar beliefs. The difference is that Young G had been given a formal stage with a supportive audience on which he could perform dignity, freedom, and reform. The other boys were stuck performing for a punitive audience who threw tomatoes at their every attempt to reform or resist. The key is to provide all marginalized youths a stage with good props, good lighting, and a supportive audience. In this way, acts of resistance, resilience, and reform, which go hand in hand, can become the basis for helping young people transform their lives. Policymakers, researchers, and program workers must recognize these seeds of transformation in young people and work with them to pry open the punitive bars that have socially incapacitated so many for so long.

We must eliminate the zero-tolerance policies that are rampant in schools, policing, and community centers. School-based police officers must be given limitations: schools don't allow music teachers to teach math, so why allow police officers to stand in for counselors, administrators, parents, or teachers? Police are trained to find and eliminate criminality; they are not trained to teach or to nurture. Therefore, neither police nor criminal justice practices should monopolize social control. The right arm of the state, the punishing arm, must be restrained and uncoupled from the left arm, the nurturing arm. We must find ways to eliminate the use of criminal justice metaphors and practices as a means of solving everyday social problems. Redistributing resources from criminal justice institutions back into nurturing institutions must become a priority.

I hope this book has demonstrated that the current system of punitive social control, filled with criminalization, zero-tolerance policies, and extreme sentencing, is not working to deter young people from committing crime. Instead, it has the unintended consequence of incapacitating young people, developing resistance in them which is often perceived as criminality, and further pipelines many into the criminal justice system. As I complete this manuscript, Oakland, California, and other cities have implemented gang injunctions, the laws that provide extreme surveillance and punishment for young people who are accused of being in the gang. These policies will only make matters worse. We must take a leap of faith, place trust in these young people, and believe that if we provide them with the right opportunities, they will respond and become productive citizens. We have to be brave. We must believe that one day, that boy who the youth control complex has labeled a "gang banger," "street thug," "dropout," "juvenile delinquent," and "predator" will come back to us and say, "Because of the second chance that you gave me, because of the support you provided, because you invested in me, I am now a productive member of society." He may even write a book that exposes the trials and tribulations that marginalized young people face.

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