

DRUG TRAFFICKING AND GUN CARRYING: A CO-OCCURRING
PHENOMENON AMONG URBAN
MALE YOUTH

by

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines an often-observed, but rarely studied, phenomenon of drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors among urban male youth, as much of social science research so far addresses the two behaviors separately. Attention is directed at delineating the social mechanisms, namely individual-level risk factors (poverty, family, and education), that lead youth to adopt code-related beliefs, which increase risks for engaging in drug trafficking and gun carrying. Results from the multivariate data analysis indicate that race and code-related beliefs are significant predictors of participation in co-occurring behaviors. Additionally, the impact of code-related beliefs on participation in co-occurring behaviors was not found to be different for different racial groups as suggested by Anderson. Little support was found for individual-level risk factors, as a whole, impacting participation in co-occurring behaviors. Implications of the findings are discussed with regard to the impact of racial status, as a risk factor, and code-related beliefs on participation in co-occurring behaviors by urban male youth.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the 1980s, drug-related crimes quickly increased, especially youth homicide (Blumstein, 1995). Throughout that time period, drug trafficking among urban African-American male youth also became an ever-growing phenomenon (Li & Feigelman, 1994). This distinct group of youth was prone (and still is) to drug trafficking because of social structures in place and the code-related beliefs practiced in socially disadvantaged neighborhoods in which many African-Americans reside. The adoption of code-related beliefs is a response to the social structural aspects of the neighborhood. Thus, the learned code-related beliefs influence the drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors of urban African-American male youth. Socially disadvantaged African-American neighborhoods integrate certain beliefs into their everyday life as a means of survival in the inner-city. The beliefs represent and determine what type of life-path an individual will follow. Therefore, the environment in which to study the co-occurring phenomenon of drug trafficking and gun carrying is important, since there is a higher concentration of disadvantage in urban African-American communities, as compared to white neighborhoods (Kubrin, 2005; Stewart, Schreck, & Simons, 2006).

Drug trafficking is defined as “the selling or delivering of drugs” (Stanton & Galbraith, 1994, p. 1039). Much of the literature uses the terms “drug trafficking” and “drug dealing” interchangeably. Today, these terms are not so much used interchangeably, as “drug trafficking” signifies the movement of large quantities of drugs across state lines or borders, whereas “drug dealing” implies the sale of smaller amounts of drugs. Despite their discrepancies, this study

uses “drug trafficking” and “drug dealing” interchangeably and emphasizes the definition by Stanton and Galbraith (1994), with reference to smaller drug sales.

Stanton and Galbraith (1994) noted that much of the research focuses on urban African-American youth involved with drug trafficking, not because they are the only ones committing this type of behavior, but rather they are more likely to be exposed to its negative effects. White youth are also involved in drug trafficking; however, they deal drugs in more wealthy suburban neighborhoods (Stanton & Galbraith, 1994). It is important to study African-American male youth, as research suggests that 33% of inner-city, African-American males over 16 years of age deal drugs (Centers & Weist, 1998).

Some of the literature suggests that drug trafficking and gun carrying co-occur (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Blumstein, 1995; Braga, 2003; Sheley, 1994). Drug trafficking has been associated with an increase in violence and mortality rates among urban African-American male youth (Whitehead, Peterson, & Kaljee, 1994). In 1993, Fingerhut noted that firearm use was implicated as the second leading cause of death among youth ages 15-19 years and the leading cause of death among black males 10-34 years of age. Black males between the ages of 15 and 19 are more likely to be victims of a firearm homicide than any other racial or ethnic group of similar ages (Fingerhut & Christoffel, 2002). Beginning in 1968, rates of youth firearm deaths increased nationally (Fingerhut & Christoffel, 2002). However, since 1993, firearm deaths have decreased immensely for children and youth, although the rates still remain high internationally and compared to those of the past (Fingerhut & Christoffel, 2002). Though the youth firearm homicide rates have been on a steady decline, those among Black male youth remain staggeringly high.

Stewart, Schreck, and Simons (2006) noted how African-Americans in disadvantaged neighborhoods are disproportionately more likely to become a victim of violence (Stewart & Simons, 2006). Not only are those involved with violence or drug dealing at risk for victimization, but innocent bystanders are also at higher risk (Anderson, 1999). For example, African-American males are more likely to become fatal victims of weapons violence and are more likely to carry weapons and become victims of violence than their male counterparts (Black & Ricardo, 1994). Therefore, the victimization that stems from systemic violence, proposed by Goldstein, is an important implication, in terms of victimization, being that drug markets and lethal violence are positively associated with each other (Goldstein, 1985; Ousey & Lee, 2002).

This study is guided toward drug trafficking and gun carrying among urban male youth, especially African-Americans, ages 15-19, as Anderson's theory "Code of the Street" (1999) focuses on this specific population within the inner-city environment. Specifically, the study examines inner-city youth who are subjected to structural disadvantages and who are more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors. This group is of interest because they are more apt to adopt code-related beliefs unique to the inner-city context, which consequently influences their participation in drug trafficking and gun carrying. Anderson's theory has identified specific beliefs and important roles that youth, especially African-American youth, subscribe to and play in structurally disadvantaged neighborhoods. His theory is relevant because it specifically discusses the African-American population represented in this study and describes their behavior in terms of a cultural adaptation to the white society through informal behavioral rules (Anderson, 1999). Anderson's theoretical framework includes some causal explanations for drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors among urban African-American disadvantaged male youth. Therefore, using Anderson's work, this study delineates the mechanism by which youth

participate in co-occurring behaviors, for purposes of evaluating the role of code-related beliefs in the process (Anderson, 1999). In addition, this study examined whether the impact of code-related beliefs on youth's participation in co-occurring behaviors differs by race, as Anderson's theoretical framework was developed based on his observations in communities resided mostly by African-Americans.

Significance

The major significant contribution of this study is that it fills a gap in the current research. Although co-occurring behaviors have been researched, empirical testing of what has been observed and theorized by Anderson is lacking. This study is one of the first known to be theory-based with respect to co-occurring behaviors. Thus far, empirical testing of Anderson's theory has been applied toward victimization (Stewart, Schreck, & Simons, 2006) and violence (Brezina, Agnew, Cullen, & Wright, 2004; Stewart & Simons, 2006).

The relationship between drug dealing, violence, and firearm homicides among urban African-American disadvantaged male youth is an important reason to focus a study on this population, especially because of the negative social consequences affecting this group. Youth who participate in drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors adhere to a lifestyle that promotes violence (Anderson, 1999). The relationship between urban African-American disadvantaged male youth who adhere to beliefs intrinsic to the inner-city and participate in drug trafficking and gun carrying demonstrate the need to explore and explain why this distinct population practices such behaviors.

This study is unique in that it is one of the first known studies to utilize Anderson's theoretical framework to examine the processes that lead urban male youth, especially African-American youth, to participate in co-occurring behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying.

The social structures and code-related beliefs inherent to the inner-city are specifically outlined in terms of their influential role on co-occurring behaviors, so that policies, as well as other means of behavioral control, can be set forth. Based on past empirical research, specifically Anderson's work, the effect of race on co-occurring behaviors is analyzed. By examining race effects, the application of Anderson's propositions for different racial groups can be assessed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Code of the Street

Anderson (1999) developed the theoretical framework, “Code of the Street,” after completing a four-year ethnographic study in inner-city communities, and specifically some areas in Philadelphia. He identified the code as a set of informal rules of behavior governing citizens of deficient areas in the inner-city. It encompasses values adopted by inner-city Black people (beginning early in life) that are used to cope with social injustices such as unresponsive police and a discriminatory justice system. In short, the code represents the alienation of inner-city Blacks from the rest of American society, specifically the dominant white society.

The code of the street is associated with several demographic factors: race, low socioeconomic status, and residence in urban neighborhoods (Brezina et al., 2004). Race is an especially important factor in Anderson’s theoretical construct; he maintained that the code of the street is a cultural adaptation specifically experienced by inner-city African-Americans. As a result, researchers have accommodated an interaction term involving race and code-related beliefs to assess the impact of code-related beliefs for different racial groups (Brezina et al., 2004; Markowitz & Felson, 1998). Brezina and colleagues (2004) found no support for racial differences in the development of code-related beliefs. Markowitz and Felson (1998) found that racial status had no effect on the development of attitudes favorable to violence.

Among young people, adherence to the code has been associated with social risk factors that influence the learning and adoption of beliefs related to the code itself. Brezina et al. (2004)

noted that such factors may include lack of adequate parental supervision, abusive parenting, experiences involving violence and victimization, exposure to violent or aggressive peers, and the belief that achieving status and respect through legitimate means is unattainable. Anderson's research largely focused on understanding transgressions in inner-cities and the social and cultural dynamics of interpersonal violence. In particular, he sought to understand the relationship between the code of the street and violence within economically depressed communities.

