

**A THEORETICAL APPROACH: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF
HIGHER LEVEL NARCOTRAFFICKERS OF
LATIN AMERICAN DESCENT**

BY

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of
MARTÍN MERÁZ GARCÍA find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

Chair

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Abstract

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President Richard Nixon once declared drugs “public enemy number one.” Since then, several putative wars have been waged against this illusive enemy and numerous studies have been conducted attempting to explain the resilience of this enemy. Additionally, few studies of this nature have taken a theoretical and interdisciplinary approach to analyze and explain the way in which this war has been waged. Most studies conducted on the drug war have taken a top down approach (elitist) to the subject focusing on drug lords and cartels; few studies have been undertaken from the bottom up to determine the reasoning for the endless supply of recruits into the drug trade. Such a bottom up approach is used here along with theories in international relations, political psychology and criminal justice to explore the effectiveness of social learning, social identity, group and image theories in explaining higher level drug trafficking in the American West. This study focuses on the socioeconomic, psychological, cognitive and political characteristics which have prompted individuals to engage in the drug trade, particularly those who are of Mexican or Latin American descent. The study finds the theories used for this study are well suited for the assessment of higher level drug trafficking and their use helps shed light on the human decision-making process involved in becoming involved in the drug trading in contemporary American society.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATED TERMS

INS	Immigration and Naturalization Services
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
RICO	Racketeer Influence and Corrupt Organizations Act
TCOs	Transnational Criminal Organizations
MRTA	Tupac-Amaru
FARC	Fuerzas Revolucionarias de Columbia
AFO	Arellano Félix Organization
CFO	Carrillo Fuentes Organization
CGO	Cárdenas Guillen Organization/Cartel del Golfo
WOLA	Washington Office on Latin America
AFI	Agencia Federal de Investigación
FPP	Policía Federal Preventiva
MS-13	Mara Salvatrucha
SLT	Social Learning Theory
SIT	Social Identity Theory
GT	Group Theory
IT	Image Theory
IGOs	Intergovernmental Organizations
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organizations

CI	Confidential Informant
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
GPS	Global Positioning System
NLA	National Liberation Army
AUC	United Self Defense of Columbia
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, who taught me that with sacrifice, discipline and an exceptional work ethic, great things are possible; to my family, who despite not knowing the reasoning behind all of these years in school supported me in this journey; and finally to the McNair Scholars Program, which believed in me and has supported me throughout this process.

CHAPTER ONE

Si eres pobre te humilla la gente, si eres rico te tratan muy bien, un amigo se metió a la mafia porque pobre ya no quiso ser, ahora tiene dinero de sobra, por costales le pagan al mes. Todos le dicen el Centenario, por la joya que brilla en su pecho, ahora todos lo ven diferente, se acabaron todos sus desprecios, nomás porque trae carro del año, ya lo ven con el signo de pesos... (Los Tucanes de Tijuana, 2002, track 1)

If you're poor, people humiliate you, if you are rich they will treat you very well, a friend joined the *mafia* because he wished no longer to be poor, he now has money left over, each month he gets paid by the sacks. Everyone calls him the *Centenario* because of the jewel that shines in his chest, now everyone sees him different, the lack of respect is suddenly over, just because he has a brand new car, they now see him with the symbol of money... (Author's translation, 2007).

INTRODUCTION

Western society measures success based on the material wealth an individual has acquired. For this reason, there is a tremendous pressure from friends, neighbors, the media, and society as a whole to achieve material success. The influence of mass communications has created an environment that encourages immediate consumption of goods and services without regard to how those resources were acquired. The lavish styles of drug dealers showing off their wealth in the communities in which they live ignite hopes and dreams among younger, adventurous and more ambitious members of our communities that leads them to a life of crime too difficult to resist despite the dangers and hardships associated with a criminal career. The narcocorrido quoted above by Los Tucanes de Tijuana, a popular Norteño band which has made a name for themselves by playing narcoballads, provides a snapshot of the willingness of young adults to join drug trafficking organizations or engage in illegal activities in order to achieve the wealthy lifestyle they are seeking.

The younger generations are easily deceived by the mass media's perceived notion that material wealth can be easily achieved. This culture of material consumption poses a challenge to those who do not have the ability to acquire them legitimately, forcing them into a cycle of deviant activities that will ultimately lead them to a life of crime. These individuals soon realize that without an education or technical skills, the American dream will take them a lifetime to accomplish, and they are neither able nor willing to wait to cultivate the tools necessary to accomplish these goals through legitimate channels. The lack of access to education, jobs, mentors and strong community leaders that advocate a delay of gratification of material wealth, in return for more permanent intellectual, political, economic tools for a better quality of life makes these community members more vulnerable to recruitment into drug cartels and other criminal organizations. This has posed a challenge to the U.S. and Mexican governments and the institutions put in place to deal with drug trafficking and other international criminal networks. In this chapter I will briefly outline the historical overview of the U.S.-Mexico cooperation in the drug war, U.S. policies and the drug war, the impact of narco corruption in government institutions, the current literature on organized crime, the role the woman play in these organizations and its connection to higher level drug trafficking.

A Brief Historical Overview of US-Mexico Cooperation

In a technologically advanced society with an increase in trade, sophisticated modes of transportation, advance communication technology, and long and porous borders, individuals have easy access to people, resources and information across

international borders. This makes it more difficult for law enforcement to penetrate transnational criminal networks, particularly if the countries in which these criminal organizations operate do not have strong diplomatic and working relationships with intelligence agencies and other government institutions which have been put in place to curtail the criminal activities of such groups. For example, drug cartels and drug trafficking in general have been the cause of diplomatic friction between Mexico and the U.S., with accusations on both sides of the border of corruption, incompetence and lack of commitment to fighting organized criminal syndicates whose power, influence and violence constantly spreads across international borders. This diplomatic friction has led to the inability of both U.S. and Mexican law enforcement to effectively hunt down members of drug cartels who engage in violent acts in both countries.

Drug traffickers and other criminal organizations are the direct beneficiaries of these diplomatic rifts because these gaps in coordination prevent law enforcement on both sides of the border from sharing intelligence about their whereabouts which may lead to their apprehension and successful prosecution for the crimes they have committed. If these diplomatic dynamics continue, citizens on both sides of the border who are the real victims of this violence will question the competency of law enforcement, particularly that of the U.S. whose reputation is held in high regard for their professionalism, persistence, and effectiveness at hunting down Italian Mafia figures, organized crime and other criminal organizations. These attitudes on both sides of the border will lead individuals who have been crucial in dismantling Mexican drug cartels to resist cooperating with the U.S. and Mexican governments for their inability to

effectively neutralize the threat of international drug criminals and protect them from retaliation.

