

2010-01-01

Analysis of Secondary Data on the Causes and Consequences of Migration in Central American Children

Jacquelin Hawley

University of Texas at El Paso, groovybird@mac.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.utep.edu/open_etd



Part of the [Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hawley, Jacquelin, "Analysis of Secondary Data on the Causes and Consequences of Migration in Central American Children" (2010). *Open Access Theses & Dissertations*. 2704.

https://digitalcommons.utep.edu/open_etd/2704

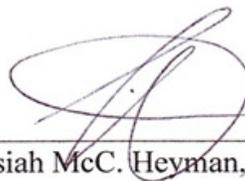
This is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UTEP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UTEP. For more information, please contact lweber@utep.edu.

ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY DATA ON THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF
MIGRATION IN CENTRAL AMERICAN CHILDREN

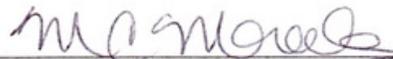
JACQUELIN HAWLEY

Department of Sociology

APPROVED:



Josiah McC. Heyman, Ph.D., Chair



Maria Cristina Morales, Ph.D.



Irasema Coronado, Ph.D.

Patricia D. Witherspoon, Ph.D.

Dean of Graduate School

ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY DATA ON THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF

MIGRATION IN CENTRAL AMERICAN CHILDREN

BY

JACQUELIN HAWLEY, LBSW

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

MAY 2010

ABSTRACT

It is said that immigration is approaching historic levels, and it is believed that one-third of the foreign-born population in the United States is undocumented. By examining the available research on Central American families that migrate to the United States, it seems plausible to argue that one of the main causes for migration is the lack of employment opportunities in their home country. The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between the migration of Central American youth and low employment opportunities. The paper intends to address the following questions. Is lack of employment opportunities a cause for children to migrate to the US? Could children have other factors that motivate them to migrate to the US? To study the causes and effects of migration of Central American youth, a qualitative, secondary analysis of immigration court cases was used. The examiner evaluated fifteen court cases found on the database Lexis-Nexis. They were evaluated to determine the factors that motivated the children to migrate to the United States. The examiner presented the findings in the format of narrative case histories that highlight the causes of migration and the trends found throughout the cases analyzed. Results showed that youth migrate to the United States primarily for non-economic reasons. The majority of children migrated to the United States for fear of gangs. Other causes of migration include family reunification and family violence. Through the analysis of the documents there emerged another motivator for children to migrate; according to the court cases the majority of children that migrated had prior experience or exposure with migration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM.....	9
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	10
3.1 Migration	10
3.2 Transnationalism	15
3.3 Gender-Based Violence	17
3.4 Human Trafficking.....	20
3.5 Central American Gangs.....	22
4. METHODOLOGY	25
4.1 Description of Subjects.....	25
4.2 Design.....	25
4.3 Sampling	26
4.4 Protocol for Assessing Cases.....	26
4.5 Protocol for De-Identifying the Data.....	28
4.6 Scientific Benefits of the Research.....	28
5. RESULTS	29
5.1 Fear of Gangs	29
5.1.1Case of Alberto.....	29

5.1.2 Case of Cesar	31
5.1.2 Case of Gustavo.....	33
5.2 Family Reunification	34
5.2.1 Case of Eduardo.....	34
5.3 Fear of Kidnappers.....	36
5.3.1 Case of Jovita.....	36
5.3.2 Case of Tatiana.....	38
5.4 Adventure	39
5.4.1 Case of Wilmer	39
5.5 Deserted the Army	40
5.5.1 Case of Porfirio	41
5.6 Family Violence.....	42
5.6.1Case of Miguel.....	42
5.6.2 Case of Noe	44
6. DISCUSSIONS.....	47
7. CONCLUSION	50
APPENDIX.....	52
Table 1.....	52
REFERENCES.....	53
ENDNOTES.....	58
CURRICULUM VITA	59

INTRODUCTION

Central America consists of the following countries: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Their proximity to the United States has created an asymmetrical relationship between the United States and Central America. Countries in Central America experienced great turmoil during the 1960's through 1980's that devastated many countries (Dominguez, J. I. & Lindenberg, M., 1997). The United States involvement in Central America has fluctuated throughout the past fifty years. The continued turmoil in Central America and inconsistent assistance from the United States has created an asymmetrical relationship between the more powerful United States and the weaker countries in Central America.

During recent years migration has received a lot of attention in the media. The reason is because we are currently seeing an increase in the migration of individuals. The current migration of individuals is different from prior migrations in the number of individuals, the rapid pace of the migration and on the multiple social cultural effects it has on the sending and receiving countries.

The government of the United States has increased funding to prevent and deter undocumented migration. The cause for the increased attention on migration is partly due to the increase number of undocumented individuals living within the U.S. These migrants often make dangerous journeys to reach the U.S. Immigrants often travel into sparsely populated, desert regions with little water or shelter and with environmental temperature extremes in an attempt to avoid law enforcement. Criminal activities along the border, including human and drug smuggling, make the journey even more hazardous (Ramos, J., 2002). Immigrants that cross the borders without legal permission from the receiving country are considered undocumented and end up living in the shadows of their new country.

I became interested in the study of undocumented Central American children four years ago. I was exposed to the population when I began working with undocumented, unaccompanied children awaiting deportation hearings in the United States. For the past five years I have developed a passion for this population and feel that these children are a vulnerable population that needs individuals to advocate for their needs. If a child is determined to be an unaccompanied, undocumented minor by immigration officials they are placed in the custody of the Office of Refugee and Resettlement (ORR), Division of Unaccompanied Undocumented Children (DUCS) to await their immigration cases. I currently work directly with this population. Through my direct experience with the population I have noticed that the population is primarily from Central American, but they can come from around the world. The average age of the children is 15 and 17 and they are primarily male. In an attempt to educate myself and others in regards to this population I believe that a study focused on this population would add significantly to the study of sociology and migration. ¹

Personal experience has shown me that the decision of migration is not always an easy one to make. Children that travel to the United States are often faced with difficult circumstances in their home country and travel to the United States in search of the “Migrant Dream.” The “Migrant Dream” is the hope immigrants have of the United States providing them opportunities for a better life. While I have worked with this population I have often heard children depict futures in which they will find immediate employment, learn English, graduate from school and have a wonderful relationship with their estranged parents.

While working with immigrant children I have seen that many Central American children have experienced the separation of their family due to migration. Families with one or more family members residing in another country other than their native country live in transnational

families (Chavez, 1998). Although migrants may not terminate family relationships when they travel to the United States they are strained by prolonged periods of separation. In addition immigrants that leave their family are also leaving the support system of their family and community. Another effect of migration is the loss of social status that one has in their home country. The stress created by separation is amplified when the immigrant is a child and they are reunited with their parents and their “new” family in the United States after a prolong period of separation. This observation is made through direct observation of immigrant children and the reaction children have when they hear their parents are re-married, have children and have established new lives while living in the United States.

The purpose of the proposed study is to fill the void in the literature by conducting a qualitative analysis of the relationship between the migration of Central American youth and low employment opportunities. These children could be considered among the most vulnerable and as such, there needs to be more information as to why they are migrating to the US. This research, though challenging, can be groundbreaking in providing some insight as to why children migrate to the United States and how the maras personally affect Central American children. In addition, those working with these children will be better prepared to provide a level of service which more appropriately meets the needs of the child based on the results of this project.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The purpose of the proposed study is to fill the void in the literature by conducting a qualitative analysis of the relationship between the causes of migration of Central American youth and low employment opportunities in the sending country. Although a central concern of the study is the relationship between migration and employment opportunities a major theme is the ability of Central America government to provide for its citizens. This paper intends to address the following questions:

- (1) As per research it shows that the majority of migrants that travel to the US, travel for lack of employment opportunities. Is lack of employment opportunities the same reason children migrate to the US? Could children have other factors that motivate them to migrate to the US?
- (2) (a) Among those children that migrate to the US with identifiable elements of low economic opportunities only, how many have encountered gangs? What is the level of involvement the minor had with the gang? (b) Among those children that identified being influenced to migrate by both low economic opportunities, plus other migration motivating factors, how many encountered gangs? What was the level of involvement with gangs for this population? c) Among those children that identified being influenced to migrate for only non-economic motivating factors, how many encountered gangs? What was the level of involvement with gangs for this population?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review is an attempt to gain further knowledge on the issues and stressors faced by Central American youth. The articles I have reviewed were written by an assortment of scholars, advocates, government agencies, and practicing attorneys and have been published in a variety of legal and social science journals. There are many articles that speak about immigrants but for the purpose of this paper only those articles that discussed migrant youth from Central America and migration to the country of the United States were reviewed. A number of common themes were found in these articles. I have organized the literature review into the following categories: Central American gangs, human trafficking, gender-based violence, the migration to the United States, and the act of assimilation to the United States.

Migration

Contrary to current political actions, migration is not deterred by stricter border enforcement. Cornelius and Sealyham (2007) have studied border enforcement and unauthorized migration and they have found that individual's economic and family incentives far out-weigh political restrictions. According to many researchers immigrants leave their home and family for many reasons, including economic, political and personal reasons. Stephan J. Sills (2000) notes that some of the causes of migration are "international wage differentials, relative stability of employment in destination countries, relative deprivation in sending countries and historical linkages between sending and receiving nations" (p.6). Another trend found in migrants, is many have had prior family members cross the border and they feel comfortable with the idea of international migration. Individuals have family currently living in the United States and therefore the transition to a new country does not seem as strenuous; unlike a person traveling to the United States with no prior history or experience with the act of migration.

Economic migration may involve moving to find work or follow a particular career path. Social migration may involve moving somewhere for a better quality of life or to be closer to family or friends. If someone is a political migrant they may be moving to escape political persecution or war. Environmental causes of migration include natural disasters such as flooding or hurricanes (Martinez, 1994).