Anderson noted how under the code, citizens align themselves to either the "street" or "decent" path, values that stem from the family's moral structure. "Street" and "decent" orientations represent labels given to residents themselves. The street family lacks consideration for others, unlike their counterpart, the decent family. According to Anderson (1999), the criminals, within this context, represent those at the extreme end of the street-oriented group. He identified these individuals as "casualties of the social and economic system" because they wholeheartedly embrace the street lifestyle (Anderson, 1999, p. 36). Street people are said to feel the most alienated by the larger society. Thus, the street families are very disorganized, have limited resources, and do not recognize priorities and consequences of behaviors. The head(s) of the street household, therefore, socialize the children accordingly. Lessons of the code are passed down to children (Brezina et al., 2004). Thereby creating a noticeable cyclical pattern of behavior amongst street families. As these families continue to act out the code, the behaviors become more acceptable.

Decent families constitute the antithesis of street families, in that they adopt and live by mainstream values. For these individuals, it is important to rear the children according to the prescribed morals of the family and the larger society. These families value hard work and seek

to sacrifice and provide for their children. Anderson described these families as being polite and considerate, unlike that of street families.

The orientation of the family is important in determining that of the children; however, oftentimes, the children are forced to incorporate both street and decent values in order to survive outside of the home, a term referred to as “code switching” (Anderson, 1999, p. 36). A typical example of code switching is one in which decent youth adopt the street code outside of the home, but maintain decent values in the home. Street and decent family members can coexist together in one family.

Few studies have attempted to test the code of the street (Stewart et al., 2006). Much of the code research is centered on violence (Brezina et al., 2004; Stewart et al., 2006; Stewart & Simons, 2006), since Anderson (1999) maintained that the adoption of the street code leads to violence. Brezina et al. (2004) conducted analyses of Anderson’s street code, to test the consistency of Anderson’s findings with other research on youth violence. Their study tested a proposed model linking social position, perceived opportunity, victimization, and other variables to code-related beliefs and violent behavior. In contrast, Stewart et al. (2006) examined the extent to which Anderson’s code of the street increased risk for violent victimization. Stewart and Simons (2006) explored how neighborhood context, family structure, and discrimination influenced the adoption of the code of the street. They also analyzed whether the code of the street mediated the effects of neighborhood context, family structure, and racial discrimination on violent delinquency.

In the current research, the code is viewed as the mechanism that leads urban male youth, especially African-Americans, to traffic drugs and carry guns. Though Anderson’s theoretical framework has generally been used to explain the occurrence of youth violence in the inner-city,

the means that lead youth to engage in violent behavior may also be applied to the behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying. Although, individual-level risk factors and code-related beliefs have been used to explain the occurrence of drug trafficking and/or gun carrying among urban male youth (Anderson, 1999), the researcher is unaware of studies that used Anderson's code to delineate the social processes that lead urban male youth to practice co-occurring behaviors. As such, the current study fills this void, by applying Anderson's theoretical perspective to drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors among urban male youth, especially African-Americans. Explicit attention is directed at the social processes that lead youth to participate in these behaviors.

Literature Review

Three distinct lines of research inform how urban disadvantaged male youth, especially African-Americans, who traffic drugs and carry guns, are influenced by social structures and the assimilation of code-related beliefs. First, the literature on drug trafficking and gun carrying by urban African-American youth is presented. This extant evidence offers a variety of similar explanations for drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors among the subpopulation of interest. Attention is then directed at individual-level risk factors that help explain why this particular group of youth assumes certain code-related beliefs, which lead them to traffic drugs and carry guns. Finally, the code-related beliefs are identified and outlined, in order to understand what purpose they serve and how they function in influencing drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors.

Drug Trafficking and Gun Carrying

According to Blumstein (1995), three major changes occurred between 1985 and 1992: (1) youth homicide rates among juveniles more than doubled, although there were no growth in

rates for adults age 24 years and older; (2) youth gun-related homicides more than doubled, but there was no change in non-gun homicides; and (3) the drug arrest rate among minority youth more than doubled, while there was no rate increase observed among their counterparts. The upturn in the youth homicide rate during the 1980s was related to the drug trafficking and the increased prevalence of crack-cocaine. The introduction of crack into the drug market in 1985 spurred an increase in its demand; thus, the demand called for an increase in dealers. Youth drug traffickers from disadvantaged, inner-city neighborhoods became popular choices for dealers, because they would be punished less severely by the criminal justice system than their adult counterparts (Braga, 2003; Moore & Tonry, 1998).

Moore and Tonry (1998) explained why the “youth violence epidemic” exploded in the 1970s and early 1980s. During that period, many urban neighborhoods were negatively affected by social and economic pressures. The disappearance of employment opportunities and small businesses in the inner-city caused economic strain for many families. In order to gain economic stability, some youth began dealing drugs as a way to make money. At that same time, gang membership and activity increased. Gangs also were involved in the drug market. As a means of self-protection, gang-related and non-gang drug dealers armed themselves on the streets. Thus, the violence spread from mainly African-American male youth to Hispanic, Caucasian, and Asian males, and even to girls (Moore & Tonry, 1998).

The growing problem of drugs and crime in the 1980s directly affected the rates in which African-Americans were arrested for drug crimes (Blumstein, 1995; Moore & Tonry, 1998). African-Americans were more likely to sell drugs in the streets than whites; therefore, African-Americans were at higher risk for being arrested for a drug offense (Blumstein, 1995). Since urban African-American youth were at an elevated risk for being arrested and exposed to the

negative effects of drug trafficking, it is important to understand what leads these youth to traffic drugs and carry guns.

As drugs became more pervasive in the street-scene of the 1980s, so, too, did gun carrying. Not only did juveniles' access to guns increase (Moore & Tonry, 1998), but many juveniles also were carrying guns as a means of self-protection (Blumstein, 1995; Braga, 2003). Blumstein (1995) explained youth gun carrying in terms of community disorganization. Community disorganization can affect the behaviors of those living in certain communities, whereby certain individuals arm themselves as a means of self-protection from others carrying weapons, particularly drug dealers. Therefore, other youth who were not involved in selling drugs also began to carry handguns to protect themselves, because of the new trend concentrated in disadvantaged, urban neighborhoods (Braga, 2003).

Today, youth homicides have decreased, as well as the number of youth carrying weapons (Reese, Vera, Thompson, & Reyes, 2001). However, one of the most noted reasons for carrying a gun today is self-protection, because inner-city communities are more concentrated with youth weapon carriers due to the levels of violence (Reese et al., 2001). The availability and access to handguns has been strongly associated with selling drugs (Callahan & Rivara, 1992). Youth find guns necessary for the drug dealing business, because weapons quickly provide an opportunity for an economic gain (Black & Hausman, 2008).

The bulk of prior research focused on the violence associated with drug trafficking among African-American male youth (Blumstein, 1995; Braga, 2003; Centers & Weist, 1998; Reese et al., 2001; Stewart et al., 2006), while fewer studies primarily focused strictly on drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994). Anderson's (1999) "code of the street" considered violence in the streets of

the socially disadvantaged, African-American communities, but little research has focused on the role of the drug dealer. Although drug dealing has become more problematic among youth and urban, teenage drug dealers have become more prominent, little research has attempted to understand and explain this group's delinquent behavior (Centers & Weist, 1998). This study attempts to bridge this gap in the literature by explaining co-occurring behaviors with individual-level risk factors and code-related beliefs. Aspects of Elijah Anderson's work are found in this investigation. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis reflects previous findings regarding race and participation in co-occurring behaviors.

H1: Black male youth are more likely to participate in the co-occurring behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying than non-Black male youth.

Individual-level Risk Factors

Individual-level risk factors are important for shaping and facilitating the lifestyles and behaviors of socially disadvantaged urban male youth, especially African-American youth. Anderson (1999) noted that factors such as poverty, family, and education influence how juveniles are socialized to behave in a "street" or "decent" manner, or both. Understanding the difference between street and decent families helps discern how individuals in the inner-city react differently to the individual-level risk factors of poverty, family, and education.

Poverty. Poverty is an issue that directly and negatively affects both street and decent families. For instance, it affects the street people living in inner-city, black communities, especially younger people who mistrust the criminal justice system and conventional society (Anderson, 1999). Street youth adopt the code as a way to cope with social injustices associated with inner-city African-Americans, most notably poverty (Anderson, 1999). Some urban African-American male youth resort to drug trafficking as a response to living in poverty. This

economic factor among youth is an important risk factor (Anderson, 1999; Blumstein, 1995; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994). In inner-city communities, where selling drugs is considered socially acceptable, the drug trade is profitable (Anderson, 1999). Selling drugs in these communities is equated to a “job;” the job is always available and pays well (Friedman, Ali, & McMurphy, 1998). Youth make more money selling drugs than working in conventional jobs (Anderson, 1999; Black & Ricardo, 1994; Whitehead et al., 1994). The drug trade can be enticing because material items can be purchased from the profits (Anderson, 1999; Black & Ricardo, 1994; Friedman et al., 1998; Li & Feigelman, 1994; Whitehead et al., 1994).

