CHAPTER FOUR

Multiple Manhoods

(with Rachel Sarabia)

When I first met Jason, he was twenty years old with a criminal record and considered himself an "active gang member."[1] Jason garnered respect from his "homies" because he had spent much of his teenage years "putting in work" on the streets, which meant fighting, dealing drugs, and stealing. Jason explained:

> Well, you have to earn respect. Nobody gives it to you. If you give respect to the right people, you get respect from the right people . . . you hold your ground you know, just throw down [fight]. . . . Like some fool tries make you look like a bitch, then you throw down [fight] and that's how they look at respect you know?

In my observations, I saw Jason "calling shots" in the neighborhood, giving orders to other young men, and avoiding victimization and incarceration by having other young men look out for him when conflict arose. But I also noticed that Jason was one of the few active gang members who escaped police searches and harassment.

One day, I was standing in front of Golden State Liquors with six boys, four of whom were drinking tall cans of Arizona Iced Tea. A Gang Suppression Team member—police officers responsible for monitoring gang members—pulled up to the curb, stepped out of his vehicle, and asked, "What are you drinking?" Most of the boys ignored him; two shrugged their shoulders. The officer signaled Julio to come closer, but Julio ignored him.

"If you don't come here," the officer warned, "I'm gonna make you look really bad in front of your homies."

Julio walked over, and the officer grabbed him by the shirt, pressuring him to sit on the curb. Then, he lifted Julio up by the shirt and emptied his pockets. Using his radio, the officer checked if Julio had a police record or any outstanding warrants. He proceeded to do the same for all the others—except for Jason.

Before driving off, the officer looked at Jason and said, "I'll see you at the bagel shop. . . . Tell these boys they need to get a job like you."

Jason worked at a local bagel shop where police officers who patrolled the neighborhood often stopped, which is why he believed the police gave him more respect than some of the other young men. "Police know I am a hard worker," he said. "That's what they expect of me. I'm a family man and I don't commit crime anymore." Among more than eighty young men I encountered during my five-year study, Jason was one of only six homies who held a steady full-time job.

Jason often brought his four-year-old son, Junior, with him to hang out at the park or in front of the liquor store. Junior wore a blue bandana in his rear pocket, a sign representing the Mexican Mafia, and sometimes Jason urged him to play-fight with older neighborhood kids. He said he wanted Junior to learn to be a man, which entailed learning about street life, how to protect himself, and how to demand respect.

Although Jason believed that gang parents and older gang members sometimes played a negative role in the life of their younger kin, he did not realize that his own actions to socialize his son to be a tough man might also have a negative impact:

> It's like the families and older guys force them to join [the gang]. It's like a circle that can offer protection . . . well, not just force them, but also they don't have the money to buy this and that, so people join gangs for protection and go rob and shit. But my son, I don't want him doing all that nutty stuff.

Jason was an active father who wanted his son to have a bright future. Frequently, he could be seen pushing his son in a stroller through the neighborhood and tending to his needs. Yet, he did not as often consider how the actions and lessons of manhood performed around his boy might encourage Junior to join a gang in the future. To Jason, Junior was partaking in "child's play."

Jason always appeared incredibly loyal and respectful to his girlfriend, even on the street where other young women were called "bitches" and "hos" by their partners or other boys and could be physically or symbolically attacked. Jason had developed the ability to balance various manifestations of masculinity, which yielded diverse benefits: respect on the streets, acknowledgment from police, a healthy romantic relationship, and the reputation as a "manly son."

However, Jason's experience was unusual. Although all of the young men in this study adopted different forms of masculinity, Jason was one of the few who experienced associated positive outcomes. More commonly, young men displayed their masculinity in a way that resulted in their arrest for challenging or assaulting police officers and others. A comparison of Jason's experience with that of other young men yielded concrete examples of the various practices of masculinity in this South Riverland neighborhood.

These gang-associated young men used masculinity as a central vehicle by which to compensate for race and class subordination. In an effort to maintain dignity and respect, they used differing forms of masculinity (subordinate, street, working class, dominant, and hyper) at various times, a process we refer to as synthesized masculinities. The young men we studied synthesized masculinities to acquire social status and to contest various forms of subordination. Like other forms of gender and sexuality practice, the masculinities they practiced were fluid, situated, and shifting.