Several attempts have been made between Mexico and the United States to cooperate in the drug war and counter the violent activities of the drug cartels. For example, during the 1970s the U.S. provided military training and technology to Mexico and, in return Mexico provided the desire to learn drug-fighting techniques, including the eradication and interdiction of narcotics in order to prevent them from reaching the United States. Additionally, the High Level Contact Group on Drug Control created in March 1996 to coordinate the U.S.-Mexico's efforts to combat the war on drugs (Cottam & Marenin, 2005) is also evidence of continuous attempts for collective security among these two countries to fight drug smuggling.

Operation Intercept I and II, in 1969 and 1985 respectively (Cottam & Cottam, 2001), where the U.S. “essentially closed border traffic by slowly searching people crossing the border” (p. 166) are strategies that have also been attempted in hopes of preventing illegal drugs from entering the United States. Considering that Mexico shares a 2,000-mile border with the U.S., these techniques have not only failed to produce the desired security results, but they have also hurt diplomatic relations with Mexico. The militarization of the border through the increase in the number of National Guard, U.S. Army, INS agents and the creation of the Joint Task Force Units, composed only of U.S. local law enforcement and personnel from several intelligent agencies has also been a desperate attempt to prevent drugs from being smuggled across the U.S. Mexico border.

The unwillingness by the U.S. to include Mexican law enforcement personnel and open channels of communication to apprehend members of the drug cartels based on allegations of corruption is a common theme in the relations between these two countries. The notion of sovereignty between Mexico and the U.S. always comes up as a barrier to working together against drug cartels. Incidents such as the kidnapping of Mexican nationals by the U.S. who were involved in the assassination of DEA agent Enrique Camarena to face trial in the United States in violation of national sovereignty also infuriates Mexican officials, leading to diplomatic clashes between these two neighbors.

Major barriers to the cooperation in the drug war between the U.S. and Mexico is largely attributed to nationalistic attitudes of both countries. For instance, Mexico's repeated claims of national sovereignty to prevent the U.S. from chasing drug dealers into Mexico is evidence of its nationalistic attitudes that have prevented U.S.-Mexico relations to improve despite the long history in fighting the drug war. The refusal of Mexico to permit the extradition of Mexican nationals to face drug charges in the U.S. is interpreted by U.S. policymakers as corruption rather than factors of Mexican nationalism. Although this dynamic has been played out in the past, more recently there have been encouraging signs of a diplomatic shift in its relationship regarding the extradition of violent elements of drug cartels from Mexico to face trial in the United States. On the other hand, the failure of the U.S. to admit responsibility for allowing Mexican cartels access to weapons produced in the U.S. is also evidence of nationalistic attitudes that have prevented these two countries from having harmonious relations. The readily availability of weapons has allowed drug cartels to inflict tremendous acts of

violence against innocent civilians and public servants in Mexican territory and has caused major security problems for its government.

Additionally, through the use of gang members as assassins, drug cartels have been able to export this violence across international borders. For example, gang members who hold U.S. citizenship can move freely across international borders without being intercepted and the lack of intelligence sharing between these two countries will continue to negatively impact and have grave consequences for the victims of these crimes. The reach of the Mexican drug cartels is international in nature and on numerous occasions smuggling operations can involve drug traffickers from several countries requiring the coordination, cooperation and intelligence sharing by several governments. For instance, in July of 1995 a multiagency operation discovered a Panamanian tuna boat, the *Nataly I*, 780 miles west of Peru “carrying 12 tons of cocaine stashed in neat packages. Despite the successful prosecution of its crew, Panamanian officials claim that the evidence points to Jose Castrillon Henao of Columbia and Manuel Rodriguez Lopez of Mexico as the smugglers in charge of the vessel” (Fritsch, 1997, p. A.12). American officials claim that they have been coordinating with Panamanian officials and if an indictment is made, they would allow Mr. Castrillon to be extradited to the U.S. On the other hand, U.S. officials claim that Mexico has been slow at sharing information gathered during the investigation of Mr. Rodriguez, a Mexican national.

The NAFTA agreement signed by the U.S., Canada and Mexico has helped heal some of the diplomatic wounds that have been inflicted during several decades of disagreements over how to fight the drug war. Even though NAFTA has produced some

reconciliation among these two nations, this legal trade agreement has also resulted in the increase of illegal goods, including drugs and weapons, being smuggled between Mexico and the U.S. The increase of illegal goods flowing across the borders has resulted in diplomatic friction among the two nations with accusations of corruption and incompetence for failing to prevent the infiltration of drugs into the U.S. and of weapons into Mexico. Additionally, these types of trade agreements have been perceived as benefiting a small number of large conglomerates in Mexico and in the U.S. and negatively impacting the general population who were supposed to be the primary benefactors of these trade agreements. The failure of the U.S. to consider a high priority to check individuals for weapons when crossing the border into Mexico has created tremendous security problem for the Mexican government and the flow of weapons across the border from the U.S. ends up in the hands of drug cartels that used them to commit violent crimes in Mexico against civilians and law enforcement personnel (Cottam & Marenin, 2005).

Narcotraffickers benefit from the nationalistic attitudes and distrust engrained in both the United States and Mexico. These attitudes prevent law enforcement agencies from sharing intelligence regarding money laundering, drug smuggling and other illegal activities that may lead to their apprehension. After the September 11th attacks, we as Americans have realized how vulnerable we were to terrorist attacks and the lack of intelligence sharing between law enforcement agencies were among the major factors cited by The 9/11 Commission Report in charge of investigating how these incidents were allowed to occur (2004, p. 416). Distrust among countries develop when dealing

with internal and external threats and on issues relating to their national security. Unfortunately, drug cartels are able to infiltrate even the highest echelons in government and thrive in the instability and bureaucratic infighting of government agencies that have been created to target their illegal activity.

Furthermore, the U.S. has used the drug issue as justification to tighten control on its border preventing the flow of Mexican immigrants (legal and illegal) into this country. The militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border and the increase in the number of agents patrolling these sites have resulted in an increase of human rights violations. These policies have forced Mexican immigrants to travel further into less populated areas where they are more vulnerable to attacks, starvation and dehydration in their quest to make it across the U.S.-Mexican border. The militarization of the border has not halted the number of illegal immigrants crossing nor is it causing a deterrent effect as was intended; despite this fact, increases of border patrol, Customs agents and military personnel continue to occur on the U.S.-Mexico border. For example, as recent as 2006, President Bush unveiled a plan to send as many as 10,000 troops from the National Guard to help halt the number of immigrants crossing the border illegally (Rutenburg, 2006). Although, according to Immigration officials, this plan did reduce the flow of immigrants, it did so only temporarily.