The earned money allows youth to purchase new items, such as those Anderson (1999) referred to as clothing styles popularized by African-American males that serve as status symbols: untied sneakers, pants worn below the waist, and hats worn backward. In turn, these styles constitute “cultural displays,” which make young people less employable (Anderson, 1999, p. 113). Young African-Americans then are discriminated against, both for their street-style and the poverty symbols that these styles constitute. Therefore, whites are chosen over blacks for job positions. Anderson (1999) discussed how many African-American youth from Philadelphia, especially boys, are feared by employers. These inner-city youth are often stuck in entry-level jobs, seldom promoted, and fixed in certain positions away from the forefront. Some may work as kitchen staff at a restaurant, as opposed to wait staff. Despite getting a job, these youth face much racism and discrimination in the workplace (Anderson, 1999).

The vast amount of racism and discrimination inherent in the workplace, along with the meager pay, makes drug trafficking an attractive alternative to working conventional jobs (Whitehead et al., 1994). The hard work that conventional jobs require does not compare to the low wages youth earn in exchange (Anderson, 1999). With minimal education and the lack of

necessary skills for well-paying jobs, youth may turn to drug dealing, as it is a viable source of income (Anderson, 1999). As these youth acquire more money from selling drugs, they are able to purchase more material goods that enhance their image and status (Anderson, 1999; Whitehead et al., 1994). Money not only is required to obtain material items, but currency also serves as a means to support the family, in some instances (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Whitehead et al., 1994).

Assessing poverty can be challenging, especially if parents are excluded from participating in surveys that measure family income. Ensminger et al. (2000) studied the validity measures of adolescent reports of socioeconomic status. The measures were three-category indices that assessed financial capital, human capital, and social capital. In general, their findings yielded support for the use of adolescents' reports of family income (e.g., poverty), as the income composite report was found to be strongly correlated with objective measures of the mothers' income.

Taking the lead of other researchers, this study measured poverty by youth employment status. In a study by Miller and Miller (1997), from the National Youth Survey (NYS), socioeconomic status (SES) was measured using adolescent job status to predict marijuana initiation. As a dichotomous variable, the measure centered on whether respondents had a job in the past year. Their findings indicated that SES was a significant predictor of marijuana use for adolescent males. Adolescent employment status may be an important indicator of poverty, as a literature review by Leventhal, Graber, and Brooks-Gunn (2001) revealed. Specifically, adolescent employment may be associated with several factors among low-income youth, including parental employment, welfare use, and father presence. In a study by Steinberg, Fegley, and Dornbusch (1993), the researchers found that adolescents who worked more than 20

hours a week were at an increased risk for drugs and alcohol use, and delinquency generally. Given the findings, it appears safe to assume that adolescent employment is positively correlated with poverty because of its association with factors (e.g., welfare use) indicative of low SES.

A measure of poverty based upon adolescents' perceptions of their neighborhood has been used in previous research. Typically, neighborhood quality has been measured using census data, instead of adolescents' perceptions (Hadley-Ives, Stiffman, Elze, Johnson, & Dore, 2000). Studies have concluded that adolescents' perceptions of neighborhood quality are positively correlated with census tract data, measuring SES (Aneshensel & Sucoff, 1996; Bass & Lambert, 2004; Hadley-Ives et al., 2000). The neighborhood in which families reside is especially dependent upon their SES (Aneshensel & Sucoff, 1996). Specifically, Bass and Lambert (2004) found that adolescents residing in poorer areas have more negative perceptions of their neighborhoods than others whose families have more economic resources. Additionally, several factors including gender, family SES, and neighborhood characteristics, such as poverty and crime, have been reported as influential in the formation of adolescents' perceptions of their neighborhoods (Bass & Lambert, 2004). Taking these findings into account, it appears safe to assume that a more negative perception of one's neighborhood is indicative of a community characterized by poverty.

The following hypotheses reflect the reviewed literature discussed above, which assumes that adolescent employment, a proxy measure of poverty, constitutes a risk factor for participation in co-occurring behaviors.

H2: Among urban male youth, full-time employment increases the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors.

H3: Among urban male youth, a negative view of one's neighborhood increases the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors.

Education. Education is a second individual-level risk factor that influences urban male youth's participation in drug trafficking and gun carrying. For instance, in inner-city communities, drug dealing youth, compared to non-dealing youth, are more likely to perform poorly in and drop out of school (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998). In Black and Ricardo's (1994) study on drug use, drug trafficking, and weapon carrying among low-income, urban African-American adolescent boys ages 9-15 years, those involved with drugs or weapon carrying were more likely to fail or be expelled from school. Further, poor education is associated with youth violence, the use of guns, and the drug market in inner-city communities (Blumstein, 1995). In urban settings, for example, Callahan and Rivara (1992) reported a strong association between handgun ownership, drug dealing, and school suspension or expulsion.

Anderson (1999) equated the academic problems and failure of these youth to the type of school they attend. Many of these students are enrolled in troubled inner-city schools, encircled by poverty. Troubled schools are challenged daily by students more interested in trying to mimic the "street" scene inside the school; thus, the school becomes a place to act out the street lifestyle. Consequently, the "school loses ground" when students increasingly adopt the street orientation (Anderson, 1999, p. 94). Some students oppose the formalized educational structure of the troubled school, because they feel if they accept the goals of the school, they will exchange their street values for white values. The school, therefore, is prone to violence and the drug market. Due to students' defiance of teachers (Anderson, 1999), it is difficult for many youth to achieve educational success.

The current school culture, therefore, can be detrimental to the overall educational success rates of students. Since many students concern themselves with maintaining their street identity within school, the rebelliousness that results makes it difficult for learning to take place. The difficulties that students face in inner-city schools impact some juveniles more than others, as most youth view the school as a legitimate entity and work hard to achieve academic success (Anderson, 1999). Among drug dealing youth, many reject the legitimacy of the school, regardless of whether they attend or are enrolled (Li & Feigelman, 1994). When male students reject education, they are less likely to secure legal, prestigious employment, so drug dealing becomes a profitable alternative that provides money and status (Centers & Weist, 1998).

The following hypothesis is developed based on empirical evidence that supports the notion that school expulsion serves as a risk factor for participation in co-occurring behaviors.

H4: Among urban male youth, school expulsion increases the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors.

Family. The final individual-level risk factor that impacts the drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors of urban male youth is family structure. Youth are more likely to deal drugs when family, friends, and neighbors are also drug trafficking (Anderson, 1999; Black & Ricardo, 1994; Li & Feigelman, 1994; Whitehead et al., 1994). Several familial risk factors that may facilitate drug dealing include poor communication with parents, single-parent homes, and chaotic and dysfunctional households (Centers & Weist, 1998). According to Okundaye, Cornelius, and Manning (2001), among African-American youth, father absence increases risk for early involvement in drug trafficking. In a study by Friedman et al. (1998) geared toward African-Americans, sons living only with their mother were significantly more likely to be involved in illegal behaviors, especially drug trafficking. Their findings support the notion that

absent fathers are more likely to negatively influence their son's behavior than sons with fathers in the home.

Sometimes youth drug dealers can persuade their family members to deal drugs as well (Anderson, 1999). The relationship between drugs, drug dealing youth, and family and friends reflects common norms that deem drug using and dealing as appropriate behavior. These core values reflect those of "street" families apparent in the "code of the street" (Anderson, 1999). Thus, family structure can be detrimental to youth. As family structure breaks down and the code is adopted, youth become more susceptible to drug dealing and gun carrying behaviors.

The following hypothesis is formulated, based upon the literature, to reflect evidence that father absence constitutes a risk factor for participation in co-occurring behaviors.

H5: Among urban male youth, father absence in the home increases the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors.

Code-Related Beliefs

Urban male youth who participate in drug trafficking and gun carrying adopt code-related beliefs derived from Anderson's (1999) "street" lifestyle. Although the code is learned in childhood, as a teenager, youth internalize the code and begin to distinguish the code-related beliefs of status, respect, and manhood vied for and earned on the streets (Anderson, 1999). The code-related beliefs symbolize different responses and adaptations to the structural deficiencies of the inner-city community (Brezina et al., 2004; Kubrin, 2005). Anderson (1999) proposed that racial discrimination from the larger society may result in the adoption of the "code of the street" for some, especially those who feel personally impacted by discrimination (Brezina et al., 2004). The "code of the street" is particularly attractive to African-American male youth, as it provides a way to exercise code-related beliefs largely demonstrated in conventional society

(Anderson, 1999; Brezina et al., 2004; Stewart & Simons, 2006). However, the means of displaying these code-related beliefs conflict with those of wider society. Code-related beliefs bridge the individual-level risk factors to the drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors of urban male youth, especially African-American youth. In other words, by adopting the code, the code-related beliefs provide a means to cope with minority racial status and individual-level risk factors, especially poverty (Brezina et al., 2004; Kubrin, 2005). In turn, the internalized code-related beliefs influence participation in drug trafficking and gun carrying. Though Anderson (1999) noted the importance of racial status with respect to the development and actualization of code beliefs, several studies have found that race effects diminish when other factors are taken into account (Brezina et al., 2004; Heimer, 1997; Markowitz & Felson, 1998). On the other hand, Brezina et al. (2004) reported that race alone may not be a factor in the adoption of the code of the street, but rather race combined with neighborhood poverty.