In addition to the morals and values of manhood the young men learned from being on the streets, they also found masculinity within criminalization—specifically, negative encounters with school, police, juvenile hall, and probation authorities. One consequence of criminalization and punitive social control for these boys was the development of a specific set of gendered practices that obstructed desistance from crime, positive social relationships, and social mobility. By analyzing the perceptions and actions of these young men, we uncovered how masculinity emerged from and reflected race, class, and gender subordination. Jason's discussion of "being a man" represented how many of the boys developed synthesized masculinities, a strategic and situational display of various masculinities. Various frames representing masculinity were meshed together to embody a masculinity that allowed the boys to feel empowered in multiple settings.

Like Jason, many of the other boys relied on masculinity to obtain respect and cope with race and class marginality; however, their approaches often led instead to victimization, stigmatization, and incarceration. With limited access to traditional pathways to accomplish conventional masculinity—that ideal in which a man works hard, makes good money, and supports his family—the boys sought alternative ways to achieve manhood. Synthesized masculinities allowed these young men to creatively accomplish masculinity throughout their lives in their effort to access resources they perceived to be lacking and to compensate for other forms of domination.

Masculinities

Researchers who study masculinity examine the ways that "different ideologies about manhood develop, change, [and] are combined, amended and contested" (Bederman 1996). Masculinity is dynamic, constructed, and realized through interactions with others (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Kimmel 2003). Kimmel (2003) argues that manhood is accomplished through cultural symbols and the subordination of women. Among American men, achieving masculinity is a "relentless test," and failure to embody, affirm, or accomplish it is a "source of men's confusion and pain" (Kimmel 2003, 58). But masculinities are also "subject positions taken up by differ-

ent men in different cultural contexts" (Cooper 2009, 685). Because masculinity is always intersecting with sexuality, race, and class, a plurality of masculine identities exists rather than one single identity (Carrigan et al. 1985; Connell 1991).

Connell proposed the notion of "hegemonic masculinity" as the dominant form of masculinity in a hierarchy of masculinities and amid a constant struggle for dominance (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Hegemonic masculinity describes practices by which privileged males dominate women and other marginalized men as they seek to produce wealth, achieve recognition from mainstream institutions, and demonstrate a respectable patriarchal persona. Accomplishing this sort of masculinity is almost impossible for less affluent, marginalized men because of the relentless demands, not only to acquire wealth, but also to portray a certain white male aesthetic (e.g., Carter 2003; Lopez 2002; Rios 2009). Thus, working-class, nonwhite, or gay men may seek other avenues to achieve manhood. As Adams and Savran (2002) argue, all men attempt to accomplish masculinity, but not all men desire the same type of masculinity, nor do they accomplish it at the same rate or with the same ease. Those unable to demonstrate the same markers of masculinity as privileged men may seek "compensatory masculinities" (e.g., Pyke 1996), through other—often deviant—behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use/abuse, sexual carousing, and brawling, to illustrate their resistance to and independence from existing power structures (Pyke 1996). Toughness, dominance, and the willingness to resort to violence to resolve interpersonal conflicts are central resources for men less able to acquire the resources of mainstream masculinity (e.g., Anderson 1999; Harris 2000; Messerschmidt 1993; Rios 2009).

Not all marginalized men resort to compensatory masculinity, however, but instead embrace more conventional but fluid forms that are "synthesized," depending heavily on context and type of interaction (peer-peer, male-female, youth–authority figure). Working-class masculinity, hypermasculinity, and street masculinity are, not only compensatory behaviors, but also components of

fluid cultural frames that street-oriented young men draw upon as they navigate social contexts.

Beyond the dominant-subordinate dichotomy often discussed, we found a more complicated notion of dominant and subordinate masculinities that the young men synthesized through interactions with police in the neighborhood. These synthesized performances critically highlighted these youths' negotiation of street, working-class, dominant, and subordinate masculinities. These men were more than just "violent-prone individuals who mindlessly lash out at the world with hostility and aggression" (Young 2004). Rather, they were complex individuals negotiating barriers and creatively exploring opportunities in the world around them.

Law Enforcement, Masculinity Enforcement

A majority of the young men and women interviewed (forty-six of fifty-seven men, and fourteen of eighteen women) held negative worldviews about the police. All reported at least one negative interaction in which they felt victimized either through physical or verbal abuse. In my observations on the street and in ride-alongs with police, I observed a handful of positive interactions and many negative ones, although most interactions between youth and police were neutral. Often police simply questioned or cited the boys and let them go, but I witnessed times when police verbally degraded boys, used excessive force, and employed illegal searches. For many of the young men, the police represented one of many obstacles to their development and ability to find a place in the community. In their minds, the police, like others in society, grouped them as criminals and promoted that image to community members, potential employers, and school authorities. Through instilling fear of violence and incarceration, the police consistently tested, challenged, and degraded their masculinity.