The migration of individuals to the United States is normally necessary rather than wanted. In the cases of individuals that migrate for political or for conflicts within the family the majority of the individuals do not want to migrate to the US. In addition some of the individuals that were interviewed informed the author that they only migrated to the US for economic reasons and intended to return to their home country when they were financially stable. Because many migrants fled war and civil unrest in their own country this affects a migrant's perception on return. The desire immigrants may have to return to their home country affects the immigrant's attitudes, perception and attachment to their new country. The authors Moran-Taylor & Salcido (2005) found that the majority of immigrants that they interviewed wanted to return home when the situation got better. She also found that family, work, marriage and children affect the immigrants desire to return to their home country by decreasing their desire over time.

An important aspect of migration is the transnational social networks. Transnational social networks are social systems that involve multiple individuals from two or more countries. These social networks can help immigrants, enter the country illegally, find work and housing upon arrival (Dreby, 2008). Social networks not only facilitate migration, but they also help family members stay connected across borders. Social networks are also able to provide

informal transport goods, such as special food, clothing and presents back and forth between family members living in the United States and other countries.

In the book by Leo R. Chavez, *Shadowed Lives* (1998) he states that people are influenced to migrate to the United States through the stories that are relayed to them. If people did not have social networks with individuals in the US they would not consider migrating to the US. Similarly Smith (2006) claims that since the end of the Guatemala's civil war, migration has continued due to the nation's subsequent high unemployment rate. Those that leave their country normally send about \$306 per month to their family. However the nation's unemployment rates or gross poverty rates have not been affected by the remittance being sent on a monthly basis. Another economic reason individuals migrate to the United States is to earn enough money for a specific reason. This is a common reason for young, unmarried individuals to travel to the United States. After they have earned enough money or have obtained their goal from the U.S. these individuals return to their home country. A major pull factor that drives individuals to migrate to the United States is due to what the author refers to as the "immigrant dream." Smith describes the immigrant dream as the idea that the US is the land of opportunities where upward mobility is possible.

As noted above another reason individuals migrate is for political reasons. If someone is a political migrant they may be moving to escape political persecution or war. In the book by Leo R. Chavez he provides an example of individuals that are fleeing the home country for political reasons. In the case of Central Americans they reported to the author that they normally flee their home country due to economic reasons that have been caused due to prolonged civil wars. Smith (2006) adds that during Guatemala's thirty-six year civil war many individuals fled their country and migrated to Mexico and the US.

In recent years the El Salvadoran government has seen a new trend in migration. The El Salvadoran government has seen an increase in apprehension of El Salvadoran children being transported to the United States by human smugglers (Elton, 2003).

Data shows that in 2002, the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) had taken into custody approximately 12,000 children who entered the United States illegally. They reported that these numbers had steadily increased by approximately 2,000 children each year. In fiscal year 2008, the numbers of children in ORR custody and care ranged from approximately 1,050 to 1,400 (Average of 1220) at any time. Of those children detained, 77% were male and 23% female; 10% were below the age of 14. The most common native countries are El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (United States Department of Health & Human Services). At the same time, many youth enter the country without being recognized by the authorities and quantitative data does not accurately reflect the number of child immigrants entering the United States.

There are a number of reasons why a child would take such a difficult journey alone, but the most common reasons are to be reunified with family, locate employment to support family in the country of origin, and or to escape violence (physical, emotion, sexual, and gangs). The main reasons that individuals migrate are for economic, social, political, and/or environmental. Ceres I. Artico (2003) claims that obligation is a motivator for children to migrate to the United States. The author describes that children may feel obligated to migrate to be with their parents, because their parents sacrificed for them and because their family has been separated for a prolonged period of time. The minor may have no initial desire to migrate to the United States because they have family, and peers in their home country and the minor may feel anxious living with an unknown individual.

With the increase of political restrictions on migrants, many migrant families report being affected by extended periods of separation. Suarez-Orozco, Todovora & Louie (2002) report that one fifth of children in the United States are living in immigrant families and they have been affected by extended periods of separation. They also found that unlike other migrant groups Central American families were more affected by separation because they tend to migrate separately. Migrating separately is when the parents and children migrate at separate time periods, normally years apart. “ A common pattern of immigration among Central American families is that the mother, father, or both parents will come to the United States by themselves, leaving their children in the care of extended family in the country of origin” (Artico, 2003, p. 1). In a survey with 153 Latina domestic workers living in California, researchers found that of the 75% who had children, 40% reported to have at least one child still living back in their country of origin. Among women with less secure jobs and life styles, that percentage was as high as 82% (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997). Even though this sample is small and limited to one type of worker, it does cast some light on the likely magnitude of the problem.

When Central American families migrate separately this influences a child’s perception of their family and creates unique challenges for those children and their families (Arroyo, 1997). The children of Central American migrants reported to the researchers that they had feelings of depression and anxiety in regards to reuniting with their families. This type of migration among families from Central America influences the child’s perception of the family and creates unique challenges for those children and their families (Arroyo, 1997). The child or adolescent now has the difficult task of adapting to a fairly unknown mother (and often a stepfather and half-siblings), as well as a new language, culture, social norms, and educational system.

Transnationalism

According to research on migrant populations the challenges faced by Central Americans in the United States is not unique to them or to immigrants. The challenges they face are shared with other populations that suffer social exclusion or marginalization that may be unique to regional origins. The sense of disenfranchisement remains with the individual. At the same time, newcomers have to struggle with their personal and social identity as they and their family transition to their adoptive communities whose cultural, social and political barriers is different from theirs. The unique social space “midpoint between the culture of the homeland and complete acculturation to the majority social group” (p.7) is defined as transnationalism (Sill, S. J., 2000).

In an article by the Cecilia Menjivar (2002) she describes the challenges migrant Guatemalan families face in the United States. She describes the challenges youth face as they attempt to form an identity that is a mixture between being American and that of their parent's native country. The author found in her study that some of the factors that influence a child's attachment to their parent's homeland are: limited legality, language, and their parent's reason for coming to the United States.

These children report that their parents tend to relate to them in the same way they did prior to the separation, without realizing that they are now much older and have different needs. It seems that because the parents were not present to witness the children's process of maturation, they have difficulty relating to them as they reunite years later. Separated children also feel unable to openly talk to their parents about their sadness over the loss of the surrogate caretaker and their ambivalence about coming to the U.S. Life in the U.S. turns out to be a lot harder and lonelier than they expected (Glasgow & Gouse-Sheese, 1995).

Cecilia Menjivar (2002) claims that if the children of migrants are aware of their parent's sacrifices it is seen as a source of motivation in succeeding in the United States. First generation Americans reported having the strongest sense of obligation to support their families in the future and excel in their academics. The sense of obligation a child experiences is decreased across subsequent generations. The study noted that children from lower socio-economic status felt a greater sense of obligation than one from an upper economic status family (Fuligni, 2006).

Ceres I. Artico (2003) claims that children feel resentment towards their parents if they are unaware of their parent's financial situation such as having a parent juggling two or three jobs.

Anderson (2003) points out that when a youth is unaware of his parent's parental financial situation, this creates stress particularly for juveniles and also is considered the reason behind delinquency and victimization. These populations may have little awareness of their cultural or social history they are subject to the social preconceptions that may incite their feeling of marginalization of social exclusion. This has further been attributed to adult victimization and criminal behavior and lead to diminished effectiveness of social institutions and services for these populations as a whole (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). The experience not only increases their vulnerability to crime or victimization but also makes them more likely to commit criminal acts on others.

In one example provided by Menjivar (2006), recent immigrants from El Salvador and Guatemala expressed that there is still some questions regarding their social status despite the validity of their immigration status and credentials. Though they do not feel that they are still in the absolute fringes of society, their status remains "gray", thus lacking definitiveness or security. Cecilia Menjivar defines limited legal status as the "gray" area of legal status such as temporary residency or employment authorization documents. The uncertain status of these

immigrants affects their daily lives and at times limits their abilities to assimilate into the United States. In another study, Menjívar (2006) uses the work life experience of Guatemalan women in view of their personal life experiences and globalization. She claims that the immigrant's experience in the new society is being influenced by their history and at the same time being affected by global trends in society. In effect, the immigrant is being asked to assimilate himself not only into their current environment but also to the global community.

Considering the degree of impact that the stress of immigration has, extending to offspring and social networks, the issue should be considered as both urgent and important (Fuligni, 2006). According to Fairchild (2004), research should be used to improve policies for immigrant's particularity for those immigrants who have had a history of displacement, persecution and exclusion. In a similar manner, Cecilia Menjivar (2004) stated that there is a need for US policies to become sensitive to multiple contexts of experience. Although experiences tend to be similar, there are still variances in individual history and perceptions that may make individuals unable or resistant to full social participation. These include family history and experience, immigration transition as well as changes in their self and social perceptions in the process of their immigration to the US.

Central American Gangs

Central America gangs, also known as maras, are a rising form of organized crime. Maras are a source of great stress for Central Americans. The major gangs operating in Central America with ties to the United States are the "18th Street" gang (also known as M-18), and their main rival, the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13). One article describes the Mara Salvatrucha and the 18th Street Gang as being the largest and most powerful gangs in Central America (Amar, S., & Haer, A. F.). In the article *How the Street Gangs Took Central America*, Ana Arana (2005)

describes the 18th Street gang as being formed by Mexican immigrants in the Rampart section of Los Angeles in the 1960s. It was created by youth in Los Angeles, CA that were not accepted into existing Hispanic gangs. The 18th street gang was the first Hispanic gang to accept members from all races and to recruit members from other states. Ana Arana goes on to describe that the MS-13 gang was created during the 1980s by Salvadorans in Los Angeles, CA who fled the civil conflict in their home country.