The code must be exercised in order to subsequently enhance the values intrinsic to it; enhanced values are often achieved, through illegitimate means, such as drug trafficking and gun carrying. In their subculture of violence research, Brezina et al. (2004) noted the possibility of a reciprocal relationship with reference to victimization and code-related beliefs. Therefore, in theory, a reciprocal relationship is assumed between code-related beliefs and drug trafficking and gun carrying.

Status. Status is a code-related belief proliferated through the self-image and enhanced through respect and manhood (Anderson, 1999; Brezina et al., 2004; Kubrin, 2005; Stewart et al., 2006; Stewart & Simons, 2006). Status also is bolstered through the acquisition of material items and the possession of a gun. The goods reflect acquired status; status is a response to poverty. The status of drug traffickers is ultimately enhanced following increased economic

income from dealing (Whitehead et al., 1994). Whitehead et al. (1994) stated that the reputation of the drug trafficker is important in establishing status. The self-image develops through fashion statements, which are important expressions of status and acquired wealth. Anderson (1999) noted how clothing and accessories, particularly jackets, sneakers, and gold jewelry are symbols of status in inner-city communities. While youth may possess some of these desirable material items as status symbols, the clothing and accessories also assume one's toughness and willingness to fight for and defend them against others who may try to steal their belongings.

The gun serves as a power symbol and is easily accessible if needed. The availability of guns in inner-city communities is high (Kubrin, 2005). The self-image is enhanced because the gun symbolizes a tough image and implies power (Stewart et al., 2006). Whitehead et al. (1994) noted that the gun maintains a reputation for drug traffickers. For these youth, the gun portrays strength and toughness, thus validating their status (Black & Ricardo, 1994). The gun is also a symbol of status that is associated with drug dealing, in that jewelry, cars, and fashion can be acquired by being active in the business (Black & Hausman, 2008). Thus, the gun becomes associated with money and power, both indicators of status (Black & Hausman, 2008).

Respect. Respect is a code-related belief that urban African-American male youth adopt in order to cope with the effects of individual-level risk factors of poverty, family, and education. The code must first be adopted, with drug trafficking and gun carrying occurring in effort to have the value of respect realized. It also reinforces drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors. Anderson (1999) defined respect as being treated or given the deference one is owed (p. 33). Kubrin (2005) noted that respect and self-image are the two most important components of the "code of the street." Respect is enhanced by the self-image, or status (Anderson, 1999; Brezina

et al., 2004; Kubrin, 2005; Stewart et al., 2006; Stewart & Simons, 2006). The way respect is gained requires the progression of status and manhood; the beliefs are interrelated.

Respect is seen as a form of social capital in the inner-city (Anderson, 1999; Fagan & Wilkinson, 1998). Once internalized, respect facilitates the development of the identity, which leads one to traffic drugs and carry guns. Then, the actualization of respect allows for the identity to be maintained and reinforced. According to Fagan and Wilkinson (1998), the gun plays an important role in the quest for respect. Respect is acquired through flaunting status and exercising manhood (Anderson, 1999).

Respect is ultimately achieved when male youth become drug traffickers. Because drug dealing is a profitable commodity, especially compared to other low-wage jobs, respect is secured (Anderson, 1999; Centers & Weist, 1998; Whitehead et al., 1994). In inner-city communities, having a job is highly respected (Brezina et al., 2004); therefore, others involved in drug trafficking and “street” people respect the youth drug trafficker because of the lucrative nature of the business. Those drug traffickers with greater business and larger profits are more respected in comparison to others who deal (Whitehead et al., 1994). Hustling and making money earns respect (Whitehead et al., 1994).

Gun carrying also demands respect (Whitehead et al., 1994). The gun not only is a means of protection for the drug trafficker, but it also is a power symbol (Kubrin, 2005). The drug trafficker has power, especially over others who do not possess a gun. Therefore, the power differential between the gun possessing drug trafficker and others places the dealer in a position where respect is commanded. The gun carrying, drug trafficker also may instigate violence to demand respect.

Manhood. Asserting manhood is the most effective way to gain respect (Anderson, 1999). Respect and manhood may symbolize the same physical and psychological prowess. Manhood is portrayed through the exercise of “nerve,” or acting out (or asserting) physical toughness or physicality to confirm one’s strength and to show that one does not fear death or other violent transgressions (Anderson, 1999). The need to act out and perpetuate toughness is to refine and, ultimately, enhance manhood (Fagan & Wilkinson, 1998). Drug trafficking and gun carrying, therefore, is a way for youth to actuate the internalized value of manhood and show their toughness. Among drug trafficking and gun carrying youth, manhood is necessary for demonstrating toughness, instigating violence with the use of the gun, and demanding respect. Based on the above literature, the following hypotheses reflect the role and influence of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors among urban male youth, especially African-American youth.

H6: Among urban male youth, a higher level of code-related beliefs is associated with an increased likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors.

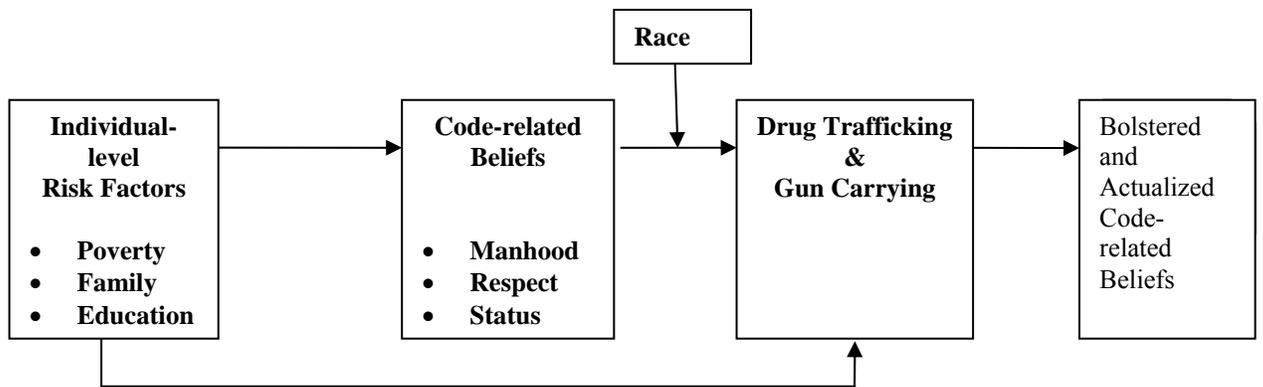
H7: Code-related beliefs mediate the effects of individual-level risk factors on the likelihood of participation in drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors among male youth.

H8: The effects of code-related beliefs on drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors are different for Black and non-Black male youth.

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model that was tested. The model outlined by Brezina et al. (2004) was referenced as a guide for developing the appropriate model put forth here. As it illustrates, Figure 1 delineates the process by which code-related beliefs mediate the impact of individual-level risk factors on drug trafficking and gun carrying. Although Anderson (1999)

posits that a reciprocal relationship exists between co-occurring behaviors and code-related beliefs, it is beyond the scope of this study to consider that relationship here. It is also recognized that a reciprocal relationship between co-occurring behaviors and individual-level risk factors may exist, yet an examination of this mechanism is beyond the scope of this study.

Figure 1. The Social Mechanism of the Conceptual Model Linking Individual-level Risk Factors and Code-related Beliefs to Co-occurring Behaviors.



CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Design and Sample

This study is based upon survey data, housed at the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and obtained from inmates and students regarding violence committed by and against juveniles. The population for this study was youth. The United States Department of Justice and the National Institute of Justice funded the 1991 *Firearms, Violence, and Youth in California, Illinois, Louisiana, and New Jersey* survey conducted by Sheley, Wright, and Smith (1991). They sought to document the extent of youth violence, violence in schools, and gun violence. Specifically, questions were designed to assess firearm ownership, possession, and use. Respondents also were asked about their involvement in crime, gangs, or the drug industry, as well as attitudes and beliefs about gangs, drugs, and guns. Data on sociodemographic characteristics also were gathered.

Both cross-sectional surveys were administered by Sheley and colleagues. Self-enumerated questionnaires were completed by 835 male juvenile inmates in six correctional facilities and 1,663 male and female 9th-12th grade students from 10 inner-city, public high schools in California, Illinois, Louisiana, and New Jersey. A random sample of high schools could not be obtained; therefore, site selections were based on areas proximate to correctional facilities with increased gun-related activity. Survey administration to inmates and students was carried out between January and April of 1991. The inmate questionnaire was announced by administrators and administered in small and large dormitories. Inmates were offered an

incentive of \$5 for participation, in an effort to increase response rates. A Spanish-language version was provided to inmates who preferred it. Personal interviews were conducted with those who lacked sufficient reading skills to complete the questionnaire. Inmates completed the questionnaires in groups of 10-20 individuals.

Student surveys were administered to students in groups of 20-30 students in some schools. Other schools held large assemblies in order to administer the questionnaire to groups of 100-200 students. Principals in four schools allowed an incentive of \$5 to be given to each respondent. A Spanish-language questionnaire was available upon request. The questionnaires for students and inmates group were not identical; however, they covered the same core topics.