Policing is a male-dominated and masculine field (Cooper 2009; Dodsworth 2007; Harris 2000), and machismo has been central in

police culture (Herbert 2006). Many of the police-youth encounters I witnessed involved masculinity challenges. Through exerting their dominance, police officers were "doing" gender (e.g., Martin 1999) as they strategically emasculated the youths to symbolically demonstrate the officers were the "real" men.

Police responded to perceived attacks on their masculine self-identity and authority with violence or threats of violence, an observation consistent with other research (Harris 2000). When they believed neighborhood youths were disrespecting them, they used threats or physical power to restore their dignity. Police officers got "macho" with youths, staging masculinity contests with them—contests rife with meaning in these young men's lives. The youths interpreted such actions as taunts, efforts to provoke the boys' anger so they would talk back or lash out and do something that would justify an arrest (Gau and Brunson 2010; Harris 2000; Sollund 2006).

Dreamy, a seventeen-year-old Latino male once arrested for possessing a marijuana pipe, represented many of the other boys' perceptions:

> Cops are a bunch of bullies. . . . They are always trying to act like they are bigger men than you. . . . They think we are organized crime or something, and, like, damn, we are just a bunch of homies that are kicking it. . . . I mean I think when you see a cop you should feel safe and you know kind of make you feel good, but hell no, when I see a cop I get fuckin' scared as hell! Even if I'm not doing anything wrong, I'm still fuckin' scared as hell!

Eighteen-year-old Angel, who had been arrested twice, once for a gang fight and once for violating probation, voiced similar interactions with police:

> They always say some fucked up shit to me. Once they told me, "Why don't you come work with us, *puta* [bitch]?" And sometimes they're like, "I promise I won't take you in if you do something for me [like giving them information on criminal activity]." *Pinche pendejos* [fucking idiots]. It's all a trick. They are always on top of us. . . . They're like "look, I know you're on probation," and they just keep talking shit, talking shit. Cops don't respect us. They laugh at us. *En serio* [seriously], they're just like, oh, look at these fools, they're just a bunch of bitches.

Joker, a sixteen-year-old who hung out with the gang, but did well in school and avoided fighting, drinking, and staying out late, related an incident when an officer used physical force on him:

> The cops do nothing but harass. I go to school. I try to stay out of trouble. Narc [undercover police] cars are always around. I see them driving back and forth on my way to school. Sometimes I think I'm just trippin'. It's like, fuck, why are they stopping here? You always gotta look over your shoulder, dog, you know what I mean? They roll up and they just stare at us. One time, they tried to stop me. I ran. I bounced because it was curfew. I tried to hide. They found me. I tried to tell them I got a fucked-up back, that I had been in a car accident. I told them not to slam me. That fool grabbed me from the neck, motherfucker, started cussing me out, fool. He fuckin' slams the shit out of me dog, fuckin' scraped my face, my chin and shit. And I'm just like, fuck, I got all dizzy. He was just talking shit. He was mad. He was like, "Yeah I fucked you up, motherfucker, keep running from me, you fuckin' little bitch. I'm gonna fuckin' bust you this time." They always mistreating us.

One afternoon, four boys in this study were arrested in front of a community center when three police officers arrived to disperse a crowd of twenty suspected gang members loitering outside. Five additional officers were called to provide backup. Jason started taking pictures of the officers. The officers approached Jason and started taking pictures of him with their cell phones. One officer got so close, according to Jason, that he was hit in the face a few times with the officer's phone. Jason pushed the officer's phone away. He was arrested for attempted robbery, resisting an officer, battery on

a police officer, and participation in a criminal street gang. Three other boys were arrested for petty infractions.

Jason spent four months in jail for this incident. Tired of being photographed by police, he said he had decided to respond by taking a picture of the officers that day:

> **Why can't we take pictures of them, but they can take them of us? It's a bunch of bullshit. They just slap a bunch of shit on us. They always try to put us in the wrong and make it look they are the innocent ones, the good guys.**

The camera incident demonstrates the masculinity battles waged between officers and the boys. Police demanded respect, and when it was not given, they reacted quickly and harshly. According to the boys, police "create bogus charges": attempted robbery, resisting an officer, battery of a police officer, or participation in a criminal street gang in an attempt to control and entrap them.