The author Donna Decesare (1998) cites statistics, from UNICEF, that estimate that approximately 30,000 youths may belong to street gangs in El Salvador alone. Coming of age boys join maras as a way of earning money in regions that are in economic shambles. According to the USAID, *Central America and Mexico Gang Assessment* (2006) the majority of mara members are poor, live in marginalized urban areas, and have limited educational and job opportunities. Additionally, a study was done by Miguel Cruz (1999) to identify the reasons why children from Central America join gangs. In his study of over 1,000 gang members from the Mara Salvatrucha and Eighteenth Street gangs in El Salvador he found that most gang members are seeking respect, friendship, a self-identity, and a replacement family. Contrary to other researchers Miguel Cruz found that drug addiction was a greater influence than unemployment. When he asked the minors about their future dreams, the majority of minors replied that they desired employment, and a stable family life.

Current news media speak of Central American maras in the context of the terror they cause. The majority of Central Americans view maras in a negative way and they say they've been terrorized by the maras. As noted in a report by the Los Angeles Times (2005) a Honduran national Police Minister, Oscar Alvarez, called gang bangers killing machines, "cutting people in pieces, raping women, killing people for fun. They might be youngsters, they might be poor, but

these youngsters are monsters." In the study by Miguel Cruz (1999) he also found that more than 80% of the youth he interviewed said that violence is a negative aspect of gang life that they desperately wish would end. Nearly 70% of the minors he interviewed had experienced the murder of a close friend or family member and half had themselves been injured badly enough to require hospitalization. However, some boys do not choose to join maras and instead are forced into them. Michele A. Voss (2005) stated in the article *Young and Marked for Death* that many children from Central America have felt that they cannot even perform simple daily tasks like walking to school without being harassed by gang members trying to recruit them. Harassment varies from verbal to physical forms of intimidation and abuse. Close family members of the individual who resists the gangs are often in as much danger as the individual themselves. Gang members target the spouses, children and close relatives of the individual that resist or are fleeing the Maras (Corsetti, 2006).

Recent articles have been written that show how current governments in Central America are unable to protect the public and ex-gang members from gangs and vigilante groups. Articles published in law journals state that a reason that local governments are unable to provide protection is due to insufficient funding for law enforcement and inadequate training for officers (Corsetti, 2006). The report by the Capital Area Rights Immigrant Rights Coalition (CAIR Coalition) describes those former gang members in the United States fear deportation to their home country. The ex-gang members interviewed informed the writer that reprisals in their home countries could be deadly. The CAIR Coalition also described that some El Salvadoran gang leaders who have been deported from the U.S. fear El Salvador's Sombra Negra (black shadow). The Sombra Negra is an assembly of rogue police and military personnel who deal out vigilante style justice to criminals and gang members. Ex gang members informed the CAIR

Coalition that they would prefer to take their chances with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security than with groups like the Sombra Negra (Amar & Fairchild, n.d.). It has also been seen by researchers that many gang members are retaliating against the strict law enforcement with increased acts of violence; for example, in Honduras, gang members shot at a bus full of people, and killed 28 people (including some children). The retaliation was a direct response to the Sombra Negra (Monzingo, 2005).

Central American gangs have a strong network in Central America and in the United States. According to the U.S. government gangs the Mara Salvatrucha has a powerful network in the east coast (Corseti, 2006). Ex-gang members that migrate to the United States continue to face threats from the maras when they migrate to the United States. Gang members living illegally in the U.S. may extort and threaten Central Americans living in the United States. Gang members may also threaten individuals with claims that they contact their network in their home country and retaliate against family members in their home countries if ransoms are not paid or if knowledge whereabouts are revealed to U.S. authority (Amar & Haer, n.d.). Recently Guatemala has experienced a surge of individuals return to their home country due to stricter immigration policies and the deportation of ex-gang members (Smith, 2006).

Gender-based violence in Central America

Violence against women is often referred to as gender based violence. Intimate partner violence and sexual coercion are the most common forms of gender based violence. Gender based violence includes, but is not limited to: physical violence, rape and sexual assault, domestic violence, sex trafficking, traditional practices harmful to women, forced pregnancy or sterilization (RAISE, n.d.).

Central America has a deeply rooted culture of patriarchy. Cultural values in El Salvador for females place importance on chastity, and obedience. The cultural value for males is brave, carrying weapons and domination of women and children (Hume, 2004b). Violence is used with great regularity within familial relations. For many young people, violence has been a key element of their socialization process. Figures from IUDOP/ACTIVA indicate that 80% of adult respondents were physically abused as children. Violence is perceived to be an acceptable way to deal with conflict and with the increased availability of small ammunition lethal weapons used by them, there is increased lethality (Hume, 2004a). Mo Hume (2004b) claims that it is the cultural norm in El Salvador to accept the murder of undesirable individuals.

Mo Hume (2004b), reports that the lives of individuals in El Salvador are enmeshed with violence and they are unable to recognize certain acts of violence, such as domestic violence. In Mo Hume's (2004) study the individuals were unable to identify violence because domestic violence is viewed as a common and accepted act. An estimated 57 percent of Salvadoran women suffer physical violence at the hands of their partners (Amaya Cobar, 2000). In 2003, 238 women were killed by their spouses in El Salvador (IUDOP/FUNDAUNGO, 2003). Members in an El Salvadoran community indicated that domestic violence is a widespread issue. Domestic violence is considered an acceptable violence (Hume 2004b). Research of Guatemala indicated that there is "systemic tolerance of domestic violence, and there is an alarming increase in the rate of femicides" (Center For Gender & Refugee Studies, 2006, p. 4)

Violence against women is a widespread issue in Central America. Mo Hume (2004b) states that violence towards females is a prevalent issue in Central America. It is reported that more than 1,000 women were killed in Guatemala between the beginning of 2005 and June 2006.

The majority of women killed are between the ages 13 and 36 (Center for Gender & Refugee Studies, 2005).

The majority of murders of women in Central America were marked by rape, torture and mutilation (U.S. Department of State, 2005). In interviews Mo Hume (2004b) conducted in El Salvador, families claimed that they protect their daughters by keeping them inside, accompanied at all times, or they send them away from the community. According to individuals in the community they reported that it was the women's responsibility to protect themselves from sexual advances.

A gap in Central America government is the ability to prevent and effectively punish domestic violence. When a government is unable to properly prevent and condemn acts of violence, it sends the message that such violations are tolerated. Although they're laws against family violence in Guatemala, the penal code in Guatemala treats domestic violence as a minor offense (En Cerigua de Guatemala, 2005). The only sanction for domestic violence in Honduras sanctions is community service, a fine, and 24-hour preventive detention if the violator is caught in the act. The law provides a maximum sentence of three years' imprisonment for disobeying a restraining order connected with family violence (U.S. Department of State, 2006).

Human Trafficking

According to recent research, the fastest growing criminal activity is human trafficking. According to the author Elzbieta Godziak (2005), the current definition of human trafficking was established in the year 2000 by the United Nations (UN). The UN defined human trafficking as the recruitment of a person by means of threat, force, coercion or fraud to have control of another person for the purpose of labor or sexual exploitation (as cited in Godziak, 2005). Human

trafficking involves not just women but children and men. Human trafficking is a crime against the individual, human smuggling is a crime against a country. Human smuggling is the act of bringing an individual to the United States through illegal means.

Research on human trafficking has been limited in qualitative data because the nature of the crime is to remain under the radar. It is a common trend to find inconsistent numerical data that estimates the number of victims of human trafficking. Micha Bump (2005) quotes data by the United States Department of Refugee that estimates that 80,000 to 900,000 people are trafficked every year. She acknowledges the inconsistencies in the quantitative data and therefore also quotes research articles that estimate that the number could be as high as two million victims a year. The authors Elzbieta M. Gozdziaik and Margaret MacDonnell (2007) claim that according to data from the official government, it is estimated that 14,500 to 17,500 people are victims of human trafficking annually. In addition, the author adds that data from Richard Estes estimate that 15,000 children are trafficked into the United States annually. A possible cause for the wide range in the estimated number of victims could be the lack of a unified definition for human trafficking. Prior to the year 2000, many nations confused human trafficking with smuggling and or with a form of illegal migration. It is important to note that many countries do not compile statistics on human trafficking because there is no legislation that specifically addresses the problems (Gozdziaik, Collette 2005). Currently the statistical data available is largely based on border arrest and police records. When conducting research on human trafficking it is important to note that trafficking and smuggling are not the same. According to Tim Riordan Raafaub (2006) the key distinction between trafficking and smuggling is that in trafficking the individual is held against their own will and they are forced into labor or prostitution while in smuggling the individual is usually allowed to be free once they arrive at

their destination. Trafficking is a crime against a person, where as smuggling is a crime against a country.

The US government has a lot of interest in understanding and stopping human trafficking. As discussed in the article by Elzbieta Gozdziaik and Elizabeth Collett (2005) much of the research conducted within the United States is done through the federal funding of non governmental agencies. Non-governmental organizations currently produce the majority of the research available on the victims of human trafficking. For example, researchers have determined through qualitative means that the victims of human trafficking are often lured or abducted from their homes and subsequently forced through various means, to work in prostitution, sweatshops, agricultural settings, or and domestic service (Bump, Duncan, Gozdziaik & Mac Donnell, 2005). For children, poverty, family disintegration, abuse, drugs, and homelessness are significant risk factors in human trafficking. According to research, victims of human trafficking are often physically and emotionally abused into submission through horrific beatings, gang rapes, starvation, violent threats, forced drug use, and or confinement (Gozdziaik et al., 2006). Children become victims of trafficking in various ways. Poor families in developing countries are deceived by traffickers who tell them that their children will be given a job or an education if they travel to the U. S. Some families even make deals with traffickers despite knowing what lies ahead for their children. Once a child becomes the victim of human trafficking it is reported that the victim will experience physical, emotional, and psychological trauma (United States Department of Justice).