Although, the terrorist attacks of September 11th had no relationship to the war on drugs, this incident has also been used as an obstacle to meaningful policy debates about immigration, democracy and economic integration between these two nations. Recently, the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq and the overall war on terror have taken precedent

over immigration policy causing Mexico to wonder if the U.S. will ever enact meaningful policies that will allow the more than 12 million undocumented workers to adjust their immigration status. The drug certification process that the U.S. has put in place to force Mexico and other countries to account for these drug policies also has prevented harmonious relationship between these two countries. The certification process has always been considered demeaning and humiliating for those countries that have to measure up to U.S. standards in fighting the drug war. However, decertifying Mexico and other Latin American countries may be against U.S. interests, since this may cause some of these governments to be unable to halt the influx of drugs into the country without assistance.

Despite all the setbacks in U.S.-Mexico cooperation with regards to the drug war, U.S. officials cautiously have called it a new era in which they have come to trust their Mexican counterparts with sensitive intelligence that previously would have ended up in the hands of drug traffickers (Dellios, 2002). The new cooperation efforts of the Fox and Calderon administrations in combating corruption and drug trafficking are paying off. The sharing of intelligence along with newly developed uncorrupted law enforcement teams have resulted in the arrest of Mario Villanueva, a former governor of Quintana Roo and Alcides Ramon Magana, a top drug cartel operator accused of jointly conspiring to ship more than \$ 1 billion worth of cocaine to the United States, and turning the Yucatan Peninsula into a major drug shipment route (J. Smith, 2001).

Additionally, seizure of more than 50 tons of cocaine intercepted in the Pacific coast as well as large drug smuggling and money laundering rings reaching from the

Canadian border all the way to Columbia have also been attributed to these joint law enforcement cooperation efforts. This team has also been credited with the arrest of three senior military officers, several drug cartel lieutenants including a Tijuana cartel enforcer charged with the murder of a Roman Catholic Cardinal in 1993 (Weiner, 2001). The Mexican Supreme Court also approved the extradition of four suspected drug traffickers to face trials in the United States, an action that is rarely taken by the Mexican Judiciary. The new developments in the fight against drug cartels have been praised even by the DEA which has been the most outspoken critic against corrupt Mexican law enforcement agents. The capture of the head of the Tijuana cartel, Benjamin Arellano Felix in March 9, 2002, the death in a shoot out with authorities of his brother Romon, the cartel's enforcer in February 10 of that same year gives testimony of the effectiveness that intelligence sharing between these two countries may bring about (<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/prssrel/pr030902.html>). More recently, the arrest of Francisco Javier Arellano Felix in August 2006 by U.S. law enforcement also delivered a blow to the Tijuana cartel (Steinhauer and McKinley, 2006). The progress made against violent high level drug cartels has disturbed the balance of power that existed for decades leading to bloody battles for territorial control with other criminal drug networks.

In May 27, 2002, Mexican authorities also announced the arrest of Jesus Albino Quintero Meraz, a Gulf Coast drug lord who had bragged about shipping more than a ton of cocaine into the U.S. each month. Officials announced that Quintero, along with six of his accomplices, had been arrested in Veracruz by army intelligence agents after a three-month investigation (Dellios, 2002). DEA Director and high ranking U.S. officials, who

in the past had been very outspoken critics of Mexican law enforcement corruption, only had praise for them after the arrest of the Arellano Felix and other high ranking drug cartels. These officials claimed that they thought they would never live to see the leaders of these Mexican cartels apprehended and their criminal organizations dismantled. After President Elect Felipe Calderon took office in December 1, 2006 the cooperation that existed during President Fox's tenure seemed to continue after Mexico announced on January 20, 2007 that they would extradite four major drug traffickers, including Osiel Cardenas, head of the Cartel del Golfo, Ismael and Gilberto Higuera Guerrero, brothers and former chiefs in the Arellano Cartels in Tijuana and Mexicali as well as Hector Palma Salazar, former leader of the Sinaloa cartel (The Associated Press, 2007).

Even though U.S.-Mexico relations have improved tremendously since the Fox and Calderon administrations, there is always diplomatic tension between these two countries that can erupt at any time and overshadow all of the progress that has been made fighting drug cartels, organized crime and other criminal syndicates. For example, Mexico's refusal to vote in favor of the Iraq invasion in the United Nations Security Counsel during the Fox administration proved to be extremely damaging in diplomatic relations between the two neighbors.

Additionally, Mexico's filing of proceedings against the United States in the International Court of Justice alleging violations of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations has also been viewed by the U.S. as an attack on its image in the international community. The Vienna convention states that "foreign nationals must be notified of their right to communicate with consular officials when they are detained by law

enforcement officials in members' states... [Mexico alleges violations] in fifty-four separate cases involving Mexican nationals who had been convicted and sentenced to death" (Caron, 2003, p.923). The International Court of Justice has issued for the third time in five years provisional measures indicating that the United States is in violation of the Vienna convention and should take appropriate measures to ensure that certain foreign nationals are not executed until the International Court issues its final judgment in the case.

Even though the U.S. does not have to follow such recommendation from the International Court of Justice, citing national sovereignty, being portrayed as a nation which does not respect international norms greatly damages the U.S.'s image in the international community and will continue to strain U.S.-Mexico's diplomatic relations for years to come. Furthermore, in April of 2004, the U.S. announced that they would temporarily stop sharing economic intelligence with Mexico after secret information surfaced in a dramatic corruption scandal in Mexico City jeopardizing ongoing investigations into money laundering and other illegal activities ([NPR](#), 2004). Finally, the attempt by the Bush Administration in 2005 to redefine Article III of the Geneva Convention regarding the use of torture and treatment of terrorist suspects has led to the continuous deterioration of U.S. standing and influence, not only in Mexico but in the whole world.

Impulsive behavior on behalf of the U.S. and Mexico is one of the many factors that have prevented and will continue to prevent good relations between these two neighbors. Finally, border issues including the continuous militarization of the border,

plans to build a new fence and immigration policies affecting both countries will continue to arise, and if both of these countries fail to exercise restraint in responding to such issues, diplomatic relations will continue to suffer.

U.S. Policies and the Drug War

Throughout the last quarter of the 20th century, the United States has waged a war on drugs. The war on drugs is not only being fought from within, but is also being fought simultaneously in many fronts with relative little success. Fighting a war within one's own borders and loosing major battles can be costly and demoralizing. Such an evasive and elusive enemy that operates without borders and relies solely on the forces of supply and demand by the citizen of the very same nation that has vowed to defeat it may continue to evade its enemy until a new strategy of eradicating poverty and social inequalities is adopted and implemented.

In the drug war, policy makers have depleted their budgets and filled U.S. prisons beyond capacity with non-violent drug offenders who have been found with drugs in their possession (Weeks, 1998). Declaring that drug offenders are the principal cause of crimes and social ills, policymakers believe it is justifiable to stripped suspects of their civil rights by removing them from their communities and placing them in jails and prisons, labeling them as convicts, denying them the right to vote, to educational and employment opportunities as well as deporting those who have engaged in drug related activities (Miranda, 1998). This attitude by policy makers has lead to disproportionate incarceration rates of minorities (Blacks and Latinos) who currently make up

approximately seventy-five percent of the prison population (Skolnick, 1994), yet they only make up only twenty five percent of the U.S. population (<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0762156.html>).