The samples were derived from four states (California, Illinois, Louisiana, New Jersey) in which correctional facilities and high schools participated. States were selected based upon accessibility to the correctional facilities, as well as locales with serious youth violence, gang activity, and high homicide rates. Inmates were sought in the states' major juvenile facilities. The population of the 6 correctional facilities ranged from 172 to 850 inmates.

The school sites were targeted based upon their location near the chosen correctional facilities. Inner-city students (9-12th graders) were sampled from large public high schools in major cities. Students were surveyed from ten high schools located in five large cities near the correctional facilities. Enrollment in the inner-city high schools varied from 900 to 2,100 students.

The exact response rates were not available. However, 22%-62% of juvenile inmates were surveyed in the correctional facilities, with a mean response rate of 42%. The inmate sample was comprised of 48% African-Americans and 52% all others. Across all schools, the percentage of students surveyed was 7-21% (or 109-229 students), with a mean response rate of

10% (or 165 students). The student sample was comprised of 75% African-Americans and 25% all others.

To test Anderson's theoretical assumptions data from these 2 distinct samples were analyzed. The purpose in testing the proposed hypotheses with data from two different urban populations was to evaluate the efficacy of the model for an at-risk population and a population already under correctional supervision. The inmate sample is made up of 835 respondents who completed the questionnaires. The student sample is comprised of 1,663 male and female students. Because this study focused on male youth, as guided by the literature, only a total of 695 male students were chosen for the student sample in this study.

Measures

As mentioned above, two sets of secondary data (inmate and student) were analyzed. The survey instruments were generally the same; however, each instrument contained some unique questions. The identical variables from both surveys are outlined below, followed by the measures unique to each questionnaire. Appendices A and B detail each of the variables examined in the research

Dependent Variable. One dependent variable was investigated: the co-occurring behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying (DRUGGUN). In order to assess the behaviors as co-occurring, questions from respective surveys regarding drug trafficking and gun carrying were combined to create a trichotomous dependent variable (for each sample). Two questions measured youth's best description of involvement in drug dealing and gun ownership. Regarding involvement in drug dealing, for both samples, the question seemed to capture respondents' lifetime participation. For the best description of gun ownership among inmates, the measure appeared to capture possession prior to arrival; for students, the question inquired

about ownership at the time the survey was conducted. The dependent variable, DRUGGUN, contained three categories to account for those who did not participate in co-occurring behaviors (1), those who participated in drug trafficking or gun carrying (2), and those who participated in co-occurring behaviors (3).

Independent Variables. A total of five independent variables, representing individual-level risk factors and code-related beliefs, were investigated. The following three independent variables were examined for both samples: youth who lived with their father; youth who have a full-time job; and the degree to which youth subscribe to the code. First, to account for family structure, youth's living situation was recoded to indicate that the respondent lives with father (1) and that the respondent does not live with father (2), with the latter category used as the reference group. For students, living situation was assessed at the time the survey was administered. For inmates, this survey item was retrospective in nature and asked about one's living situation prior to arrival at the correctional institution.

To analyze poverty, a variable measuring respondents' employment status was recoded. A response of 1 indicated that the youth does work full-time and 2 indicated that the youth does not work full-time. Full-time employment status is defined differently for students: 20 hrs./week or more. For students, the question sought to capture their employment status at the time the survey was administered, and for inmates, their employment status prior to arrival at the correctional institution.

Finally, an index measuring code-related beliefs incorporated statements that reflected youth's beliefs about status, respect, and manhood (see Appendices A and B). The index was comprised of seven total items, five of which measured the importance of carrying a gun. Responses ranged from "1" (not important) to "3" (very important). The remaining two items

dealt with peers' views about gun carrying, with responses ranging from "1" (disagree strongly) to "4" (agree strongly). The Cronbach's alpha for both indices (inmate sample $\alpha=.71$; student sample $\alpha=.76$) indicated sound internal consistency.

The impact of a fourth independent variable was investigated: school expulsion. The inmate survey contained a question regarding student expulsion. Responses to this item were recoded in a dichotomous fashion to account for respondents who never were expelled and those who had been expelled from school in the past. With respect to the student sample, a survey question asked respondents if they had ever been expelled from school; it was indicated by "1" (yes) and "2" (no).

From the student survey, poverty was also assessed with a question that asked if the youth's neighborhood was a nice place to live. This measure appeared to capture the quality of the neighborhood at the time the survey was administered. Although this variable was not available in the inmate data, it was included in the student model as an extra assessment of the level of poverty in the communities in which inner-city high school students resided. Likert scale responses ranged from "1" (disagree strongly) to "4" (agree strongly).

In this study, race was indicated by the variable for Black. A "1" signified a Black respondent and "2," a non-Black respondent. Race was a substantive variable, as the study intended to first examine urban male youth, then African-American youth (utilizing an interaction term), who compared to other youth, were more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors and played a different role when explaining the impact of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors.

Control Variables. Age was measured continuously and refers to youth ages 15-19 years, as they represented teens and "youth" has not been explicitly defined. Since violence is

grounded in Anderson's theoretical construct of the code of the street and was often used as a dependent variable in previous studies (Brezina et al., 2004; Stewart et al., 2006; Stewart & Simons, 2006), it was used as a control variable in the current research. By controlling for violence, we could clearly indicate whether the model explained solely co-occurring behaviors and not also attitudes favorable to violence. From both the student and inmate sample, a measure, regarding respondents' attitudes toward the use of violence as a means to get what someone wants, was recoded as a dichotomous variable to control for violence within the analysis. The age at which inmates tried to hurt someone in the past, was utilized from the inmate sample as an additional control variable for violence. This measure was recoded as a dichotomous variable to account for those who have ever tried to hurt someone and those who have not. Because of its availability and its objective measure, it was included within the analysis for inmates.

Data Analysis

The study attempted to explain the trichotomous outcome variable of co-occurring drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors among a sample of students and a sample of juvenile inmates. In particular, multinomial logistic regression was used to analyze the effects of race, individual-level risk factors (poverty, education, family), and code-related beliefs (status, respect, manhood) on drug trafficking and gun carrying while controlling for age and violence. A three-step procedure was employed to first regress co-occurring behaviors on all individual-level risk factors, race, and control variables. The second-step added variable code-related beliefs to the model, thereby providing a way to evaluate whether code-related beliefs mediated the effects of individual-level risk factors on the trichotomous outcome variable. If code-related

beliefs constituted a mediating variable, including it would lower the coefficient values associated with the individual-level risk factors in the second-stage model.

In the third-step, an interaction term (code-related beliefs*race) was entered into the model. A significant interaction effect would indicate that race moderates the effects of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors. If a given interaction term was significant, the third model constituted the final model for the respective sample. In contrast, if the interaction term was insignificant, the second model constituted the final model. The present study used listwise deletion to handle missing data.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The goal of the present study was to delineate the process, proposed by Anderson (1999), by which urban male youth participate in the co-occurring behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying. Specifically, the effects of individual-level risk factors and code-related beliefs on drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors were investigated. Also considered was the mediating role of code-related beliefs played in the relationship between individual-level risk factors and co-occurring behaviors. Finally, race was examined to determine whether it moderated the impact of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors.

Both the inmate and student samples were included in the analysis as a means to assess the generalizability of Anderson's theoretical framework. In order to gain a better understanding of the samples, descriptive statistics were calculated for all the independent and dependent variables (see Table 1).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for All Variables

Variables	Student Sample				Inmate Sample			
	Percent	Mean	Cases	S. D.	Percent	Mean	Cases	S. D.
Drug Trafficking/Gun Carrying			493	0.7			614	0.6
None	63.5%				9.8%			
Either Behavior	23.9%				24.4%			
Both Behaviors	12.6%				65.8%			
Living with Father			679	0.5			686	0.4
Yes	49.3%				30.0%			
No	50.7%				70.0%			
Full-Time Job			685	0.4			746	0.2
Yes	14.3%				8.8%			
No	85.7%				91.2%			
Ever been Expelled			493	0.4			561	0.3
Yes	19.9%				85.7%			
No	80.1%				14.3%			
African American			679	0.4			703	0.5
Yes	75.0%				48.2%			
No	25.0%				51.8%			
Age		16.4	695	1.1		17.1	750	1.1
Quality of Neighborhood		12.6	496	1.0				
Code-Related Beliefs		12.4	449	3.5		14.5	569	3.4
Ever Hurt Someone							732	0.4
Yes					76.8%			
No					23.2%			
Violent Attitudes			537	0.31			667	0.5
Yes	10.6%				34.5%			
No	89.4%				65.5%			

In the student sample, 63.5% of respondents self-reported no involvement in drug trafficking or gun carrying, while 12.6% had engaged in both behaviors. These rates were notable, as they were inversed for inmates. Among the inmates, 9.8% indicated no involvement in drug trafficking or gun carrying, whereas 65.8% reported involvement in co-occurring behaviors.