Police consistently challenged and mocked the boys for their way of talking, their dress, their friends and associates, and their failure to display conventional masculinity. More than enforcing the law, police were enforcing masculinity out of a desire to preserve their authority, prove their manhood, and maintain their dominant status on the streets (Cooper 2009; Hahn 1971). The boys described officers as power-hungry individuals who had something to prove: that they were "manlier" than the gang. Criticizing police for overcompensating was an integral part of the boys' performances of masculinity. They believed they were the real men, and the police were weak individuals hiding behind badges and guns. But much of their manhood was constructed in direct response to power, in this case punitive police intervention in their lives.

Simultaneously, police attempted to reinforce a particular form of working-class masculinity that was less available to these particular young men than the officers seemed to understand. They pushed the idea that "a real man gets a job and provides for his family." Yet

these boys' young age and poor education put them in the company of those with a 40 percent unemployment rate. If jobs existed, these boys were not among those getting hired.

Most of the officers serving the South Riverland community were white, and the boys viewed them as rich men with good jobs, even as they despised some of them. When officers gave advice to the boys, they used their profession as a reference point. "Right now you're just on probation for small stuff. You can still clean your record and become a cop one day," one officer told a group of four boys in front of the liquor store. Officers consistently made references to being "a real man" when they advised the boys. "Be a real man, get a job, leave the homies, go to school, and provide for your family," an officer told one boy as he stopped and searched him.

The boys understood the normative ideals for how to "become a man," even if they had yet to acquire the resources to do so. The following descriptions were representative:

> **A man is someone that can support their family . . . even with the struggle . . . having a job . . . putting support . . . having food on the table, a roof over their head, and clothes on their backs . . . that's a man. (Raul, 14)**

> **Knowing how to work makes you a man. Being responsible. A man is somebody that, you know, doesn't back down. To be a man, you gotta be down for whatever. You stick around, or stick to what you say you're gonna do. You don't learn this stuff overnight though; becoming a man is a process. (Tito, 17)**

> **I would want to be successful you know, and come back and help people that need it the most, like people that were . . . or kids that went through the same shit that I went through or something you know, just trying to give back to the community. . . . I mean hopefully college can help me figure that out, you know 'cause . . . a lot of people don't even know what they want to do you know, and when they go to**

college that's where they figure shit out. So that's what I'ma try to do. (Jose, 16)

Most boys believed gang life was just a stage in their development, and that one day, they might be able to transition into a more productive path. First, they had to acquire the resources to become men capable of providing for their families by going to college or working. While this kind of masculinity—working hard, finishing school, and providing for families—could place the boys on a better trajectory, the boys encountered various obstacles on this path. Riverland lacked entry-level jobs and community programs to help this group of youths transition back into school, and the schools' zero-tolerance policies led many to be expelled for gang activity. Frequently, the boys viewed school as a place that targeted them as criminals and cared little for them. Thirty-two of the fifty-seven had dropped out of school or had been kicked out, and twelve told us they dropped out because they felt they did not belong or school officials did not care about them. On the streets, police gang units stopped, "tagged" (entered into a gang database), harassed, and arrested the boys, sometimes for something as simple as walking to the store to buy groceries.

When the boys attempted to get jobs or complete school, their avenues for opportunities often turned out to be dead ends. The realization that they were not able to be the kind of man mainstream society expected them to be inflicted stress, anger, and pain. As a result, they forged alternative forms of manhood—forms that often stressed being tough, gaining status and respect, and, like the police did onto them, demonstrating dominance over others.

Synthesized Masculinity

Men gain masculine esteem and status from the acknowledgment of other men (Cooper 2009); but with limited access to traditional avenues used to accomplish this task, the boys negotiated alternative masculinities, particularly through interactions with police

officers. The boys adeptly demonstrated aspects of dominant, street, working-class, and subordinate masculinities in a complicated enactment. In response to police mistreatment, they practiced deviant behavior (ignoring police officers, attempting to block police from taking pictures, protesting their potential arrests, and so on), symbolically defying domination, control, and harassment without a fight and, thus, gaining masculine status and esteem.

Officers used toughness, dominance, disrespect, humiliation, and aggressive force to try to control boys upon arrest—a tactic that often proved counterproductive. With every negative interaction and perceived wrongful conviction, youth lost respect for the cops and the legal system. Those who encountered negative police interactions felt they received wrongful treatment in the courts, and, conversely, those who experienced positive or neutral interactions, perceived the justice system as treating them fairly, despite similar "juvi" or jail sentences.