In an attempt to control drug dealing and drug smuggling across the state and international borders, policy makers have implemented mandatory minimum sentences for first time drug offenders. Some argue these policies are counterproductive “because they make it difficult or impossible to obtain reasonable proportionality among sentences...foster[ing] cynicism [among] lawyers and judges...” (Tonry, 1995, p. 10). This discontent is obvious when Judges claim that “automatic prison sentences give prosecutors an unfair bargaining tool that they can use to tailor charges and press defendants into plea bargains” (Clemetson, 2007, p. 1). Others like Judge Paul G. Cassell of the Federal District Court in Utah “called the mandatory 55-year sentence he was forced to give a low-level marijuana dealer who possessed, but did not use or brandish, a firearm ‘simply irrational’...[claiming his sentence]...was longer than those required for an airport hijacker, second-degree murderer or a rapist...” (Clemetson, 2007, p. 2).

Congress, in 1984, through the Sentencing Reform Act, created the Sentencing Commission to address the problem of sentencing discrepancies among minorities. However, the Sentencing Reform Act seems to have worsened this crisis because after its implementation it was “followed by legislation which instituted mandatory minimum sentences for crack and cocaine offenders at a 100-to-1 ratio...by doing so, Congress differentiated between the trafficking of cocaine and crack, and provided a much harsher penalty for crimes involving the latter” (Sacher, 1994, p. 1). Despite the recommendation

of the Sentencing Commission that the distinction between cocaine and crack be eliminated no change was made to the “100 to-1 ratio.”

After the shift of power from Republicans to Democrats in the December 2006 elections, these discrepancies are finally going to be addressed in hearings that will be held by the House and Senate Judiciary Committees in late January or early February (Clemetson, 2007). These hearings, however, do not guarantee that drug offenders will be afforded shorter sentences since many interests groups support tougher sentences arguing that the “weakening existing laws will cause an increase in drug trafficking and violent crime” (Clemetson, 2007, p. 1).

The inflated notion of the media and law enforcement agencies of crack babies being born to crack addict mothers has lead to a high percentage of incarceration of pregnant mothers with dependant children. In today’s war against drugs, the incarceration of woman is probably one of the most damaging factors of drug policy. For example, “more than 70% of incarcerated women have children under the age of 18, and most were responsible for their children at the time of their incarceration” (Bush-Baskette, 2000, p. 1). Despite harsh sentences imposed for various types of crimes, including mandatory prison terms for various types of offenders including an increase in the use of the death penalty, policymakers still believe that they are too soft on crime (Wesley, 1998).

According to Dahl (1989), a prominent American political philosopher, in a democracy the majority does not always act according to the principles of equality and may require the intervention of judicial review in order to correct and adjust for such

inequalities. However, the democratic institutions put in place to guard against these inequalities have also aligned themselves with these policies, hence failing to protect those without political power and allowing white and blue collar criminals as well as corporate fraud to go largely unabated. The crimes committed by white collar criminals have resulted in greater loss to the community, yet policymakers have done little to pursue legislation to crack down on these types of crimes because they share many of their own values and do not see them as threatening as the crimes committed by drug offenders. The more we overload the court and judicial system with drug related cases, the fewer resources remain to deal with other serious criminals. For instance, some argue that in some states those who have been found in possession of a few ounces of cocaine for the first time are likely to do more time in prison than those who have raped woman and abuse children (Duke, 2001).

The drug war has created such a staggering rate of incarceration of ethnic and racial minorities that the economist John Flateau has described the criminal justice system as “a slave ship, transporting human cargo along interstate triangular trade routes from Black and Brown communities; through the middle passage of police precincts, holding pens, detention centers and courtrooms; to downstate jails or upstate prisons; back to communities as unrehabilitated escapees; and back to prison or jail in a vicious recidivist cycle” (Small, 2001, p. 1). Miranda (1998) argues that the criminalization of drug offenders “cause[s] the removal of literally hundreds of thousands of young men from inner-city neighborhoods, leading to the...social breakdown” (p. 8) of many communities throughout American cities. Despite the exponential growth of prison

population and incarceration rates, policy makers have done little to curve these trends (Bush-Baskette, 2000). The overcrowding of prisons have forced states like California with a budget of \$8 billion house approximately 173,000 inmates to rethink their approach to fighting crime, which includes policies that required offenders to do more prison time than in other states for similar crimes, by removing rehabilitation programs with a parole system so restrictive that inmates can go back and automatically serve full prison terms for technical violation (Steinhauer, 2006). Institutions in other countries have been burdened by drug related polices, but because these institutions tend to be weaker than those in the U.S. these effects have had more dramatic consequences, particularly in law enforcement, the judiciary and other government institutions.

Effects of Narco Corruption

The profits generated from drug trafficking activities have played a major role in corrupting government institutions in Mexico and other Latin American countries to the point of creating governmental instability. The institutionalization of corruption in Mexico is evident in a study conducted in April and August of 1998 by sociologist Nelson Arteaga Botello of the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico and his sociologist student Adrian Lopez Rivera. In order to get first-hand knowledge of the corruption taking place in police departments, Lopez enrolled in a police academy and after graduation joined a municipal police force. In their study, Arteaga Botello and Lopez Rivera found that most of those who seek law enforcement positions do so for all the wrong reasons, including the accumulation of wealth, to start their own business, to

recover a lost home, savings, land or to hide from crimes that they themselves have committed.

The study concludes that those who join law enforcement are not considered the best citizens that Mexican society has bred; they include people who have a history of law breaking, violence, bitterness and resentment, drug and alcohol consumption and an overall lack of education. Additionally, others who join the force include individuals “with ties to narcotics or stolen goods distribution rings [who] see police work as a chance to expand their distribution and sales networks” (Arteaga & Lopez, 1998, p. 61). Considering the results of this study, it is no surprise that law enforcement officials are always on the lookout for opportunities that would make them money, including connections to drug traffickers, where most likely they will find the gold mine they’ve always dreamed off.

The drug trade allows for large profits to be gained from their illicit activities, which then can be used to lure others into a false sense of economic security and to corrupt members of institutions that are supposed to keep a society in order. Developing countries such as Mexico with their economies in shambles are particularly vulnerable to corruption because public servants—including the police, judicial and military officials—receive low salaries, making it difficult if not impossible to resist the temptations of bribes. Corruption is so engrained in Mexican institutions that those who attempt to resist such efforts are alienated, intimidated and sometimes killed by drug traffickers. From the local police all the way to state, federal and military personnel many public officials are more than willing to accept bribes to compensate for their low salaries.