METHODOLOGY

Description of Subjects

The subjects in the study were fifteen youth (males and females), between the ages of 14-17 and whose country of origin are the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras or Nicaragua. For the purpose of this paper a youth is defined as an individual who is less than eighteen years of age. All subjects are undocumented, unaccompanied, undergoing immigration proceedings and they currently reside all over the United States. Undocumented, unaccompanied children are defined as individuals that are under the age of eighteen, that have entered the United States without legal documentation, and without an adult parent. The study participants were obtained through court cases available on the database Lexis Nexis. Lexis Nexis, is a database available online with an extensive collection of public records, unpublished opinions, forms, and legal information.²

Design

To study the cause and effects of migration of Central American youth, a qualitative secondary analysis of immigration court cases was used. The purpose of the study was to analyze the relationship between the migration of Central American youth and low employment opportunities. Secondary data was chosen because the age, immigration status of the subjects, along with their low education levels, caused it to not be feasible for the study to be implemented using traditional methods such as questionnaires and surveys.³

Court cases found on the database Lexis Nexis were selected because they are available to the public. The court cases found on the database have a description of the facts, a statement of the issue/problem, a reference to the various positions that can be taken on the issue, a result to the case, and an explanation to the decision.⁴

Sampling

Because the primary interest of the writer was to obtain qualitative information, the narratives of 15 minors from Central America were selected for the study. The data for the study was obtained from the Nexis-Lexis database. The Nexis-Lexis database was selected because it has “full text of selected federal court cases, and includes all BIA (Board of Immigration Appeals) from 1984 to present, and selected BIA non-precedent decisions, BALCA (Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals), and Department of Labor decisions” (Immigration case reporter, 2009, para. 2). The cases were selected by searching for the following variables in the immigration field in the database: Central American and youth or Central American and children. This writer selected cases that were found on the state and federal court case field on the search results.

Systematic sampling methods were used to obtain the immigration cases for evaluation. Systematic sampling consisted of selecting every 5th sampling unit of the population after the first sampling unit was selected at random from the total of sampling units. This form of sampling was selected because it is more convenient than simple random sampling. In addition systematic samples are easier to use with very large data sources. With systematic sampling every sampling unit has a one in five probability of being included in the sample (Frankfort-Nachimias & Nachimias, 2007). This writer found a total of 5,325 cases using the database and the selected fields. Please note that although every 5th sampling case was selected, not every case met the criteria for analysis. If a case did not meet the criteria it was rejected and the writer proceeded to evaluate the following 5th sampling case.

Protocol for Assessing Cases

After obtaining all of the cases the writer coded them and prepared them for analysis.

The inquiry process began with the analysis of the appearance and intensity of factors that motivate a migrant youth to travel to the United States. One of the factors that motivate Central Americans to migrate to the United States is economic opportunities (Sills, S. J., 2000). The motivators for migration were coded as either being economic or non-economic factors. In this study identifiable elements of low economic opportunity were defined as a rise in unemployment rates, development polarization, lack of job advancement, limited educational opportunities, and earning a minimum amount of money on a daily basis. Responses that were noted as non-economical reasons were coded as either family reunification, gang persecution, political or environmental. These codes were selected due to research that indicated that these were common reasons for migration (Chavez, 1998). The codes for non-economic reasons for migration were not limited to the above mentioned codes. Additional codes were added when they were identified in the cases.

The second variable that was studied was the frequency that gang persecution was noted as a reason for migration. Central America gangs, also known as maras, are a rising form of organized crime. Maras are a source of great stress for Central Americans (Amar & Haer). The response of gang involvement was coded as none, limited, moderate and extensive. In this study none will be defined as having never met anyone in a gang. Limited was defined as having known an individual that has been in a gang but not an immediate family member. Moderate was defined as having an immediate family member been in a gang or harassed by gang member. Extensive was defined as having been in a gang or being threatened by a gang. Notes were also taken about how the minor was involved with them such as gang information on recruitment and desistance from gang-related activities, personal experiences of joining a gang, life in the gang, and the process of leaving the gang

Upon coding the secondary data the writer scrutinized and discussed the main themes found in the cases. The results were presented in the format of narrative case studies that demonstrate the typical themes found in the data. The case studies will highlight three observations of our study: the specific context of each individual and their reason for migration; their thoughts about their nation and its government; and the individuals experiences post migration.

Protocol for De-Identifying the Data

The principal investigator developed a log for the sample cases that were analyzed. The log included the name of each child, case number, age, and country of origin. Once the study was completed the log was destroyed. The study was designed so that there will be no information linking the participant to the research. All names in this study are pseudonyms.

Scientific Benefits of the Research

These children could be considered among the most vulnerable and as such, there needs to be more information as to why they are migrating to the US. This research, though challenging, can be groundbreaking in providing some insight as to why children migrate to the United States and how the maras personally affect Central American children. In addition, those working with these children will be better prepared to provide a level of service which more appropriately meets the needs of the child based on the results of this project.

Therefore, to serve this vulnerable population it is important for practitioners and policy makers to know much more than the anecdotal information that is currently available. Thus, this research may begin to equip stakeholders, such as the Office of Refugee and Resettlement, with the needed information to meet the needs of these children.

RESULTS

Fifteen cases from the following nations were selected: Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Although it was not a criteria of the search, all of the cases highlight the plight of undocumented, unaccompanied children. Undocumented, unaccompanied children are defined as individuals that are under the age of eighteen, that have entered the United States without legal documentation and without an adult parent. The case studies that were analyzed identified six main causes for the migration of Central American children. The six causes are: fear of gangs, family reunification, fear of kidnappers, adventure, desertion of army and family violence. On many of the cases analyzed it was identified that not just one factor motivated a child to migrate but rather a combination of variables. It is note worthy to add, that although the cases were classified into groups they have many overlapping themes and causes for migration. In addition to the six themes identified in the analysis, country issues and prior migration history were also highlighted as having an influence on whether an individual would migrate.

The following cases are a sample the six themes identified in the analysis.⁵

Fear of Gangs

The following cases describe the plight of Central American children that described the main cause of their migration as being persecution from Central American Gangs. Out of the fifteen cases analyzed seven children identified fear of gangs as the main cause for their migration to the United States. In addition to identifying a fear of the Central American gangs the children also identified feeling that their government and local police department were unable to protect them against the threats or retaliation from the gangs.

Case of Alberto

The first case analyzed was of a sixteen year old male named Alberto. He was born in Guatemala in 1998. He traveled to the United States in an attempt to flee gang persecution. Research shows that there have been an increased number of gang persecutions in the country of Guatemala due to the high number of gang members in the country.

Alberto and his family began to have problems with the Mara 18 in the 1990's. Alberto's older brothers were recruited to join the gang. His brothers, Eddie and Sergio, had served in the Guatemalan army and were recruited by the mara for their military training. Both of Alberto's brothers refused to join the gang. According to research retaliation is common when individuals attempt to leave a gang or refuse to join the gang. A common form of retaliation is severe beating and murder. In the case of Alberto Andres his brother, Eddie was murdered. Eddie was murdered when the gang stabbed him eighteen times in the spring of 1990. Alberto's family reported the murder to the police department however no one was ever apprehended regarding the murder. The lack or limited number of police enforcement agents has been cited for a reason why individuals migrate to the United States after being threatened by Central American gangs.

In 1999 after Alberto turned sixteen years of age he began to receive threats from the Mara 18. Alberto and his cousins were confronted by the gang in the park. The gang asked both minors to join the gang. Alberto claimed that he feared the gang after his prior experience with them and he wanted to flee from them immediately. Alberto responded to the mara by telling them that he would consider their offer of joining the gang in an attempt to have them leave him alone. After the incident both minors began to receive threatening letters from the Mara. The two minors were told that if they did not join the gang they would be killed. Alberto and his family considered these threats to be credible as they had previously killed one of his brothers. Because of their fear they both decided that they should migrate to the United States. Both

Alberto's and his cousin's parents arranged for the two minors to flee Guatemala. The minor's traveled seven hours in a vehicle to another city in Guatemala. They lived with a friend of their parents. They both reported that while they lived with the friend of their parents they were not threatened by any gang member. However, their parents continued to receive threatening letters from the Mara 18 in their home country.

In the end of 1999 the boys left Guatemala and traveled towards the United States. Alberto was detained by INS now border patrol at or near the Texas border in the end of 1999. While in the custody of INS Alberto was informed by his parents that his cousin was murdered by the gang upon his return to Guatemala. Alberto was eventually released from the care of INS and into the care of his brother in Los Angeles to pursue his immigration proceedings. While in the US, Alberto continued to feel fear and decided to move to Virginia because he feared the gang could not find him in Virginia. Gang research shows that Central American gangs are increasing in number in the United States. This demonstrates continued fear of persecution although the individual migrated to the United States. It is noteworthy to mention that while Alberto was waiting for his immigration court proceedings he was able to assimilate into the US culture. He entered the United States in 1999 and the US immigration judge made a decision regarding his case in 2004. Alberto was found removal in 2004. Alberto was appealing the decision.

Case of Cesar

Another case that depicts how the fear of gang persecution motivates an individual to migrate to the US is the case of Cesar. Cesar is an individual that had moderate experience with gangs in the form of his siblings. Cesar's brother and cousin were gang members.

Cesar was born in Honduras. His oldest brother was a member of the Mara Salvatrucha in Honduras. Cesar's brother was a member of the Mara Salvatrucha for three months until he was shot and killed in 2001. His brother was 16 years of age when members of a rival gang killed him. The individuals that killed his brother were arrested by the police but for unknown reasons. According to Cesar no one in his family filed a police report reporting the crime or the assailant. According to the literature found it is common for individuals to not file a report with the police because they feel the police would be unable to do much to protect them. In 2003, Cesar's other brother joined the Mara Salvatrucha. He was a member of the gang for approximately five to six months. He was killed when he left the gang and became a Christian. On this occasion his grandparents immediately filed a police report and the investigation was never closed and the assailants were never apprehended.

