



Life in the Gang: Family, Friends, and Violence (Cambridge Studies in Criminology)

Scott H. Decker, Barrik van Winkle

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This study is based on three years of field work with 99 active gang members and 24 family members. The book describes the attractiveness of gangs, the process of joining, their chaotic and loose organisation, and their members' predominant activities - mostly hanging out, drinking, and using drugs. The authors also discuss gang members' rather slapdash involvement in major property crime and their disorganised participation in drug traffic, as well as the often fatal consequences of their violent life-style. Although the book focuses on the individual, organisational, and institutional aspects of gang membership, it also explores gang members' involvement with other school and neighborhood structures. Extensive interviews with family members provide groundbreaking insights into the gang members' lives. As much as possible, however, the story is told in the gang members' own words.

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