Mexico and other Latin American countries are not the only countries susceptible to corruption by narco-traffickers. Even though most of the narco-corruption scandals make headlines in Mexico and other Latin American countries, corruption by drug cartels is also a problem for the United States. Drug traffickers have been able to infiltrate respectable law enforcement agencies including the U.S. Customs, Border Patrol and other local law enforcement agencies. Beginning “in 1991, the FBI, working with local agencies along the Southwest border, has won 41 convictions of federal, state and local law enforcement officers on drug charges” (Serrano, 1997, p. A1).

Custom Commissioner George Weise admitted that in 1996 at least 68 of his agency’s border employees were arrested, resigned or fired from their jobs as a result of serious criminal misconduct (Serrano, 1997). Among those arrested include officers from Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) who have been sentenced from 27 years to life on charges ranging from drug importation, conspiracy, bribery, money laundering, income-tax evasion to possession of up to \$1.2 billion in cash from drug proceeds (Serrano, 1997). Additionally, in McAllen, Texas, five former police and animal control officers pleaded guilty to conspiring to move hundreds of pounds of marijuana through the South Texas border (Serrano, 1997). Even though the punishment for corruption if caught is severe, and the salary and benefits a lot higher, U.S. law enforcement agents, just like Mexican officers, are also willing to risk life in prison in their quest to find a “gold mine”.

Drug cartels have also inflicted tremendous acts of violence against public servants, including federal prosecutors, police officers and journalists. For example, in

2000 an undercover Mexican prosecutor, Jose “Pepe” Patino’s crushed body was found in a ditch after he returned from a safe house in San Diego; the execution of entire families to cover drug debts are also common practices among drug cartels such as the Arellano Felix of Tijuana (Dellios, 2002, p.1). When the very people who are supposed to provide security for our communities (i.e., prosecutors, judges, military officials and law enforcement agents) are being executed, and those who are not executed are being corrupted, those who refused to be corrupted are intimidated, the options are limited, and many individuals make a conscious decision not to interfere or help with the government’s effort at cracking down on drug cartels.

Whenever a system of law has failed to provide security for those who serve in their institutions, or has been tainted by corruption and betrayal, not only will it fail in achieving its mission, but it also threatens its democratic ideals that its society has vowed to uphold. This type of environment where high unemployment, lack of education, lawlessness and general government discontent abounds is considered breathing grounds not only for narcotraffickers but for terrorists and other criminal organizations.

A Discussion of the Literature on Organized Crime and Higher Level Drug Trafficking

One of the most commonly cited studies about organized crime was conducted by Cressey Donald, on request by the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1967. This study gave birth to his work titled *Theft of a Nation: The Structure and Operations of Organized Crime in America* (1969). Cressey’s study relied heavily on government informants, FBI wiretaps of Italian crime families,

police files and other government documents to come to his conclusions on organized crime in America. Cressey was among the first scholars who defined organized crime as a corporate-type structure where individuals occupied different positions and performed different duties within the organization.

Cressey's study identified approximately 24 families in the U.S. that operated across the country with the Boss, also known as *Capo*, *Don*, or *Rappresentante* as the one who exercises maximum authority over the family or unit it commanded and was in charge of maintaining control while maximizing profitability of the organization. Below the Boss came the Underboss, or *Sottocapo* who is essentially the vice president of the organization charged with the duties of collecting intelligence, conveying it to the boss and passing down orders to its subordinates. Below this position is the Counselor, *Consigliere* or *Consulieri* who advises the Boss and Underboss and enjoys considerable influence and prestige in the organization. Lieutenant—*Capodecina* or *Caporegima* is the position below the Counselor, which is followed by the Section Chiefs and finally the Soldiers who are at the lowest end of the pecking order of the organization (Cressey, 1967).

However, Albin (1988) disagrees with Cressey's conclusions about organized crime citing his own studies about organized crime in America (1971) and Great Britain (1986) where he found evidence of organized crime as a "loose-knit system of patron-client or network relationships, rather than as the manifestation of a rigidly organized, bureaucratic one" (p. 25). Albin points out other studies including Ianni (1974), Firestone (1997), John Mack (1975), Robert Kelly (1986), Gordon Hawkins (1969), Peter

Reuter (1983); Galliher and Cain (1974) as evidence supporting his own view about the “informal structural-system” of organized crime in America.

On the other hand, Rogovin and Martens (1997) who were also members of the Presidential Commission in charge of studying organized crime, counter Albin's claim by arguing that Cressey's model has endured the test of time and has been utilized by the government to successfully prosecute members of criminal syndicates and the result of legislation including the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) enacted in 1971 by Congress. Additionally, these authors cite literature including *Bonano's Autobiography* (1983), *An Account of Fratianno's Life in Organized Crime*, by DeMaris (1981), *The Mob on Trial* (1986), Paul Meskil (1976) and Thomas Renner (Renner & Giancana, 1984; Renner & Teresa, 1973) among others as evidence that Cressey's model has been successfully tested and implemented in the study of organized crime in America.

However, Lombardo's (1997) study, which uses the constant comparative method to analyze 25 in-depth interviews of subjects including prosecutors, criminal investigators, police officers, authors, organized crime associates and organized crime figures found evidence of several organizational styles. For example, Lombardo's study found evidence of a combination of bureaucratic, patrimonial and patron-client relationship in the Outfit, a Chicago-based criminal syndicate made up of Italian American members. Lombardo refers to this hierarchical organizational style as the contingency model, a fluid and adaptable approach to the changing environment in which they operate. Lombardo claims that the Outfit operated similarly to other crime

syndicates except that they did not use the same names for the position that individuals held in those crime syndicates based in New York. The Outfit is composed of Made Guys (Bosses-members), Outfit Guys (Soldiers-members), Connected Guys (Associates, non-members), Gamblers, Thieves and Wanna-Bes. This criminal syndicate is divided in six different units named after the street names or geographic location in which they operated, including Taylor Street, Grand Avenue, 26th Street, the North Side, Rush Street, and the Suburb of Chicago Heights.

Firestone (1997) also debunks the corporate model structured of organized crime that Cressey (1967) and his followers claim existed. Firestone analyzed a collection of several autobiographical works of previous Mafia members in which he found little evidence of the bureaucratic organizational style that Cressey and his followers claimed. For example, Firestone argues that there existed no centralization of decision-making about any criminal enterprise among the 24 crime families. There existed no “centralization of power, coordinated planning, and functional differentiation characteristic of modern corporations. Second, relations among Mafiosi are characterized by premodern status distinctions, in which superiors are not seen as simply more experience or more qualified, as in modern bureaucracy” (Firestone, 1997, p. 81).