After the death of his brother his cousin, an MS gang member, approached him on several occasions to join the gang. Cesar claims that he always replied to his cousin that he was not interested in joining the gang. His family was also threatened by gang members after the death of his two siblings. His mother received several threats advising her to flee or they would be killed. His family decided to flee the city in 2004; but he remained in the same city to attend school. While he lived alone Cesar did not receive any threats against him and his family. His family returned back to their home after a few months after they noticed that the other city also had a lot of gang activity. Note Honduras has a lot of gang activity throughout the city and fleeing within the country is difficult because of the complex network of communication that maras have. Cesar decided to migrate to the United States by himself after his family received another death threat against him and his family in 2005. The death threat advised his family to flee the country within the next three months. Cesar was placed in a detention center while in

the United States. He was released to extended family in the United States. The minor's political asylum case was denied and he was found removable.

Case of Gustavo

The following case is of the minor, Gustavo. Gustavo is a minor that migrated to the United States due to his fear of retaliation from the Central American gangs. Gustavo was coded as having extensive experience with Central American gangs. The case of Gustavo depicts the challenges faced by youth that join the gangs and no longer want to belong in them.

Gustavo is a juvenile from Honduras. While he lived in Azacualpa, Honduras he lived with his immediate family. Gustavo was also an active member of the Mara Salvatrucha. He had distinguishable tattoos and participated in all aspects of gang life. He informed the immigration court that while he was in the gang he killed two other rival gang members when his gang intimidated him into killing them. After the gang forced him into killing the two individuals, Gustavo decided that he wanted to abandon the mara. Gustavo was severely beaten on more than one occasion for trying to abandon the gang and trying to remove his tattoos. According to research individuals that leave gangs are likely to be targeted by their prior gang and many are killed. Gustavo claims that he did not report the gang's threats or physical assault because he felt the police would not be able to protect him. He also expressed fear that the police would apprehend him for his gang affiliation and tattoos. The Honduran government has implemented gang control methods such as The Mano Dura. The Mano Dura is a group of ex police members that lock and punish anyone that is affiliated with gangs and or have tattoos. Gustavo and his family decided that it was in his best interest to migrate because the gang has a great network within Honduras. Gustavo migrated to the United States in early 1999. Gustavo was issued a deportation order in 2000. He was denied his appeal in 2002.

The cases above depict the challenges minors and families encounter when they are either ex-gang members or being recruited to join a gang. A youth that attempts to flee the mara often migrates to different countries in an attempt to escape the death threats of the mara. Central American gangs have a strong network in Central America and in the United States (Corsetti, 2006). Although, some youth and their families seek assistance from their local government; they are often unable to assist them. Corsetti (2006) states that a reason that local governments are unable to provide protection is due to insufficient funding for law enforcement and inadequate training for officers. That information is consistent with the case of Cesar, filed a police report about prior gang crimes and the investigation was never closed and the assailants were never apprehended.

Family Reunification

The following case describes the situation of one minor that migrated to the United States. He described that the main cause of his migration was the desire to be reunited with his family. This theme is important to point out as this writer's personal work experience has shown that the majority of children that migrate have family living in the United States. Research shows that Central Americans tend to migrate during different periods. Parents normally migrate to the United States first and after they feel stability they send for their children. In eleven of the fifteen cases analyzed family reunification was cited as a reason to migrate to the United States. Case of Eduardo ⁶

The minor Eduardo, was born in 1989 in El Salvador. Eduardo Santos's parents migrated to the United States in 1998 without documentation. They later obtained legal status in the form of Temporary Protective Status (TPS). They obtained TPS in 2001, because their country suffered a series of severe earthquakes and it was determined that El Salvador was unable to

handle the return of its nationals. Since Eduardo Santos's parents obtained legal status in the form of TPS, they were unable to return to their home country.

At the age of 14, Eduardo decided to travel to the United States to join his mother. He left El Salvador by bus and traveled alone through Mexico and crossed the Rio Grande River. He was apprehended with 13 other undocumented immigrants on October 9th, 2004 by El Cenizo, TX. He was interviewed by immigration officers and later released into the custody of his mother. His parents reside in Austin, TX. Eduardo had his first immigration hearing in 2003 and he was order removable. Since that date he has appealed the judge's decision multiple times and the last time was on February 26th, 2009. His prolonged period in the United States demonstrate that the minor has been in the US for five years and has been developing a network of social support. Since his immediate family is in the United States he has not transnational kinships groups that tie him to his home country. Eduardo has become accustomed to the US culture and no longer feels comfortable returning to his home country.

The case above depicts the challenges minors and families encounter when they are separated by migration. Parents that decide to migrate to the United States often do not see the long-term consequences of being separated from their families for an extended period of time. The majority of these people want to improve the quality of life for their families (Bustamante & Aleman, 2007). When parents leave children they often expect to return to their home country or establish a stable home environment in the new country within a short period of time. In the case of Eduardo his family remained separated for a prolonged period of time because his parents obtained TPS status and they were unable to return to their home country. In the study conducted by Suarez-Orozco, Todorova, and Louie (2002) they determine that more than half of the Central American families that are separated due to migration are separated from their

father's for more than five years. That information is consistent with the length of separation for Eduardo; he was separated from both of his parents for approximately six to seven years.

Fear of Kidnappers

The following cases describe the two females that experienced and witnessed kidnapping on either themselves or their family. The case depicts the violence and the fear that individuals experience when kidnappers target them. The cases also suggest that crimes of kidnapping are targeted more towards females than males. According to Bermudez (2005), Guatemala has problems with the high number of violent acts against females

Case of Jovita

The first case is of a female from Guatemala. Jovita was born in 1980 in Conception Las Minas, Guatemala. Jovita lived with her mother, father, and siblings. Her father abandoned her family when she was sixteen years of age. Jovita was raised to practice the Catholic religion. Jovita claims that due to her religious upbringing she held traditional views about pre-marital sex.

In 1997, in the city where Jovita was living they experience great growth when the government contracted a company to build a road in the city. While the road was being constructed Jovita met Ramon. They became friends and would visit each other. During these visits Jovita informed Ramon about her religious views. After Ramon was introduced to her family she agreed to go on a date with him in late 1997. They agreed to go for dinner at a Chinese restaurant. The two of them went to a Chinese restaurant in Chiquimula on a bus. However after dinner when she inquired how she was going to get home, he told her that she wasn't. Jovita became scared and walked towards a bus that would take her home. When she was walking away Ramon grabbed her by the arm and pulled her to another bus. She claims that she yelled

and screamed but no one helped her. According to research, Guatemala has problems with the high number of violent acts against females (Bermudez, 2005.)

Ramon took Jovita to Ipala, Guatemala. Ipala is approximately 50 kilometers from her home town. During this whole time she begged to be released. After Ramon dragged Jovita into his room, he pulled her clothes off and violently raped her. Ramon held Jovita for six months before she was able to escape. She was held in his custody in a room that had no windows, telephones and bathroom. Ramon would lock the door from the outside. Jovita was bound to the bed with ropes whenever Ramon was not home. While Jovita was confined she was raped two to three times a week and was physically beaten three to four times a week. Since Jovita was bound to the bed she was forced to urinate and defecate on herself. Jovita was gagged all day except for five minutes a day when he allowed her to eat. She did not escape till early summer 1998 when Ramon was drunk and forgot to lock the door and restrain her.

Due to her lack of confidence in the local authorities she never reported the crime. Soon after arriving to her home she sought medical treatment for her physical and mental health. She was hospitalized for eight days for bruises throughout her body, blood clots and lacerations on her genitals. A month later Jovita discovered she was two months pregnant with Ramon's baby. Jovita feared that Ramon would find her and discover she was pregnant and therefore decided to flee to the United States. She was apprehended attempting to cross into the United States. She was detained and released into the care of her cousins in the United States. While in the United States she sought and received counseling services for her abuse. Rape damages the physical, mental and social well-being of its victims and can sever relationships, permanently change a victim's outlook, or result in emotional illness (Jongsma, A. E., 2006.) Jovita petitioned for legal status in the United States and was granted relief in 2004.

Case of Tatiana

Another case that depicts migration influenced by threats of kidnapping is the case of Tatiana. In 1991 Tatiana, a Guatemalan female, witnessed the kidnapping of her uncle by masked men. Tatiana was seventeen years of age. The masked men entered her home; and kidnapped her uncle and raped her. Tatiana claims that she did not report the attack because the masked men threatened to kill her if she reported the rape. Tatiana claims that she feared for her life and therefore decides to flee to the United States.

She entered the United States illegally in 1991 and lived with her aunt in California. In the case of Tatiana fleeing to the United States seemed like a viable option because she had family living in the US. According to the author Chavez (1998) migration is seen as a possible option when the individual has other family in the US. Tatiana lived for several years in California with her aunt then she moved in with her boyfriend. This indicates that she had developed strong ties in the United States by her having a romantic relationship. While Tatiana was living in the United States she had her first child in 1994, when she was twenty years of age. In 1996, she moved to the state of Missouri with her son. In the year 2000, she gave birth to her second son, Michael. Her youngest son, Michael, was born with asthma and had many respiratory illnesses.

In 2003, Tatiana applied for a state id with a false name. When Missouri officials discovered the offense she was charged with forgery. The forgery charges were dismissed when officials discovered she was undocumented. Tatiana was then turned into the care of the Department of Homeland Security. She was placed in deportation hearings in 2003. The immigration judge denied her request for cancellation in 2006. She later appealed her case and it was denied on December 2008. This is an example of a family with multi-nationalities or multi-

legal status. Her oldest child reported not knowing how to read or speak Spanish and her youngest child would continue to need additional medical services for his asthma and respiratory problems. Their social ties to the United States are stronger than their ties to their home country.