With respect to father absence, 50.7% of students and 70% of inmates reported that they did not live with their father. Only 14.3% of students and 8.8% of inmates reported having a full-time job. The inversed responses regarding expulsion are worth highlighting. While 80.1% of students reported that they had never been expelled, 85.7% of inmates reported prior school expulsion. The racial composition of the two samples varied somewhat, as 75% of students were African-American while less than half (48.2%) were African-American of the inmate sample. The majority of non-Black inmates (51.8%) were Hispanic. On average, students and inmates were 16.4 and 17.1 years of age, respectively at the time of the survey administration. The mean of neighborhood quality was 2.63, which indicates that students tended to agree that their respective neighborhoods were nice places to live. On average, inmates had a higher level of adherence to code-related beliefs than students (14.5 versus 12.4, respectively). It is evident that inmates harbor more favorable attitudes toward the use of violence over students. Almost 35% of inmates reported more favorable attitudes toward the use of violence, though, as compared to only 10.6% of students. Among inmates, 76.8% reported hurting someone in the past while 23.2% had not.

Bivariate correlations among independent variables indicated few significant results. For students, Black students were significantly more likely to have a father absent from the home and to have been expelled. Code-related beliefs were significantly correlated with school expulsion

and attitudes favorable toward violence. For inmates, Black inmates were more likely to have a father absent in the household and less likely to have full-time employment prior to incarceration. Code-related beliefs were significantly correlated with attitudes favorable toward violence and having hurt someone in the past.

Before further analyses were conducted, multicollinearity among the predictors was examined. Tolerance statistics indicated that multicollinearity would not pose a serious problem for the multivariate data analysis. Using multinomial logistic regression, this study utilized a three-step procedure. In the first-step, co-occurring behaviors were regressed on all individual-level risk factors as well as the control variables. The second-step introduced code-related beliefs to the model to see if this construct mediated the impact of individual-level risk factors on co-occurring behaviors. The third-step introduced the interaction term (code-related beliefs*race) in order to evaluate whether race moderated the impact of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors. Results for the interaction term were not significant (for both the inmate and student samples); therefore, step 2 constituted the final model for each sample. Within each step, two categories representing drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors were evaluated in comparison to the reference group. The reference group represented those who reported that they had never participated in either drug trafficking or gun carrying behaviors. The remaining two categories are as follows: (2) those who had participated in drug trafficking or gun carrying behaviors and (3) juveniles who had participated in co-occurring behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying.

Student Sample

Step #1. The first-step of the analysis regressed co-occurring behaviors on all individual-level risk factors of youth employment status (poverty), father absence (family), and school

expulsion (education), and race, while controlling for violence and age. The results of this analysis are found in Table 2.

Table 2
Determinants of the Log-Odds of Drug Trafficking/Gun Carrying (Student Sample, N=391)

Variables	Either Behavior				Both Behaviors			
	1st Step		2nd Step		1st Step		2nd Step	
	b	Odds Ratio	b	Odds Ratio	b	Odds Ratio	b	Odds Ratio
Age	0.210	1.022	0.105	1.111	0.068	1.070	0.203	1.225
Quality of Neighborhood	-0.044	0.957	-0.022	0.978	-0.188	0.829	-0.176	0.846
Living with Father	-0.120	0.887	-0.143	0.866	-0.057	0.944	-0.369	0.691
Full-Time Job	0.181	1.199	0.150	1.162	0.372	1.451	0.093	1.098
Ever Been Expelled	0.319	1.376	0.156	1.168	1.085**	2.959	0.863*	2.371
Black	0.517*	1.676	0.562*	1.754	0.854*	2.350	0.789	2.200
Violent Attitudes	1.313**	3.719	0.956*	2.602	1.993**	7.341	1.531**	4.623
Code-Related Beliefs			0.088*	1.092			0.110*	1.117
Constant	-1.721		-4.220		-3.434*		-6.922*	
G	437.654**		508.023**		437.654**		508.023**	
Nagelkerke R ²	0.132		0.145		0.132		0.145	

* p<.05

** p<.01

The first-step of the procedure indicated that the specified model was significantly different from the null model ($G=437.654, p<.01$); although only a few significant results were yielded. For either behavior, violence and race were significant predictors of participation in drug trafficking or gun carrying. Specifically, without taking into account code-related beliefs, students with attitudes favorable toward violence were 272% ($b=1.313, p<.01$) more likely than their

counterparts to participate in either drug trafficking or gun carrying. In turn, before code-related beliefs were added to the model, Black students were 67.6% ($b=0.517, p<.05$) more likely than Non-black students to engage in either drug trafficking or gun carrying. The individual-level risk factors had no significant influence on participation in drug trafficking or gun carrying.

With regard to co-occurring behaviors, violence, race, and school expulsion were significant predictors of participation in drug trafficking and gun carrying. Most students who possessed attitudes favorable toward violence were 634.1% ($b=1.993, p<.01$) more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors than their male counterparts. Black students were 135% ($b=0.854, p<.05$) more likely than Non-Black students to participate in co-occurring behaviors. School expulsion also was a significant predictor, signifying that being expelled in the past influences participation in co-occurring behaviors. Specifically, students who were expelled from school in the past were 196% ($b=1.085, p<.01$) more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors than those who have never been expelled. All other individual-level risk factors produced no significant effects on co-occurring behaviors.

Step #2. For the second-step of the procedure, the model was also shown to be significantly different from the null model ($G=508.023, p<.01$). In this model, code-related beliefs was introduced so as to evaluate whether this construct mediated the effects of individual-level risk factors on the trichotomous dependent variable. When code-related beliefs was added to the model, three variables (violent attitudes, race, and code-related beliefs) explained participation in either behavior. Students with attitudes favorable toward violence were 160.2% ($b=0.956, p<.05$) more likely to participate in either behavior. Once code-related beliefs were entered into the model, Black respondents were 75.4% ($b=0.562, p<.05$) more likely than Non-Black respondents to participate in either drug trafficking or gun carrying. Finally, for every one

unit increase in code-related beliefs, respondents were 9.2% ($b=0.088$, $p<.05$) more likely to participate in either drug trafficking or gun carrying.

Results for co-occurring behaviors were significant for code-related beliefs, violent attitudes, and expulsion in the second-step model. Every one unit increase in code-related beliefs was associated with a 11.7% ($b=0.110$, $p<.05$) increase in the likelihood of participating in co-occurring behaviors. With the addition of code-related beliefs in the second-step, the likelihood of participating in both behaviors was 362.3% ($b=1.531$, $p<.01$) more likely for students with attitudes conducive to violence than those respondents with unfavorable attitudes. Not only was school expulsion a significant predictor, but code-related beliefs mediated the impact of expulsion on students' participation in co-occurring behaviors, by reducing the coefficient value. After code-related beliefs were added in the second-step procedure, race was not a significant predictor of participation in co-occurring behaviors ($b=0.789$, $p>.05$).

Inmate Sample

Step #1. In the first-step of the inmate sample, the specified model was found to be significantly different from the null model ($G=302.242$, $p<.01$). Only one variable significantly predicted either behavior. Inmates who self-reported hurting others in the past were 185.6% ($b=1.049$, $p<.05$) more likely to traffic drugs or carry guns, as compared to their counterparts. Individual-level risk factors for participation in either behavior were not significant. See Table 3 for results on inmate sample.

Table 3

Determinants of the Log-Odds of Drug Trafficking/Gun Carrying (Inmate Sample, N=415)

Variables	Either Behavior				Both Behaviors			
	1st Step		2nd Step		1st Step		2nd Step	
	b	Odds Ratio	b	Odds Ratio	b	Odds Ratio	b	Odds Ratio
Age	-0.059	0.943	-0.080	0.923	0.069	1.072	0.097	1.101
Living with Father	-0.126	0.881	0.253	1.287	-0.408	0.665	-0.028	0.973
Full-Time Job Ever Been Expelled	0.014	1.014	0.111	1.118	-0.526	0.591	-0.318	0.727
Black	-0.121	0.886	-0.952	0.386	0.544	1.722	-0.461	0.630
Ever Hurt Others	0.785	2.193	1.143	3.135	1.530**	4.619	1.968**	7.156
Violent Attitudes Code-Related Beliefs	1.049*	2.856	0.784	2.189	1.585**	4.879	1.008*	2.740
	0.849	2.445	0.997	2.711	2.028**	7.601	1.815*	6.142
			0.143	1.153			0.329**	1.389
Constant	1.457		0.842		-1.093		-4.656	
G	302.242**		385.185**		302.242**		385.185**	
Nagelkerke R ²	0.200		0.277		0.200		0.277	

* p<.05

** p<.01

With regard to co-occurring behaviors, only race and the two control variables for violence were significant. In this sample, Black inmates were 361.9% ($b=1.53, p<.01$) more likely than non-Black inmates to participate in co-occurring behaviors. Respondents reporting having ever hurt someone were 387.9% ($b=1.585, p<.01$) more likely than those who did not hurt someone to participate in co-occurring behaviors. Also, inmates who held favorable attitudes toward the use of violence were 660.1% ($b=2.028, p<.01$) more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors than inmates who possessed intolerant attitudes toward violence.