Instead, Firestone claims that members of crime families are perceived as superhuman figures that are given royalty status reinforced through dramatic displays of riches and reverence among criminal circles and their neighborhoods. Firestone proposed a new form of organization in which criminal syndicates were organized; he calls this form of organization the feudal model. He agrees with Ianni’s (1974) description of

organized crime in which its members are loosely connected via childhood friendships, kinship and family. Members of the crime syndicate are independently making decisions on criminal enterprises and only get to pay a fee to the Bosses of the crime family that has control over the territory in which they operate in exchange for advice on how to conduct successful criminal ventures and for protection from other criminal syndicates.

This dynamic resembles that of the feudal lords in which they “took a cut of the profits made by those under their protection” (Firestone, 1997, p. 79) or that of an aristocratic society in which you gain respect or recognition simply because you are a member of a certain family. They will combine forces and unite only when an illegal enterprise promises mutual gain and once this objective is accomplished this association becomes informal again. Firestone argues that in some instances, members of the same family may compete against each other in criminal enterprises for their own financial gain. The organizational style or corporate model that Cressey (1967a) described about the way organized crime operated almost four decades ago still seems to be the way law enforcement approaches higher level drug trafficking in their investigations and prosecutions of their cases. However, more recent studies of higher level drug trafficking networks seem to contradict these forms of operation and hierarchical organizational style of these criminal networks.

The most recent comprehensive study about higher level drug traffickers was conducted by Frederick Desroches (2005) in his book titled *The Crime that Pays; Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in Canada*. Desroches interviewed 70 subjects, including smugglers, importers, manufacturers and wholesalers who were in prison,

parole, or under some sort of supervision in Canada. These interviews were conducted from 1990 to 2002 and the data deducted was crosschecked and/or validated with court and police records. Interviews with officers of the Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) and criminal investigators were also conducted. Desroches' study indicated that most of these higher level drug traffickers "exhibit[ed] a great deal of rationality...[were] careful to evaluate risks versus rewards, and develop[ed] and implement[ed] a modus operandi that emphasize[d] safety and profit" (Desroches, 2005, p. 11).

Desroches' study found that higher level drug traffickers do not operate under a rigid, hierarchical structure Mafia model, as it was believed in the case of organized crime, in which the organizational structure was composed of the Boss, the Underboss, Counselor, Lieutenants, Section Chiefs and Soldiers (Cressey, 1967a). Desroches' study found higher level drug traffickers to operate in a much smaller and strongly bonded group where they "often deal[t] and compete[d] with other gangs..., [had] a relative loose and fluid structure, and...[a] modus operandi that change[d] over time, place, and in response to situational and legal factors" (Desroches, 2005, p. 31). Several of Desroches' subjects did not even consider themselves to belong to any organizations since they had only dealt with a couple of individuals in their drug dealing careers. His subjects instead, "resemble independent businesspeople in a wholesale distribution system, and work for their own enrichment and not that of the organization" (Desroches, 2005, p. 32).

Patricia Adler (1985) also conducted a six-year ethnographic study of higher level drug traffickers in Southern California. Adler interviewed 65 smugglers and dealers, and conducted extensive interviews about the drug trafficking ventures, drug dealing

activities and the social and economic backgrounds of her subjects. Consistent with Desroche's study, Adler found that higher level drug trafficking is "not an arena dominated by a criminal syndicates, but an illicit market populated by individuals and small groups of wheeler-dealers who operate competitively and entrepreneurially" (Adler, 1985, p.2). Adler found the organizational structure of higher level drug traffickers was anything but organized as some scholars had claimed. In fact, Adler agrees with Reuter (1983) that the illegal market is "disorganized" and has no tangible structural organization that guides the actions of its members.

Fukumi (2003) has described the organizational style of higher level drug traffickers and has placed them in the following categories; *headquarters, producer, transit and consumer* countries respectively. For example, the Andean drug trafficking region has been dominated by Colombian drug cartels that made Colombia their headquarters with Peru and Bolivia acting as *producers*. These countries supply the coca leaves and coca paste to the Columbian cartels that in turn manufacture this product and get it ready for shipment. The finished product is then shipped to Mexico and the Caribbean who act as the *transient* countries with their final resting place in North America and Europe, the *consumer* states where this highly coveted commodity will be consumed. This author describes drug trafficking networks as the "most popular and profitable economic activity of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) [who operate much like a] trade company...[where] on the way to the market, traffickers bring back commodities which are in demand" (p. 93-94), these may include weapons, technology and other dangerous products that may prove challenging for a state to control.

Fukumi (2003) describes drug trafficking networks and other TCOs as syndicates whose sole existence is the maximization of profits without ideological or political motives as those of terrorists groups. Fukumi compares these criminal syndicates to legitimate business enterprises and multinational corporations who operate across international borders and whose goal is to operate independently from state interference. These organizations are perceived by Fukumi (2003, p. 43) and other authors (see Williams, 1994a; Huntington, 1973; Schmid, 1996) as very successful enterprises in the world market who have been able to circumvent law enforcement intervention in the network of nation states and have sought to ignore existing channels of authority in order to maximize the profit of their activities.

Although the work of some scholars (see, Mendoza-Nakamura, 1999; Nadelman, 1987-1988; Craig, 1987 & Malkin, 2001) do not describe a particular organization similar to the criminal syndicates in the U.S., they argue that drug traffickers have been able to successfully exploit the weaknesses of social institutions and revolutionary movements in Latin America for their own economic gain. This corruption is evident in Nadelman's study titled *The DEA in Latin America: Dealing with Institutionalized Corruption* (1987-1988). His interviews from 1984-1986 of 30 DEA agents, as well as journalists, diplomats, foreign agents, government officials and other figures revealed the gravity of corruption by drug traffickers of government agents and their institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean. This study also revealed how DEA agents, through the creation of specially trained units, managed to intercept, arrest, neutralize, and extradite drug traffickers to face a tribunal in the U.S. despite the endemic corruption among law

enforcement agencies who were supposed to carry out these duties. Mendoza-Nakamura (1999) argues that the Military and Police organizations in Peru have been infiltrated by drug traffickers through the use of bribes to members of the military, judges and police organizations. Revolutionary movements such as the Shining Path, the Tupac-Amaru (MRTA), Fuerzas Revolucionarias de Columbia (FARC) and other groups have also been infiltrated by drug traffickers who have used nationalistic sentiments to fight drug eradication programs supported by the U.S. (see, Mendoza-Nakamura, 1999; Ceballos-Melguizo & Cronshaw, 2001).

Mendoza-Nakamura (1999) found that drug traffickers in Peru have adopted the organizational structure of legitimate hierarchical agricultural cooperatives that were established long before the production of coca crops were outlawed in the Andean region. Drug traffickers took advantage of land redistribution reforms by means of controlling the local population through the use of violence, intimidation and severing communications of the mountainous regions by destroying bridges, roads and other means of transportation that linked them to the outside world. Mendoza-Nakamura concludes that the formation of these revolutionary movements are “creations of the local drug lords, who set the movements up as ‘armed insurrection’ organizations to help them fight anti-drug policies” set up to undermine their efforts in the production of coca crops (Mendoza-Nakamura, 1999, p.100).