The two cases described above depict the large social issue, of the prevalence of violence towards females. The case of Jovita, could be argued to be a form of trafficking. The UN defined human trafficking as the recruitment of a person by means of threat, force, coercion or fraud to have control of another person for the purpose of labor or sexual exploitation (as cited in Godziak, 2005). She was forced to have sexual relations with a male. Jovita was not allowed to leave the situation and the male had control over all aspects of Jovita's life.

Adventure

An interesting theme that was found through the analysis of court documents is adventure. Some Central American migrants reported traveling to the United States to see what was over her, or as an adolescent adventure. Adventourness is a typical state in an adolescent's life. As an adolescent begins to approach adulthood they are more willing to take risk.

The case of Wilmer

The case of Wilmer describes a male that traveled to the United States to see the United States. Wilmer was born in Guatemala in 1984. He lived in a rural village in Guatemala. In his village the only languages spoken was Juaman and Quiche. Wilmer's parents are Indians and Wilmer used to consider himself and Indian prior to learning to speak Spanish. While he lived in Guatemala his family owned a small patch of land and they had no home. Wilmer attended three months of school while he lived in Guatemala. The reason he did not attend further education is because his parents never encouraged him because they did not like school.

When Wilmer turned eight years of age he and his family moved to Mexico. According to Wilmer his family moved because they did not like Guatemala and because they had no home in Guatemala. While in Mexico, Wilmer only attended school for two months. He lived with his parents for seven months before he decided to migrate to another city in Mexico. He cites the reason for the migration was the cold weather and because he wanted to find work. He was approximately between the age of eight and nine when he decided to migrate by himself. He lived with his parent's friends and family. He began working at the age of fourteen as a grape cutter. He would earn 1500 pesos every week and he would send them to his parents. His parents and siblings eventually obtained legal status in Mexico. Since Wilmer did not reside with his parents he did not obtain legal status. Wilmer decided to migrate to the United States in 2000 to see how it was. He was apprehended while trying to enter the United States without documentation. Wilmer was placed in the care of a detention facility but was later moved to a jail for trying to abscond from the facility. Wilmer requested to be returned to his home country in 2001.

In the case of Wilmer, he traveled to the United States, to see how it was. This case is of interest because it argues that non-economic motivators influence youth to migrate to the United States. The author Oscar J. Martinez (1994) argues that the main reasons that individuals migrate are for economic, social, political, and/or environmental. In the case of Wilmer a desire for adventure was one of the motivators that influenced him to migrate to the United States. Adventourness is a typical state in an adolescent's life. As an adolescent begins to approach adulthood they are more willing to take risk.

Deserted the Army

The following case is of a minor that was recruited to fight in the civil war in Guatemala.

The case of Porfirio

Porfirio is a fifteen year old male from Guatemala. He entered the United States after he deserted the guerilla army in his home country. Guatemala suffered more than 36 years of internal conflict, which formally ended with the signing of the Peace Accords at the end of 1996 (Amar & Fairchild, n.d.). Porfirio resided in the highland regions and resided in an indigent community. He was recruited by the Amerindians. At the age of thirteen he joined the guerillas after his father, uncle and cousins were murdered by death squads. Porfirio claims that he was a member of the army for only three months and then he deserted it. Because he was involved with the guerilla army the death squad also known as the civil defense patrol targeted him and his family. The death squad forced Porfirio's brother to watch the execution of one their cousins. The death squad continued to threaten Porfirio and his family and they advised him that if he reported the crime to the police they would kill him. Porfirio feared for his life and he fled his home. He went into hiding in Guatemala City. He remained in Guatemala City for sixteen months. During those sixteen months, Porfirio continued to receive death threats. The death squad would relay threats towards him via his family that continued to live in his home village. He was detained while entering the United States and he filed for political asylum while awaiting his deportation hearing. While awaiting his court hearing Porfirio was released from federal custody and was allowed to reside with his adult relatives that reside in the United States. The minor was found removable after his political asylum case was denied.

The case above depicts the struggles of a Central American youth that was pursued to fight in the Civil War. Guatemala suffered more than 36 years of internal conflict, which formally ended with the signing of the Peace Accords at the end of 1996 (Amar & Fairchild,

n.d.). Although the youth was only a member of the army for three months, he was pursued for abandoning the army.

Family Violence

The Latin American culture of machismo (male dominance, "obligation to family," and "moral superiority" to women) is important a major cause of domestic violence, or at least a strong contributing factor. Gender inequality is also common in the male dominated governments of Central America. The following cases describe situations where migrant children experienced trauma through the form of family violence. Although both situations portray extreme cases of family violence, they are noteworthy examples of family violence.

Case of Miguel Angel

Miguel Angel was born on December 29th, 1986 in Abicinia, Honduras. He was born into a poor family of six. Miguel's parents are farmers and he has three younger siblings. In 1995, Miguel's mother migrated to the United States to find work and help provide for the family financially. When he was nine years of age, he attended school. He only attended one year of school. After his mother migrated to the United States he and his three siblings remained in the care of his father. Shortly after his father's mistress moved into the home and she began to care for him and his siblings.

In August 1998 Miguel's father was murdered. His father was murdered while traveling to town to sell cattle. Miguel feared for his father after he did not return the next day and traveled to town to search for him. On the road to town he was informed by a family friend that his father was murdered and that his body laid on the road. With help from his paternal uncles he brought his father's body home. Initially he was unaware of who had committed the murder but he later found out through conversations with town's people that his maternal uncles killed him. He also

was informed that his father was aware off the threat and had planned to move his whole family. In an attempt to save money for the move Miguel's father traveled to town to sell the cattle. Soon after the murder of his father his father's mistress left Abicinia due to the threat's from Miguel's maternal uncles. Since Miguel had no parents he was left to care for his younger siblings; since his older sister had left the home a few days before the murder.

A month after the murder Miguel's mother returned to Honduras. Eventually Rosa, Miguel's mother, was desperate to take care of her family and sought help from her family although she knew they had murdered her husband. Her family agreed to help care for the children if she agreed to sell all their property and return to the United States to send money to them. For the next two years Miguel lived with his mother's family and worked as a brick layer and a farmer. On one occasion Miguel was violently beaten by his uncle's because he asked them what had happened to his father.

In 2001, Miguel's mother finally saved enough money to buy a home in Honduras for her and her mother to move in. Miguel and his mother however were unaware that his grandmother had invited his uncles to move in as well. His uncle was often high on drugs and alcohol and continued to beat him. After Miguel continued to ask his uncle about the death of his father his uncles told him that they had killed his father. They told him that they killed him with a gun after his grandmother told them to take his money when they saw him taking cattle to town.

Upon hearing this news he traveled to see his paternal uncle to help him report the crime to the police. Miguel claims that his paternal uncle refused to report the crime. Without the help of his uncle, Miguel felt discouraged about reporting the crime. He felt terrified returning to the home and asked his sister for help. She agreed to take care of him and his younger siblings if he

agreed to work. Although they worked and received money from their mother they were unable to maintain the family financially.

Shortly after leaving the home of their grandmother Miguel and his siblings began to receive threats against him and his siblings from his uncles. The threats would say that he should be “careful that you don’t die first” or something would happen to his siblings. Although Miguel reported the threats to his mother she did not believe that her family would harm them. Miguel reports that one night when he was feeding the cattle his siblings were kidnapped by his uncles and grandmother. His grandmother advised him that she was angry for fleeing his home and taking his siblings and refused to give them back to him.

At the age of sixteen Miguel decided to flee Honduras because he felt unsafe and felt depressed about losing his siblings. He made the journey to the United States with his cousin but they were separated in Mexico. While in Mexico he stayed a few weeks with his mother’s boyfriend’s family and then continued the journey. It was his intention to live with his mother in the United States. While crossing the border he was detained by border patrol and placed in a detention facility in May 2003. Since being detained Miguel was informed that one of his younger brothers was severely beaten by his uncles and required medical attention. Miguel pursued legal relief in the form of SIJV (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status), the minor was able to adjust status in late 2005.

Case of Noe

The second case that describes family violence as a motivator for migration is of Noe. Noe was born in 1987, in El Salvador. He lived in a village with his two parents and eight siblings. Five of his older siblings currently reside in the United States. The minor attended school through the six grade and then he began working. Noe started to work at the age of eleven.

Noe's family had a meager lifestyle. The family had a small plot of land where they grew watermelon and a few other crops. The family would harvest the crops and sell them in a market in the town.

Although everyone in Noe's family would work they did not have sufficient money. Noe's father was an alcoholic and he would spend the majority of their earnings on alcohol. His father would go on drinking binges that would last approximately three days. In addition, Noe's father was physically and emotionally abusive towards him and his family. He would become violent with little or no provocation. He often would scream yell and destroy the families own belongings. Noe reported that his father would often beat him with his fist, ropes, sticks or whatever was convenient. Noe claimed that he had cuts, bruises on his body and was in constant pain. When he was sober he was very controlling of the families every move. His mother would often try to protect the family by hiding the children in the home of the neighbors when their father arrived intoxicated.

As he became older Noe would flee to his best friend house to avoid the physical abuse. In addition to his problems at home Noe began to have problems with the Mara Salvatrucha when he was thirteen years of age. As far as he knew everyone in his neighborhood belonged to the gang. Only he, and his friends refused to join the mara. The gang would often threaten them, punch and hit them. Noe recalled that on three occasions he was viciously beaten by the gang. The worst attack occurred in late 2003 when he was beaten to the point were he was vomiting and spitting up blood. In early 2004 Noe's friend was killed by the gang because he liked a gang member's girlfriend. Noe claims that he never reported the crime to the police. Noe lacked trust in his local police and he did not feel that the police would assist him. After the death of his friend Noe decided to travel to the US. Noe was 17 years of age.