Although the boys aspired to achieve dominant forms of masculinity, they embraced synthesized forms. For example, fifteen-year-old Elias defined being a man:

> A real man is a leader not a follower. He has backbone. He stands up for himself. He is able to protect himself. He doesn't go out and look for trouble just because. He lives for his own satisfaction and no one else's. He works when he can, and when he can't find work he finds a way to make it work.

For Elias and other South Riverland boys, this redefined masculinity was achievable. They could be leaders, they could stand up for themselves, and they could be themselves—guys who appreciated a street orientation. With this synthesized masculinity, they could fill the gaps to access resources and mitigate race and class privileges they seemed to lack. The performances of synthesized masculinities differed by boy, unique to each of their situations and perceived strengths and weaknesses.

Men who constantly face challenges to their masculinity or find

that "masculine resources" are in short supply may turn to criminal behavior (Messerschmidt 1999):

> Masculinity challenges arise from interactional threats and insults from peers, teachers, parents, and from situationally defined masculine expectations that are not achievable. . . . 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. (13)

Indeed, criminal activity constitutes a gendered practice that men rely on to communicate their manhood. As such, crime is more likely to occur when men need to prove themselves accountable to strict gender expectations, based on how they interact with social institutions such as law enforcement (West and Fenstermaker 1995). Therefore, an examination of the boys' interactions in their community can reveal how the criminal justice system shaped their development of masculinity.

The young men I followed constantly faced challenges to their manhood on the streets through such interrogations as "Is he really a homie?" or "Is he really a man?" Those who could not measure up were stigmatized or victimized. At the core of growing up in their community, the boys felt a constant necessity to prove their manhood. Institutions also often challenged their masculinity in the attempt to reform them. They may have been told they were not "man enough" to have committed a crime or that once "in the system" they risked being emasculated. In response to gendered institutional practices, they boys synthesized new practices, identities, and models of masculinity.

The underacknowledged collateral consequences of the criminalization and punitive social control of inner-city boys include constant surveillance and stigma imposed by schools, community centers, and families; permanent criminal credentials that exclude them from the labor market; and the boys' mistrust and resentment toward police and the criminal justice system (Rios 2011). As I followed the South Riverland boys, I found an additional consequence: the development of a specific set of gendered practices, heavily influenced by their interactions with police, detention facilities, and probation officers.

For example, negative encounters with white female teachers often called up a scenario of an "angry male of color" attacking a "white damsel in distress." Encounters with police often became a contest to see who was the "bigger man," and probation officers interacted with the boys in either a motherly or a heavy-handed way. These patterns of punishment provided a constant backdrop against which these young men exhibited their understanding of masculinity.

Race determines the treatment a young person may receive in the criminal justice system, but masculinity plays a role in whether the person desists or relapses into recidivism as they pass through that system. For young black and Latino men, pervasive contact with the criminal justice system produces hypermasculinity, or an "exaggerated exhibition of physical strength and personal aggression," often in response to a gender threat, "expressed through physical and sexual domination of others" (Harris 2000). I found that the criminal justice system encouraged hypermasculinity by threatening and misunderstanding these young men's manhood. Detrimental forms of masculinity reflecting violence, crime, and counterculture were reinforced through youths' negative interactions with police, juvenile hall, and probation officers. Although we think of law enforcement as *policing* such behaviors, I discovered that police often played a crucial role in *producing* them and their attendant meaning and significance.

Masculinity, Criminalization, and Punitive Social Control

Gender expectations shape human behavior, and each person is subject to a system of accountability based on gender, race, and class (West and Fenstermaker 1995). The boys in this study were incul-

cated with hypermasculine expectations that often encouraged behavior in conflict with dominant institutions. But with probation officers and police, the boys had two choices: engage in a battle of masculinity or submit to authority. The choice was a lose-lose predicament, and they knew it. If they acted tough, officers might hesitate to harass them, but they just might get arrested. If passive, they risked humiliation. Caught between these positions, many acted out their frustration through drug use or violence. The "default" manhood they knew best involved masculine resources they could purchase on the streets.