Using networks of drug collectors and sicarios—body guards composed of Peruvian and Columbian nationals-Mendoza-Nakamura (1999) found that drug traffickers disguised as members of the Shining Path were able to monopolize drug

trafficking operations. The secretive and oppressive military and police excursions into Andean-coca producing territories gave rise to these movements which later were used strategically by drug traffickers to benefit their drug smuggling operations. According to Medoza-Nakamura (1999) and Nadelman (1987-88), military bases built with U.S. government funds were used by Peruvian army generals as cover up for drug traffickers who paid them a monthly fee to operate unobstructed in the area with landing rights of private light weight aircrafts used to fly cocaine into other distribution areas. The ability of drug traffickers to use the institutions created to fight them to their advantage shows their creativity and adaptability to the environment in which they operate. These vulnerabilities will continue to be exploited if the institutions that have been created to maintain social order are not strong enough to sustain corruption and intimidation by criminal networks.

More recently, Vellinga (2004) suggests that drug traffickers are no longer what they used to be—large organizations with a monopoly on drug production, distribution and smuggling operations similar to the Cali-Cartels of Columbia. He suggests the new generation of drug trafficking networks “do not use telephones or cell phones for business and prefer personal messengers to modern means of communication...transport themselves in old beat-up cars instead of flashy four-wheel drives. Their new organizations are small and cell-like...informal, flexible and decentralized” (p. 374-8). Vellinga suggests that anti-drug trafficking efforts in Columbia, Peru and Bolivia have been effective at dismantling large drug cartels resulting in new members joining the trade who are more adept at disguising themselves as students with little or no material

wealth and no bank accounts that may occasion suspicions of illegal activity. According to Vellinga, the new generation of drug traffickers is using legitimate forms of transportation to smuggle their cargo and launder money. Among these practices include regular scheduled flights from source countries into Europe by carriers for the transportation of drugs; the funds from drug sales then flow back to the source through foreign currency exchanges, deposits in banks just below the legal limit, precious metals and other small businesses. These funds then move back and forth through businesses, corporations and other institutions along with legitimate funds concluding the laundering process in legal transactions.

Nicaso and Lamothe (2005) described some of the origins of Colombian drug trafficking networks as “small and independent smuggling gangs [which] formed themselves into cartels” (p. 197). These groups consolidated their resources and formed the Cali and Medellin cartels which controlled approximately 70 percent of the cocaine being shipped to North America in the 1980s. The Medellin and Cali drug cartels from Columbia utilized a business model in running their illegal operations, which included organizing their shipments in a manner that if one was intercepted the rest were almost guaranteed in making it across border into the consumer country. Small groups who were isolated and worked independently from each other as well as from the command structure were used to ship the cocaine. If these groups were intercepted by law enforcement, the independent cells would not be able to provide information that would jeopardize the cartels’ leaders. Other groups were in charge of laundering money and funneling the drug proceeds back to offshore banks or to Colombia. These cartels had

“franchises” that would buy their product in the source country but were also allowed to operate their own “outbound” smuggling routes and distribution operations at the retail level. When group members were intercepted, the organization would acquire intelligence on how they got apprehended in order to avoid making the same errors in the future. Members had to prove that the shipments were seized by law enforcement without any reckless errors made on their part; otherwise, they would be held responsible for paying for the merchandise. Shipments of money for merchandise were more difficult to prove, since members in the chain of command could get greedy and simply claim that they never received payment, and if members could not prove that such a payment was made and there were no credible members who would vouch for them they would be in danger of being executed.

Nicaso and Lamothe (2005) described most of the Colombian cartels as made up of family members who had relatives both in consumer countries as well as in Colombia. This meant that if drug traffickers wanted to cooperate with the government it would be virtually impossible, since the family members left in Colombia would be at arms length and in danger of retribution from the cartels. This dynamic, along with brutal murders of police, journalists, lawyers, judges and other government officials, allowed the cartels to maintain a tight knit organization leading to the growth and monopolization of drug trafficking activities in Colombia.

According to Nicaso and Lamothe, members of these cartels were recruited and carefully trained to remain low key by blending into the communities in the consumer countries in which they were going to operate. Members of the cartels would purchase

low cost vehicles, operate small businesses, rent or purchase small homes that were well kept with certain configurations that were advantageous for conducting business operations, including garages that were connected to the main body of the homes with meters located outside of the homes in order to prevent individuals from coming inside their homes. Additionally, local leaders would survey the city where their operations would be set up and gather intelligence about banks which would take large amounts of cash without asking too many questions, trustworthy lawyers, accountants, corruptible police officers and members of the judiciary for possible future recruitment.

Additionally, the shipments would originate from the source country, in this case Columbia, they would arrive in large quantities at transient countries such as Mexico or the Bahamas where the contraband was stored and carefully guarded in warehouses. Once the shipment arrived at this location, the price would increase to cover the cost of the shipments and for middleman to make a profit. These shipments would be sold off in smaller quantities to other buyers, associates and the rest would be shipped off to the consumer country by the cartels themselves or by individuals of the transient country who would be paid either in cash or merchandize to get the shipment to their final destination. Given the inexpensive access to drugs in Colombia, paying individuals in transient countries with merchandize allowed the cartels to lower their cost for shipment and cut the risk of loosing in their investment as well as having to pay the transporters in case the load was intercepted by law enforcement. Once the drugs are sold in the consumer country the funds are funneled back to the cartels in Colombia via their own associates or the individuals who purchase the product. Ironically, according to Nicaso

and Lamothe, the practice of paying drug smugglers with merchandise made drug trafficking groups in countries like Mexico grow in profitability, influence and violence, hence posing a threat to its government as well as that of the U.S.

Nicaso and Lamonthe (2005) argue that the most powerful drug cartels operating in Mexico include the Arellano Felix Organization (AFO), Carrillo Fuentes Organization (CFO) and the Cardenas Guillen Organization (CGO) which maintain their grip on power by hiring out anti-drug agents as hit men, security guards for drug shipments and protection, or take bribes from these criminal organizations to facilitate their drug smuggling operations. Furthermore, these authors argue the rampant corruption among law enforcement and the judiciary in Mexico has allowed these criminal syndicates to thrive and expand their organization from Peru and Colombia where they purchase inexpensive drugs to be shipped to the U.S., Canada and Europe where the merchandise is sold distributed and consumed. The CGO, also known as El Cartel del Golfo, has caused concern among U.S. law enforcement agents and policy makers for their use of military agents who called themselves Los Zeta—a commando unit formed under the Mexican Attorney General's Office in 1980 to track down some of the most violent drug traffickers. This group included 31 agents who were trained by the U.S. military as paratroopers, considered the equivalent of the U.S. Special forces; some members of this unit deserted the army and went to work for the Cardenas organization. Los Zetas are believed to be responsible for dozens of murders and disappearances and other violence that has spilled over into the United States.