Once in the US, he was diagnosed with PTSD, night-tremors, migraines, flashbacks, and nightmares. Note although Noe reported that his ultimate motivator was the death of his friend Noe had a long history of abuse. The trauma Noe experienced was represented in his physical and emotional state upon arriving to the United States. Noe was pursuing legal relief of SIJV (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status), and political asylum. The minor's political asylum claim was denied in 2005, but he was appealing the decision.

Severe physical punishment of children is an international child welfare issue. In the report, *Dimensions of child punishment in two Central American countries: Guatemala and El Salvador*, the authors claim that there is a high prevalence of physical abuse towards children in the countries of Guatemala and El Salvador (Speizer, Goodwin, Samadari, Kim & Clyde, 2008). In Guatemala, 35% of women and 46% of men reported being beaten as punishment during their childhood. In El Salvador, 42% of women and 62% of men reported being beaten as a form of punishment (Speizer et al., 2008). The cases above display some examples of severe domestic violence. In addition they case of Noe depicts the trauma that is associated with severe domestic violence.

DISCUSSION

Overall, my findings show that children from Central America travel to the United States for multiple reasons including economic variables. The predominant themes found by this writer were fear of Central American gangs and a history of family migration. These two themes appear to reflect that children are influenced by different factors than adults.

Consistent with previous research, some children reported traveling to the United States for economic reasons. In the fifteen court cases analyzed six causes for migration were identified. The main cause for migration was identified as being fear of gangs. The other reasons for migrations were identified to be family reunification, fear of kidnapers, a desire for adventure, desertion of army and family violence. On many of the cases analyzed it was identified that not just one factor motivated a child to migrate but rather a combination of variables. It can therefore be said that the combination of personal factors and perceived opportunities, motivated the individual to migrate. It is interesting to note that many of the identified causes for migration can be perceived as personal factors such as family reunification, adventure, and family violence rather than perceived opportunities such as a desire to find employment due to limited economic opportunities.

An interesting theme that was identified in the majority of cases analyzed was the frequency that children cited having family in the United States whom they intended to live with. The children reported that they had immediate and non-immediate family members living in the United States. This displays that the act of migration was not perceived as a foreign act but rather as a possibility. If the child perceives their family to have a positive migration experience the child will see the act of migration in positive terms. In addition the fact the child has family in the United States is seen as a network of support for the child as they try to transition into their

new environment. This theme is briefly discussed by the author Chavez in his book, *Shadowed lives*. This theme is important to acknowledge in the population of children. Children have different needs than adults and due to the perceived idea of childhood in the United States, a child migrant would be in greater need of having an adult caretaker to survive in the United States. In the United States a child is labeled as an individual, under the age of eighteen and is considered a vulnerable population that is seen to need special protections. The fact that the United States has special protections for children can also be seen as a motivator for migration as a child is provided further education opportunities than in their home country.

Another theme that was identified in many of the articles analyzed was the perceived idea that their home country was unable to protect them. In cases where children cited that they fled their home country due to fear of gangs, many children reported that they did not report the crime to the police for either the fear that the police could not protect them or due to prior negative experiences. Children claimed in their case analysis that both them and their parents did not feel that the police responded to their cases. A reason some Central American fear reporting crimes to the police is because they are afraid that the gangs have contacts inside the police, and any denunciation would immediately be reported back to the criminals. When a child feels that their home country is unable to provide protection for them, this could be perceived as a push factor when a child is considering migration. In addition this push factor is unchangeable in terms that a child or his family cannot alter it.

According to the analysis of qualitative data it appears that children are motivated to migrate to the United States for different reasons than adults. However it is important to note some of the limitations in the findings. Since the data obtained was from court cases it can therefore be said that the children have possible immigration cases and they are seeking to

remain in the US rather than returning to their home country (voluntary removal). Examples of legal immigration cases/relief are political asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile Visa (SIJV) or a trafficking visa. By analyzing court cases the information may have limited perspectives of all the causes for migration and focus on those individuals that have a fear of persecution of gangs or experienced abuse in their home country. There are other causes of migration for youth that were not discussed in this study and the categorization is limited due to fact that the analysis focused its data on secondary data from court documents. Another limitation in the study is the limited information that was available on the court cases. To provide a more thorough analysis on the cause of migration it would important to obtain more ethnographic information on the child's home country living situation.

CONCLUSION

According to the analysis of the secondary data it can be said that children from Central American migrate to the United States for different reasons than their parents. According to research adults are primarily influenced by economic reasons. The analysis found that the six causes for migration were fear of gangs, family reunification, fear of kidnapers, a desire for adventure, desertion of army and family violence. It was identified that not just one factor motivated a child to migrate but rather a combination of variables. In addition two themes were found consistent in the majority of cases those children that migrated to the United States had known of others that had migrated to the US and they had perceived negative thoughts about their government's ability to protect them. It was also found that the majority of children that identified traveling to the US for fear of gangs were not personally involved in gangs but rather were being recruited.

This finding is important because it argues that children's needs differ from adult needs. In a field, such as immigration law, where multiple fields collide such as child welfare issues and immigration issues it is vital to remember that the needs of children vary from those of adults. Practitioners who approach a youth as they would an adult are likely to have difficulty communicating and understanding the client. It is the recommendation of this writer that more interdisciplinary approaches be taken when working with immigrant youth to address the varied need and experiences of immigrant children.

The findings of the analysis merit further study. By focusing on the population of children it was identified that they have different motivators for migration than their adults. This information provides insight on a population that is often discussed in terms of adults and therefore does not provide accurate information. Further qualitative and quantitative research

can provide further information on this population, with attention to the child's home country, their family upbringing and method they used to migrate. This in particular should help us understand this vulnerable population, and create proper migration legislative that takes into account the multiple reasons why individuals migrate.

It can therefore be speculated that non-economic motivators have a significant influence in the migration of Central American adults to the United States. Further analysis should be done to analysis how significant non-economic factors influence the migration of Central American adults to the United States.

Appendix

Case #	Gender	Age entering the US	Nationality	Cause of Migration	Family in the US	Gang Affiliation
1	F	17	Guatemala	Family Reunification	Yes	No
2	M	15	Guatemala	Deserted the Guerilla Army	Yes	No
3	M	17	Honduras	Fear of Gangs	Yes	No
4	M	16	Honduras	Family Reunification, Family Violence	Yes	No
5	M	14	El Salvador	Family Reunification	Yes	No
6	M	16	Guatemala	Adventure	No	No
7	M	17	El Salvador	Family Violence, Fear of Gangs	No	No
8	M	17	Guatemala	Fear of Gangs	Yes	No
9	F	17	Guatemala	Fear of kidnapper	Yes	No
10	F	17	Guatemala	Fear of kidnapper	Yes	No
11	F, M, M	17,14,14	El Salvador	Fear of Gangs	No	No
12	M	16	Guatemala	Fear of Gangs	Yes	No
13	M	17	El Salvador	Fear of Gangs	No	No
14	M	16	Honduras	Fear of Gangs	Yes	Yes
15	F	17	El Salvador	Fear of Gangs	Yes	No

Table 1

REFERENCES

- Aldous, Joan (2006). Family, Ethnicity, and Immigrant Youths' Educational Achievements. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27, 1633 - 1667.
- Amar, S. & Fairchild Haer, A. (n.d.) Seeking Asylum from Gang-Based Violence in Central America: A Resource Manual. Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition.
- Amaya Cobar, E. and Palmeiri, G.F. (2000) "Debilidad Institucional, Impunidad y Violencia" in PNUD *Violencia en una Sociedad en Transición: Ensayos*, San Salvador: PNUD, pp: 75-114.
- Anderson, Mette (2003). Immigrant youth and the dynamics of marginalization. *Young*, Feb; 11: 74 - 89.
- Arana, A. (2005). How the Street Gangs Took Central America. *Foreign Affairs*, 84, 98-110.
- Arroyo, W. (1997). *Central American children*. In G. Johnson-Powel, J. Yamamoto, G. E. Wyatt, & W. Arroyo. *Transcultural child development*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Artico, C. I. (2003). *Latino families broken by immigration: The adolescent's perceptions*. New York: LFB Scholarly.
- Bermudez, M. (2005). Gang violence and death squads in Central America. *Asheville Global Report*. 6 Sept 2005.
- Bermudez, M. (2005). Guatemala: Violence against women unchecked and unpunished. *Inter Press Services News Agency*. Retrieved April 25th, 2009 <<http://ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=31192>>.
- Bump, M., Duncan, J., Gozdzia, E., & MacDonnell, M. (2005). Second Conference on identifying and serving child victims of trafficking. *Forced Migration*, 43, 343-363.
- Bustamante, J. J., & Aleman, C. (2007). Perpetuating Split-household Families: The Case of Mexican Sojourners in Mid-Michigan and their Transnational Fatherhood Practices. *Migraciones Internacionales*, 4, 625-644.
- Booth, J. A., & Walker, T. W. (1999). *Understanding Central America*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Center for Gender & Refugee Studies. (2005). *Getting away with murder: Guatemala's failure to protect women and Rodi Alvarado's quest for safety*. San Francisco, CA: Hastings College of the Law.
- Center For Gender & Refugee Studies. (2006). *Guatemala's femicides and the ongoing struggle for women's human rights: Update to CGRS's 2005 report getting away with murder*. San