Step #2. The second-step results also revealed an adequate fit between the model and the data ($G=385.185, p<.01$). The second-step of the procedure added code-related beliefs to the model. No significant results were produced for either behavior for the inmate sample. In contrast, for co-occurring behaviors, four independent variables produced significant results: code-related beliefs, race, ever hurt someone, and violent attitudes. Specifically, every one unit increase in code-related beliefs was associated with a 38.9% ($b=0.329, p<.01$) increase in the likelihood of participating in co-occurring behaviors. With regard to race, once code-related beliefs were taken into account, Black respondents were 615.6% ($b=1.968, p<.01$) more likely than non-Black respondents to participate in co-occurring behaviors. Race effects increased after the introduction of code-related beliefs. Following the introduction of code-related beliefs to the model, the two violence control variables remained significant. All of the individual-level risk factors were insignificant predictors after the effects of code-related beliefs were considered. In other words, among juvenile inmates, code-related beliefs did not mediate the effects of individual-level risk factors on co-occurring behaviors.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The 1980s saw a rise in drug trafficking and gun carrying by inner-city African-Americans, related to what became known as the crack epidemic (Blumstein, 1995). The drug trafficking and gun carrying actions by African-Americans became documented as a phenomenon in and of itself (Li & Feigelman, 1994). The act of drug trafficking and gun carrying simultaneously within specific inner-city contexts became known as co-occurring behaviors (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Blumstein, 1995; Braga, 2003; Sheley, 1994). The carrying of firearms during drug trafficking, increased the risks for injuries and fatalities, especially among African-American male youth (Whitehead et al., 1994), which has caused concern for studying the phenomenon of drug trafficking and gun carrying.

Unaware of prior theory-based research with respect to co-occurring (drug trafficking and gun carrying) behaviors, the present study was carried out to explain the phenomenon largely documented among urban African-American male youth (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994). The research intended to examine the utility of the theoretical framework put forth by Anderson (1999) and determine whether different explanatory factors should be assumed for African-Americans and non-African-Americans. Thus, this study was unique, in that it is one of the first known studies to utilize Anderson's theoretical framework to examine the processes (i.e., namely through the identification of individual-level risk factors and code-related beliefs) that lead urban male youth to participate in the co-occurring behaviors of drug trafficking and gun carrying.

Overview of the Findings. The basis of this study has centered on the phenomenon of co-occurring behaviors. Research has indicated that African-American male youth are more likely to traffic drugs and carry guns (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994). This study accommodated that assumption by examining the impact of race on co-occurring behaviors. Hypothesis 1 was supported overall, indicating that African-American male youth are more likely than other male youth to participate in co-occurring behaviors. This general finding coalesces with that from prior research on race and drug trafficking and gun carrying (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994).

Two samples, inmates and students, were utilized in order to quantitatively test and evaluate the generalization of Anderson's theoretical propositions. To delineate the mechanism leading to participation in co-occurring behaviors, individual-level risk factors were included in the analysis. Minimal significant results were yielded. To assess the individual-level risk factor of poverty, youth employment status was examined, comparing those who worked full-time to all others. Given that hypothesis 2 was not supported in either sample, full-time employment did not significantly increase risk for participation in co-occurring behaviors among urban male students and inmates. Hypothesis 3 which states that a students' negative view of one's neighborhood increases the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors was not supported. Negative perceptions of one's neighborhood were not found to be a risk factor for participation in co-occurring behaviors.

To measure education, the risk effect of school expulsion was investigated (Hypothesis 4). In the student sample, school expulsion was found to increase the risk for participation in co-occurring behaviors among urban male youth. This finding is noteworthy, as school expulsion was the only significant individual-level risk factor among the high-school student sample.

Further, this significant finding confirms previous research that found a strong association between drug trafficking and gun carrying and school expulsion (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Callahan & Rivara, 1992).

Finally, hypothesis 5 (family) yielded no support in either sample, signifying that father absence in the home has no significant effect on the likelihood of participating in co-occurring behaviors. This finding conflicts with past research that found that father absence serves as a risk factor for drug trafficking (Okundaye, Cornelius, & Manning, 2001). Taken together, the results from the current study are not consistent with Anderson's assertions regarding the influential nature of individual-level risk factors on participation in drug trafficking and gun carrying.

The examination of code-related beliefs was crucial to this analysis due to the fact that Anderson's theoretical framework centers on the idea that the beliefs are conducive to violence and victimization, and in this study co-occurring behaviors. To address hypothesis 6, a preliminary assessment was conducted on the effects of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors. Results revealed that code-related beliefs increased the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors for both the student and inmate samples. Thus, this hypothesis was fully supported. Regarding hypothesis 7, code-related beliefs also was found to mediate the effects of school expulsion in the student sample. Overall, however, very little support was yielded for hypothesis 7 as it was posited that code-related beliefs mediated the effects of each individual-level risk factor.

One notable aspect of this study deals with race. As stated previously, Anderson's (1999) "Code of the Street" was derived from ethnographic research in inner-city communities. It is in this context that Anderson posited that the code represented a cultural adaptation (specifically for

African-Americans) to the dominant white society. Because this theoretical framework is directed at African-Americans, subsequent research has focused largely on this subpopulation. However, the present study moved beyond the scope of previous research by examining whether the race moderates the impact of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors. According to Anderson, research should find that the adoption of the code by inner-city African-Americans has a different effect than for other racial and ethnic groups. To assess the utility of this proposition, the present study assessed the interactive effects of code-related beliefs and race on the dependent variable (hypothesis 8).

Both samples yielded no support for hypothesis 8, indicating that race does not moderate the impact of the code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors. To determine if mean differences existed between Black and Non-Black youth on levels of code-related beliefs, a t-test was conducted. The results were negative for both samples, indicating a non-significant relationship between race and code-related beliefs. This result is consistent with past research that found that race does not moderate the effect of code-related beliefs on outcome behaviors, specifically violence (Brezina et al., 2004; Markowitz & Felson, 1998). As it stands, it appears that code-related beliefs constitutes a race invariant predictor.

Past empirical focus on poverty, family, and education among African-Americans insinuates that racial status may place an individual at risk for participating in co-occurring behaviors (Anderson, 1999; Black & Ricardo, 1994; Friedman et al., 1998; Okundaye et al., 2001). Specifically, literature shows that African-American youth are more likely to be living without a father in the home (Friedman et al., 1998; Okundaye et al., 2001), in poverty (Anderson, 1999; Blumstein, 1995; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994), and have poor education because of troubled inner-city schools (Anderson, 1999). Though, considering evidence in this

study and others regarding higher rates of drug trafficking and gun carrying among African-Americans (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994), perhaps race should be viewed as a risk factor as well because of its close relationship with individual-level risk factors, so the variable may serve as a proxy measure for these factors. Sampson (1987) stated that race is one of the strongest predictors of social dislocation within the United States. Massey and Eggers (1990) noted that there is a greater concentration of poverty among Blacks than Whites. Although individual-level risk factors, on the whole, did not produce significant results in this study, the significant race results indirectly confirm Anderson's thesis outlining the important role these individual-level risk factors played in the participation of co-occurring behaviors.

On balance, this study found support for race and code-related beliefs impacting the likelihood of participation in co-occurring behaviors for both inmates and students. While the data was limited to several inner-cities of the United States, the findings are generalizable to two distinct subpopulations (students and juvenile inmates). These samples produced significant results for 1) the direct risk effect of code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors, and 2) the risk effects of race (namely African-Americans) on co-occurring behaviors. Both findings support Anderson's theoretical assumptions.

Study Limits. This study was not exempt from limitations. First, measures of the individual-level risk factors could be improved. Youth employment status was used to measure poverty. This construct served as a proxy measure and was used because objective measures of poverty (e.g., census tract data, welfare, food stamps, and reduced school lunches) were not included in the survey instruments. Although the use of youth employment status, as a measure of poverty, has been documented in prior research (Miller & Miller, 1997), it is plausible that

threats to the construct validity of the attendant findings may have been operating. For example, some respondents may have interpreted drug trafficking and gun carrying as legitimate employment. This study also was unable to distinguish youth who may work for personal income rather than work to increase family income. Further, although the perceptual measures of neighborhood quality have been employed in numerous studies (Aneshensel & Sucoff, 1996; Bass & Lambert, 2004; Hadley-Ives et al., 2000) to capture SES, the proxy measure of poverty may not have captured variation in poverty. Since respondents from the two samples were derived from inner-cities, it was assumed that poverty rates were likely very high among the two samples, considering strong evidence that rates of poverty are highest in inner-city communities (Anderson, 1999; Massey & Eggers, 1990; Rankin & Quane, 2000). The relatively low variation associated with poverty levels for both samples might also explain the non-significant effects of youth employment status on the co-occurring behaviors.

The second major study limit pertains to the findings for education (school expulsion). A plausible explanation for this finding from the student sample and not the inmate sample may lie in differential school drop-out rates. If fewer grade-levels were completed, one's opportunities for expulsion decreased because of the reduced amount of time spent in the school, as compared to others who continued to complete higher grade-levels. Relative to the students, the inmates (who were under correctional supervision at the time they completed the survey) may have completed fewer grades as a result of entering the system. Thus, the expulsion rates of inmates may have been attenuated due to the fact that this sample may have contained juveniles who dropped out of school. It is recommended that future research consider the grade-level at which respondents completed in order to parcel out the effects of school drop-out on school expulsion.

