Title of Project: Easy Streets: Examining Gangs in New Orleans
Year of Project: Summer 2015

Project Summary (100 words):

In recent years, it has been acknowledged that gangs are contributing significantly to the homicide rate in New Orleans. Even still, there is no academic information on gangs in the Big Easy and sparse information provided by local law enforcement. Based on protocols from previous qualitative studies on gangs in other cities, the proposed research seeks to understand the nature and scope of gangs in New Orleans through in-depth interviews with gang members.

Stipend ($500) Budget Justification:

$500 is requested to fund one researcher assistant at $10 an hour for 50 hours, whose primary responsibility will be transcription and data management.
Where will the results be published, exhibited or performed?
The results will be published in peer reviewed academic journals in sociology and criminology and presented at national and/or international conferences such as the yearly Eurogang Consortium.

What other sources of funding (internal and external) have you identified for this project?
None

List years and amounts of prior Loyola University faculty grants (for the last three years):
N/A

Does your research involve human subjects? ___X__ Yes _____ No. If yes, funding for this project is contingent on receiving IRB approval. If you have IRB approval prior to submitting your proposal, please attach the approval memo to your application. If you do not have IRB approval at the time of your submission, please complete the IRB protocol as soon as possible after your proposal submission.

I have submitted the Employee Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form. ___X__

I have read and understand the University’s reimbursement policy. ___X__

Narrative Description of Project:

Easy Streets: Examining Gangs in New Orleans
By: Christian Bolden, Loyola University New Orleans

While it is no secret that New Orleans consistently ranks among the cities with the highest homicide rates (8th in 2013 and 3rd in 2012), what is not well known is the contribution of gang violence to this rate. Authorities have traditionally refused to acknowledge that problematic groups in New Orleans were gangs. The cause of this neglect is two-fold. Part of this is due to there being no validated information out there, academic or otherwise, on gangs in New Orleans. The other part is due to the portrayal of gangs as large nationally organized entities with
recognizable names, colors, and symbols. Whereas, gangs in New Orleans tend to be very small, disorganized, and localized. This mismatch in perception has led to a deadly disregard for gang violence. For instance, a 2010 assessment sponsored by the Bureau of Justice concluded that only 2 out of 200 homicides in New Orleans that year were gang related (Welford, Bond, & Goodison, 2011). Examination of more recent data sources including homicide and gang intelligence reports from the New Orleans Police Dept. indicate that these groups have a much more significant contribution to violent activity (36% of homicides in the last 2 years).

After a change in police administration during the last few years, new task forces were created, including a multi-agency gang task force. As law enforcement began keeping track of members of these delinquent neighborhood groups, it became clear that individuals in these collectives were responsible for more than a third of the homicides per year in New Orleans.

Despite rhetoric, New Orleans is no stranger to criminal groupings. In the late 1800s, the mafia was pervasive in the Crescent City. Their activities culminated with the murder of the first police superintendent on New Orleans, David C. M. Hennessey (Taylor, 2010 p. 105.) Now that law enforcement and the media are paying more attention to gangs in New Orleans, groups are becoming increasingly identifiable. Using racketeering statutes, the mayor’s task force is now attacking gangs and systematically disabling the most violent groups (City of New Orleans, 2012). This tactic appears to be effective as there has been a notable decrease in the number of homicides in New Orleans, from 204 in 2012 to 160 in 2013. The use of federal laws to prosecute have also proved beneficial as perpetrators can no longer rely on Louisiana’s eccentric “60-day rule,” which allows people to be freed if no grand jury indictment is given within 60 days.
Acknowledging that these groups are indeed gangs was the first major step in beginning to address violence in New Orleans. However, we still know very little about these groups. The proposed study seeks to gain a clearer understanding of the scope and nature of gangs in New Orleans.

Dr. Bolden, the lead investigator in this study, has had significant history writing about and studying street gangs in different locales. This includes a study interviewing 15 gang members in San Antonio, Texas and a follow-up study interviewing 48 gang members in San Antonio, Texas and Orlando, Florida, as well as work with the FBI on gangs and terrorism and encyclopedia entries on gang social networks and Central American youth gangs. Using similar protocols from previous studies, the proposed research seeks to understand gangs in New Orleans from the perspective of gang members through qualitative in-depth interviews. Areas of inquiry will cover demographics, size, territory, activities, and history of local groups. All IRB protections and extended protections of respondents will be utilized in this study. Results of this research will be disseminated through peer-reviewed academic journals and national and possibly international conference presentations.

Dr. Bolden has been successful in locating gang members and establishing rapport. The opportunities to do so are plentiful in New Orleans. Gangs recognized by the New Orleans Police Dept by area of the city are **Mid-City**: Mid-City Killas (MCK), Jones Family, Prieur and Columbus Boys (PCB). **Uptown**: H&H, Taliban, M-Unit, EBB, Gert Town. **Filmore**: Young Gunners. **West Bank**: Whitney Boys, Fischer Fools (Fischer), D-Block (D4), Cut-Off. **Marigny/Bywater/9th Ward**: Fast Money Gang (FMG), Frenchman and Derbigny, St. Anthony Crew, Ride or Die (ROD), T-Block, Doom Squad Gunner Gang (DSGG), Money Over Bitches (MOB), France Alvar Mazant (FAM), Killer Squad Goonies (KSG), Killer Mafia Gang (KMG),
Park Boys, Back A-Town Boys. **Central City**- Skull Squad Mafia (SSM), St. Thomas Boys, 2-Block, Byrd Gang, 3NG, Young Melph Mafia (YMM), Allen Family. **New Orleans East**- Monroe Family, Martin Family, Warner and Grant, Wilson and Dwyer, Marley Gang, Flame Gang, Bloodhounds.

**Reference:**


**Budget**

$500 is requested to fund one researcher assistant at $10 an hour for 50 hours, whose primary responsibility will be transcription and data management.