- Francisco, CA: University of California, Hastings College of the Law.
- Chavez, L. R. (1998). *Shadowed lives: Undocumented immigrants in American society*. (2nd ed.) California: Wadsworth.
- Corsetti, J.D. (2006). Marked for Death: The Maras of Central America does who flee their wrath. *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal, Spring*, 407- 436.
- Cruz, J. M. (1999). El impacto psicosocial de la violencia en San Salvador. *Revista Panamericana de Salud Publica/Pan American Journal of Public Health*, 5, 295- 302.
- Decesare, D. (1998). How Edgar Bolaños became Shy Boy in El Salvador. Retrieved October 2, 2008. <<http://www.aliciapatterson.org/APF1804/DeCesare/DeCesare.html>>.
- Dominguez, J. I. & Lindenberg, M. (1997). *Democratic transitions in Central America*. Florida: University Press of Florida.
- Dreby, J. (2008). Gender and Transnational Gossip. *Qualitative Sociology*, 1, 33-52.
- Duncan, J. (2006). *Six children: Difficulties in Identifying child trafficking victims*. Paper presented at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Conference on Survivors of Sex Trafficking, Washington, DC.
- Eisenman, David P., Gelberg, Lillian, Liu, Honghu and Shapiro, Martin F. (2003). Mental Health and Health-Related Quality of Life Among Adult Latino Primary Care Patients Living in the United States With Previous Exposure to Political Violence. *JAMA*, 290, 627 - 634.
- Ellis, Mark and Wright, Richard (2005). Spatial Demography Special Feature: Assimilation and differences between the settlement patterns of individual immigrants and immigrant households. *PNAS*, 102, 15325 - 15330.
- Elton, C. (July 2003). El Salvador targets smugglers who transport children. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved on June 15, 2008, from <<http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0107/p07s01-woam.html>>.
- En Cerigua de Guatemala (2/8/2005) Género: Mujeres de la provincia, las más afectadas por el femicidio en el 2005. *En Cerigua de Guatemala*. Retrieved on January 3, 2010, from <<http://www.isis.cl/Feminicidio/Prensa/docprensa/agosto/020805Guatemala.doc>>.
- Fuligni, A.J. (2006). Family Obligation Among Children in Immigrant Families. *Migration Policy Institute*. Retrieved on June 13, 2008 from <<http://www.migrationinformation.org/features/display.cfm?ID=410>>.
- Gozdziak, E. M., & Collett, E. A., (2005). Research on human trafficking in North America: A review of literature. *International Migration*, 43, 99-128.

- Gozdziak, E., Bump, M., Duncan, J., MacDonnell, M., & Loiselle, M. B. (2006). The trafficked child: trauma and resilience. *Forced Migration Review*, 25, 14-15.
- Gozdziak, E. M., & MacDonnell, M. (2007). Closing the gaps: The need to improve identification and services to child victims of Trafficking. *Human Organization*, 66, 171-184.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1997). "I'm here, but I'm there": The meanings of Latina transnational motherhood. *Gender & Society*, 11, 5, 548-571.
- Hume, Mo (2004a) Armed Violence and Poverty in El Salvador: A mini case study for the armed violence and poverty initiative in November 2004. *Centre for International Cooperation and Security*. Univeristy of Bradford.
- Hume, M. (2004b) It's as if you don't know, because you don't do anything about it": Gender and violence in El Salvador. *Environment & Urbanization*, 16(2), 63-72.
- Immigration case reporter. (2009). NexisLexis. Retrieved on July 16, 2009 from <<http://www.lexisnexis.com/store/catalog/productdetail.jsp?prodId=10436>>.
- IUDOP/ACTIVA (1999) Normas Culturales y Actitudes sobre la Violencia: Estudio, ACTIVA ,San Salvador: UCA.
- IUDOP/FUNDAUNGO (2003) *Encuesta Sobre la Percepción de la Seguridad Ciudadana a Nivel Navional, Municipal y Zonal*, San Salvador: Misiterio de Justicia and Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Pública, January 2002
- Kinzie, J. David (2006). Immigrants and Refugees: The Psychiatric Perspective. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 43, 577 - 591.
- Johnson, Douglas P. (2006). Historical Trends and Their Impact on the Social Construction of Self Among Hispanics and Its Impact on Self-Efficacious Behaviors in Training and Careers. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 5, 68 – 84.
- Jongsma, A. E. (2006). *The Adolescent Psychotherapy: Treatment Planner*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Lopez, R. J., Connell, R. & Kraul, C. (2005). Gang uses deportation to its advantage to flourish in U.S. *Los Angeles Times*. October 30, 2005.
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Migration and Refugee Service. (2004). *Frequently asked questions about services to trafficked children*. DC: LIRS & USCCB Printing Office.
- Martinez, O. J. (1994) *Border People Life and Society in the U.S. – Mexico Borderlands*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

- Massey, D. S. (2004) Social and economic aspects of immigration. *Annals New York Academy of Sciences*, 1038, 206-212.
- Menjívar, C. (2000). *Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (3rd Printing).
- Menjívar, C. (2006). Global Processes and Local Lives: Guatemalan Women's Work at Home and Abroad. *The International Labor and Working-Class History Society*, 70, 86-105.
- Menjívar, C. (2004). Introduction: Public Religion and Immigration across National Context. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49, 1447-1454.
- Menjívar, C. (2002). Living in Two Worlds? Guatemalan-Origin Children in the United States and Emerging Transnationalism. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28, 531-552.
- Menjívar, C. & Salcido, O. (2002). Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence: Common Experiences in Different Countries. *Gender and Society*, 16, 898-920.
- Moran-Taylor, M., Menjívar, C. (2005). Unpacking longings to return: Guatemalans and Salvadoran's in Phoenix, Arizona. *International Migration*, 43, 91-121.
- Mozingo, J. (2005). Authorities crack down on bloody gangs. *Free Republic*. Retrieved October 2, 2008, from <<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/fnews/1381999/posts>>.
- Raafaub, T. R., (2006). Human trafficking. *Parliamentary Information and Research Service Library of Parliament*. Retrieved October 2, 2008, from <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0425-e.pdf>>.
- Ramos, J. (2002). *The other face of America*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- RAISE. (n.d.) Raise fact sheet: Gender-based violence. Retrieved on February 10, 2010 from <http://www.raiseinitiative.org/library/pdf/fs_gbv.pdf>.
- Scott, S. (2006). Undocumented children in the United States: What happens after they have left federal custody and how well are they faring. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, American University, Washington, DC.
- Sills, S. J., (2000). Social, economic and symbolic ties: An analysis of transnationalism in Mexican communities (thesis, Arizona State University, 2000).
- Smith, J. (2006). Guatemala: Economic Migrants Replace Political Refugees. *Migration Policy Institute*. Retrieved on June 21, 2008 from <<http://www.migrationinformation.org/profiles/display.cfm?ID=392>>.

- Speizer, I. S., Goodwin, M. M., Samandari, G., Kim, S. Y., & Clyde, M. (2008). Dimensions of child punishment in two Central American countries: Guatemala and El Salvador. *Revista Panamericana de Salud Publica*, 23(4), 247-256.
- Suare-Orozco, C., Todorova, I. L. G., & Louie, J. (2002). Making up for lost time: The experience of separation and reunification among immigrant families. *Family Process*, 41, 625-644.
- United States Agency for the International Development (USAID) From the American People. (2006). Central America and Mexico Gang Assessment. USAID Bureau for Latin American and Caribbean Affairs Office of Regional Sustainable Development, April 2006.
- United States Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.) Unaccompanied Children Services. *Office of Refugee Resettlement*. Retrieved March 25th, 2009 from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/unaccompanied_alien_children.htm>.
- United States Department of Justice. (n.d.) Fight trafficking in persons. *USDOJ*. Retrieved March 21, 2007 from, <http://www.usdoj.gov/whatwedo/whatwedo_ctip.html>.
- U.S. Department of State. (March 8, 2006). *Honduras: Bureau of democracy, human rights, and labor*. Retrieved February 10, 2010 from <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61732.htm>> .
- Voss, M. A. (2005). Young and marked for death: Expanding the definition of particular social group in asylum law to include youth victims of gang persecution. *Rutgers Law Journal*, 37, 235-275.
- Walter, N. (2007). Human trafficking in the United States: Immigrant victims falling through the cracks. *Immigration & Nationality Law Handbook*, 539-562.

ENDNOTES

¹ Although this writer is currently working with undocumented youth from Central America, this writer did not use any personal observations. This writer is a Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker and must follow the social work code of ethics. The social work code of ethics warns social workers about engaging in dual relationships with clients or former clients. Since the clients are minors and under federal custody this writer decided it would be in the best interest of her clients to not include personal observations.

² The database Lexis Nexis is available in the library at the University of Texas at El Paso. The database is free for the students at the university.

³ When a proposed research study involves children the research institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB) must review the study to ensure the protection of the minor. This writer faced multiple challenges because the study was on undocumented, unaccompanied children. The first challenge was obtaining the subjects. The legal status of the individuals in the study indicates that the individual has a clandestine lifestyle and therefore would be difficult to locate. Secondly because the participants of the study were under the age of eighteen, parental consent was required to participate in the study. However because they were unaccompanied children, this writer was unable to obtain the consent from the minor's guardian.

⁴ The use of court cases is a valuable underused method to study populations. The data source is a valuable way to study, hard to study populations, because it is a public data source.

⁵ The cases highlighted in the result section were selected because the minor's cases were of interest. Other cases were available as indicated in the table.

⁶ The case of Eduardo was elected as an example of family reunification because it depicts the challenges caused by some forms of legal relief. Temporary Protective Status (TPS) allows an individual to remain in the United States, but it does not allow the individual to return or visit their home country. This form of legal relief causes families to be separated for an extended period of time.

CURRICULUM VITA

Jacquelin Hawley was born in El Paso, Texas. The eldest child of Luis Hawley and Rosa Hawley. Jacquelin Hawley graduated from Jefferrson Silva Magnet High School, El Paso, TX in the spring of 1998. She obtained a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Texas at El Paso in the spring of 2004. After she received her degree in social work, she worked as a casemanager with a long term foster care agency and obtained her license as a LBSW in May, 2005. In early 2005, Jacquelin began working with unaccompanied, undocumented children. She has been a guest speaker during local child trafficking conferences and continues to pursue higher education. In the fall of 2006, she entered the Graduate School at The University of Texas at El Paso

Permanent Address:

625 Dryden Rd.

El Paso, TX 79907