Although the measures for poverty and education were inadequate, as discussed previously, racial status was a good proxy measure for the variables (poverty and education) with limitations, being that inner-city African-Americans are more likely to be enrolled in troubled schools and have poor education (Anderson, 1999) and live in poverty (Anderson, 1999; Massey & Eggers, 1990). Considering racial status as a risk factor, the study results did show that male youth who come from backgrounds of disadvantages were more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors. The racial disparity for participation in co-occurring behaviors suggests that risk factors specific to African-American youth increase their risk for trafficking drugs and carrying guns. As previously discussed, prior research results indicate that African-Americans are more likely to be poor, live without a father in the home, and have higher rates of poor education; therefore, future research should employ solid measures in order to more fully confirm the utility of Anderson's theoretical framework for drug trafficking and gun carrying.

An interesting result is noteworthy. Prior to the introduction of code-related beliefs, Black inmates were 415.6% more likely to engage in co-occurring behaviors. With code-related beliefs added to the model, Black inmates were 715.6% more likely to participate in co-occurring behaviors. Unexpectedly, the coefficient increased, therefore, race may signify elements additional to individual-level risk factors conceptualized as poverty, father absence, and school expulsion in this study. One explanatory element may be self-protection, since co-occurring behaviors are predominately practiced for that reason (Blumstein, 1995; Braga, 2003), which was not accounted for in this study. Other variables not considered were impulsivity, sensation seeking, and drug use which may impact results regarding co-occurring behaviors that future research should include.

Finally, the use of cross-sectional data precluded the ability to demonstrate cause-effect relationships and verify temporal ordering. Future research should collect longitudinal data as a means to verify the causal mechanisms underlying co-occurring behaviors among urban male youth.

Research and Policy Implications. The non-significant interaction term found in this study for both samples has serious implications for future research regarding Anderson's "Code of the Street" because support was not yielded for the moderating impact of race on the relationship between code-related beliefs and co-occurring behaviors. Other studies should focus on the role and impact of code-related beliefs on behaviors, and not the moderating role of race in that relationship. The results of the present study confirmed that the risk effects exerted by code-related beliefs on co-occurring behaviors were not race-specific. Race, instead, may reflect differential SES and individual-level risk factors that affect involvement in criminal behaviors among young males within the inner-city context (Brezina et al., 2004). The adoption of code-related beliefs may in fact be more of a coping mechanism to strictly individual-level risk factors (race, poverty, education, and family).

The findings also have certain implications for the criminal justice system. Since African-Americans are more likely to traffic drugs and carry guns (Black & Ricardo, 1994; Centers & Weist, 1998; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994), the racial disparity inherent in this co-occurring behavior should be addressed. Leviton, Schindler, and Orleans (1994) noted a racial disparity regarding drug trafficking among youth, proposing socioeconomic status and class structure as reasons for differences. Public policies should be implemented to prevent the initiation of drug trafficking and gun carrying behaviors. Leviton et al. (1994) noted the existence of programs aimed at addressing drug trafficking behaviors among juveniles, but

pointed out the scarcity of available programs. Several policies have been put forth to combat drug trafficking among youth: reduce child poverty and strengthen the family structure; develop parenting skills and provide adequate education for children; implement school programs to prevent drug trafficking; increase programs to divert juveniles from the justice system; provide funding for youth job training programs and establish alternatives to jailing youth offenders; expand diversion programs for first-time offenders; and advocate for gun control (Leviton et al., 1994). Another alternative is to address the economic appeal of the drug trade for youth (Li & Feigelman, 1994; Staton & Galbraith, 1994). Specifically, campaigns can be developed within the community to show its intolerance of drug trafficking (Li & Feigelman, 1994; Stanton & Galbraith, 1994), especially in African-American communities. Mass media messages may prove to be a beneficial way of campaigning against drug trafficking within the most at-risk communities (Romer, 1994).

Nevertheless, taking into account the firearms homicides rates of African-American male youth, efforts should be put forth to minimize their participation in co-occurring behaviors, as they increase risk for victimization and death (Anderson, 1999; Black & Ricardo, 1994; Whitehead et al., 1994). Qualitative research by Okundaye (2004) described respondents' accounts of incidences of violence, injuries, and victimization resulting from participation in drug trafficking, all of which may lead to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or posttraumatic stress (among other symptoms). He outlined the preventative approach of tending to the needs of the impoverished, as lower socioeconomic communities are more likely to have higher rates of violence, unemployment, drug use, school drop-outs, social disorganization, and abusive families than other communities. All of these factors work together in providing an environment conducive to drug trafficking and violence. Thus, it is important to address violence, which can

result from the occurrence of co-occurring behaviors, as it may significantly affect the overall well-being of children and adolescents (Okundaye, 2004).

It is essential that public policies consider the evidence presented here and utilize it to respond to the social problem of drug trafficking and gun carrying within the inner-city and among at-risk youth. Drug trafficking and gun carrying should be addressed in a way that does not add to stresses already experienced by our burdened and overpopulated criminal justice system. Research on drug trafficking and gun carrying should continue, as the behaviors continue to evolve socially.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A
(Inmate Data)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Measurement</u>
Drug trafficking and Gun carrying	<p>“Best description of involvement in drug dealing”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0- Never used/sold 1- Bought from dealers 2- Dealer myself 3- Worked for dealer 4- User and dealer <p>Recoded into DRUGDEAL indicated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Never used/sold/bought from dealers 2- Involvement in dealing <p>“Own/‘Possess’ any guns before arrival”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0- No, did not own guns 1- Yes, did own guns <p>DRUGDEAL is combined with DRUGGUN to indicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Does not own guns/does not deal drugs 2- Does not own guns/deals drugs; owns guns/does not deal drugs 3- Owns guns/deals drugs
Lives with father (Family)	<p>“Where Living Just Before Arrival” is recoded to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Lives with father 2- Does not live with father
Works full-time (Poverty)	<p>“Were you working at a regular paying job” was recoded to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Does work full-time (more than 20 hrs.) 2- Does not work full-time.
Ever been expelled (Education)	<p>“How often you been expelled from school” is recoded to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Expelled 2- Never expelled
Code-related beliefs Alpha 0.71	<p>On a three-point scale from (1) Not important to (3) Very important, “Carry weapon because need to defend self.”</p>

“Carry weapon because it made you feel better.”

“Carry weapon because need to be prepared.”

“Carry weapon because people won’t mess with you.”

“Carry weapon because nature of drug business”

On a four-point scale from (1) Disagree strongly to (4) Agree strongly,

“No respect in my crowd if no gun.”

“My friends look down on me without a gun.”

Age

“How old are you today?” was recoded to include only those ages 15-19.

Race (Black)

“Best description of your race/ethnicity” is recoded to

1-Black respondents

2-Non-Black respondents

Violent Attitudes (Violence)

“Ok to shoot person to get something you want” is recoded to

1-Yes

2-No

Ever hurt someone (Hurt)

“How old first tried to hurt someone” is recoded to

1-Yes

2-No

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B
(Student Data)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Measurement</u>
Drug trafficking and Gun carrying	<p>“Best description of involvement in drug dealing”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0- Never used/sold 1- Bought from dealers 2- Dealer myself 3- Worked for dealer 4- User and dealer <p>Recoded into DRUGDEAL indicated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Never used/sold/bought from dealers 2- Involvement in dealing <p>“Do you not own/‘possess’ any guns”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0- No, I did own guns 1- Yes, I did not own guns <p>DRUGDEAL is combined with DRUGGUN to indicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Does not own guns/does not deal drugs 2- Does not own guns/deals drugs; owns guns/does not deal drugs 3- Owns guns/deals drugs
Lives with father (Family)	<p>“Current living situation” is recoded to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Lives with father 2- Does not live with father
Works full-time (Poverty)	<p>“In addition to school, do you also work” was recoded to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Does work full-time 2- Does not work full-time.
Ever been expelled (Education)	<p>“Have you ever been expelled from school” is recoded to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Expelled 2- Never expelled
Quality of Neighborhood (Poverty)	<p>“My neighborhood is a nice place to live”- responses range from (1) disagree strongly to (4) agree strongly.</p>

Belief in Cultural Values
Alpha .713

On a three-point scale from (1) Not important to (3)
Very important,

“Carry weapon because need to defend
self.”

“Carry weapon because it made you feel
better.”

“Carry weapon because need to be
prepared.”

“Carry weapon because people wont mess
with you.”

“Carry weapon because nature of drug
business.”

On a four-point scale from (1) Disagree strongly to
(4) Agree strongly,

“No respect in my crowd if no gun.”

“My friends look down on me without a
gun.”

Age

“How old are you today?” was recoded to include
only those ages 15-19.

Race (Black)

“Best description of your race/ethnicity” is recoded
to

1-Black respondents

2-Non-Black respondents

Violent Attitudes (Violence)

“Ok to shoot person to get something you want” is
recoded to

1-Yes

2-No