Peers, family, and neighborhood institutions impose multiple litmus tests that men must pass to win "real man" status, according to many contemporary urban ethnographers. For example, Elijah Anderson (1999) described "young male syndrome" as the perceived, expected, and often, necessary pressure to exhibit a tough, violent, and deviant manhood in order to receive and maintain respect. Although other men can prove their masculinity through their ability to make money and buy consumer products, poor young men must rely on the tools they have—toughness, violence, and survival (Pyke 1996). Even young women in poor neighborhoods learn to rely on this form of hypermasculinity for their own protection and to gain respect (Jones 2010; Rios 2011). They face a double bind as they seek to meet feminine gender expectations and simultaneously adopt tough masculine behaviors necessary to survive on the streets (Jones 2010).

Most violent youths are not psychopaths, but rather, "overconformists to a particular normative construction of masculinity" (Kimmel and Mahler 2003, 1440) defined by toughness, dominance, and the willingness to resort to violence to resolve interpersonal conflicts. Many of the South Riverland males were acquainted with the mainstream culture's expectations for boys like them—work hard, obey the law, and accept their subservient social position. Indeed, some had fathers or father figures who emulated these values, and some boys sought to embrace this masculinity in an effort to reform. But where could they find viable jobs to "prove" they were hard

workers? In a deindustrialized society, proving masculinity through success in jobs involving physicality and muscular prowess is less possible for larger numbers of men (Kimmel 1993).

Gang-associated boys very quickly come to realize that positive, working-class masculinity does not provide the resources to survive on the streets, a place to which they constantly return. In their attempts to manage young men's criminality, institutional authorities (police officers, teachers, probation officers, judges) resort to practices heavily influenced by masculinity. In response, these young men are socialized to specific meanings of manhood at odds with those dominant institutions that seek to control them. Without viable employment or guidance, they are led right back to the seductive arms of hypermasculinity.

As an example of how this process works, criminologists have found that police academies train officers to practice a rogue and hostile masculinity (Prokos and Padavich 2002), which reverberates in the inner city. 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" (quoted in Prokos and Padavich 2002, 442). In this context, punitive police treatment of men of color is, not only racial violence, but also gender violence.

Young people in South Riverland encountered these forms of violence regularly from police and consistently reported interactions with disciplinary authorities at school and with police from an early age. They learned that "being a man" meant not relying on law enforcement, learning to take a beating from police, and—sometimes—to desist from committing crime and to resist the seductions of street life. But as they practiced their masculinity on the streets, the boys' interactions with authorities also informed and reinforced their identities. Targeted as likely criminals, they encountered an expectation that limited their mobility, affected their families and relationships, and increased their chances of ending up in the criminal justice system. The masculine behavior and ideals the police and others promoted were often less available for these

boys than authorities seemed to imagine. As a result, hypermasculinity served both as resistance and self-affirmation. In turn, this survival strategy created a self-fulfilling prophecy, a ready-made rationalization entitling the system to further criminalize and punish them.

The boys in this study, however, did not passively submit to police officers' challenges to their masculinity in all of their interactions. Rather, they demonstrated active resistance through developing "synthesized masculinities"—a process that made masculinity more attainable. Neither dominant nor subordinate masculinity alone could explain the meanings that gang-involved Latino boys navigated and the actions they created. The boys constantly negotiated subordinate, street, working-class, and dominant forms of masculinity. With few resources and facing diverse demands from families, police, and schools, they often perceived failure as inevitable. Therefore, demonstrations of masculinity were a last-ditch effort to acquire social status and alleviate subordination. Even more than race or class, masculinity was for these boys a coping mechanism in a world that seemed to wage attacks on them at every turn. Masculinity was a vehicle to alleviate social marginalization and subordination. Unfortunately, women and others were often the victims of these young men's synthesized masculinity, as the men used violence to battle against emasculating control.

This study and others underline the need to change the punitive and gender dynamics of policing and the toxic definitions of what it means to be a man (Bradley and Danchik 1971; Cooper 2009). Extensive law-enforcement training programs should be designed to challenge a macho police culture and address racial, gender, and class stereotypes. Officers also could benefit from training on how to communicate effectively even when their authority is challenged and to avoid acting on the premature presumption of violence.

Listening to the stories and viewpoints of these gang-associated young men, we can easily think that police officers operate under malicious intent. But do they? Are they simply out to make young people's lives miserable? How do police officers view young people

they interact with, and would understanding these interactional dynamics provide tools for schools, law enforcement, and policy makers to engage more positively and productively with youths? I rode along with police officers in South Riverland to try to answer these questions and to understand the police officers' viewpoint. The following chapter examines these interactions from a patrol-car perspective.