Even though Mexican drug cartels appear to have somewhat of a loose organizational style, they seem to be better organized with the ability to monopolize drug distribution and prevent competitors from encroaching into their territory through the use of violence and intimidation. These cartels have effectively used the institutions that have been put in place to protect the security of citizens to advance their own interests. For example, in a report published by the Washington Office On Latin America (WOLA), Freeman (2006) described the ability of drug traffickers to infiltrate elite government law enforcement agencies, including the Agencia Federal de Investigaciones (AFI), Policia Federal Preventiva (FPP), maximum security prisons, the Mexican Judiciary, U.S. border patrol, U.S. Customs, law enforcement officers in border towns, and even the military who can use the cover of their uniforms to smuggle drugs across the U.S.-Mexico border.

Mexican drug cartels have also influenced the media using violence, corruption and intimidation to further their goals. Since Mexican President Vicente Fox took over, a surge of violent confrontation between drug cartels ensued terrorizing Mexican citizens and prompting the Federal government in 2005 to declare a state of emergency in several states and cities, including Tijuana, Juarez, Nuevo Laredo and Michoacán. In an effort to maintain control of shipping routes, Zeta members under orders of the CGO “have cowed and corrupted the municipal police... [who] under their control kidnap members of competing drug trafficking organizations and...[hold them] for ransom or tortured [and to] reveal...information...The Zetas have also formed networks of look-outs and informants among local taxi drivers, food vendors...who monitor comings and goings of

rival traffickers and law enforcement officials” (p. 4-5). The weakness of Mexican institutions has been exhibited since its inception, and this weakness has allowed drug cartels and other criminal organizations to thrive and to hold captive entire segments of the populations.

The activities of Mexican drug cartels are not limited to Mexico, the United States and Canada. Nicaso and Lamothe (2005) report that several Russian and Asian groups are seeking out partnerships with Mexican criminal syndicates to achieve their criminal endeavors. However, according to these scholars, the most worrisome of these groups include the MS-13, otherwise known as Mara Salvatrucha—a Salvadorian street gang formed in Los Angeles during the 1980s by people who were fleeing the civil war. The founders of MS-13 included members of paramilitary groups and a Salvadorian street gang “La Mara.” This group gained momentum in Los Angeles, attracting members from El Salvador as well as other Central American countries to protect themselves against aggression from other local gangs operating in the ghettos. As it grew, according to these authors, La Mara realized its power and influence and began to take part in violent robberies, murders, extortion and drug trafficking. A nationwide deportation of its members resulted in chapters of the gang appearing throughout Latin America, transforming a local gang into a violent international criminal network which is alleged to have communications with al-Qaeda (Connell & Lopez, 2005).

Most of the studies cited have failed to document the role females have played in these criminal networks, either because females are not as active as males in the drug business, or because their role has been largely ignored by scholars studying this type of

illegal activity. Even though this aspect of the problem has not been formally documented by researchers, evidence of female involvement in higher level drug trafficking does appear in the study of Narcocorridos and other qualitative ethnographic studies.

The Role of Females in Drug Trafficking Groups

Other than a few narcocorridos, including La Reina del Sur, Las Tres de Sinaloa and Camelia la Tejana (among others), there is little evidence of female involvement in higher level drug trafficking in the U.S., Latin America and other countries. Of the scant evidence that does exist, most regard females as taking the role of the women of the drug traffickers (*mujeres del traficante*), drug addicts, drug mules and street-level drug dealers (see, Vidal-Rodriguez, 1999; Brownstein et al., 1995; Harper et al., 2002). However, the lack of literature about females in higher level drug trafficking and other organized criminal networks does not necessarily mean that they are not involved in these type of activities; rather, it simply indicates that researchers have failed to include the role women have played, largely because this there is an assumption that the drug trade has been generally dominated by males. Additionally, higher level drug trafficking is viewed as a dangerous profession and Latina women have traditionally held roles as homemaker and child-bearer. There is likely a misperception that women are not engaging in higher level drug trafficking, violence and dangerous activities that might result in long prison terms and even death due to inadequate studies in this area.

Evidence of female involvement in higher level drug trafficking does appear in court transcripts of trials of higher level drug traffickers where sentences of up to forty—five years have been handed down for their participation in drug trafficking operations. The stereotype that females played only a minor role in high level drug trafficking is changing, and it is important that researchers take a closer look at the role of females in higher level drug trafficking and its impact in our communities. If the role females play in these criminal networks is minor, then there is no justification for those who have been caught in the illegal trade getting the same if not harsher sentences than their male counterparts. Evidence of female’s involvement in the drug trade include several corridos written about females who are playing leading roles as successful drug traffickers who are as capable as males at smuggling large quantities of drugs to consumer countries, being able to successfully run large criminal networks and inflicting acts of violence in order to prove their worth in the drug business. The following narcocorrido by Los Tigres del Norte gives us an insight on the future trend of drug trafficking and the new role females are expected to play in these drug trafficking organizations.

Voy a cantar un corrido escuchen muy bien mis compás para la Reina del Sur, traficante muy famosa, nacida allá en Sinaloa, la tía Teresa Mendoza. El Güero le dijo a Tere, te dejo mi celular, cuando lo escuches prietita no trates de contestar, es porque ya me torcieron y tu tendrás que escapar...Dijo Epifanio Vargas, Teresa vas a escapar, tengo un amigo en España allá te puede esperar, me debe muchos favores y te tendrá que ayudar...Manolo Céspedes dijo, Teresa es muy arriesgada, le vende la droga a Francia, África y también a Italia, hasta los Rusos le compran es una tía muy pesada. (Hablado) “Supo aprender el acento que se usa por toda España, demostró su jerarquía como la más noble dama a muchos los sorprendió. Teresa la Mexicana a veces de piel vestía, de su tierra se acordaba con bota de cocodrilo y Avestruz la chamarra, usaba cinto piteado, tequila cuando brindaba”. Era la Reina del Sur allá en su tierra natal, Teresa la Mexicana del otro lado del mar una mujer muy valiente que no la van a olvidar. Un día desapareció Teresa la Mexicana, dicen que está en la prisión, otros que vive en Italia, en California o Miami, o en la Unión Americana (Los Tigres del Norte, 2002, track 1).

I am going to sing a *corrido*, listen very carefully my friends, to the Queen of the South very famous trafficker born over there in Sinaloa, the *tía* Teresa Mendoza. The *Guero* (nickname for white), told Tere, I am leaving you my cellular when you hear it *prietita* (nickname for dark skin), don't try to answer; it is because they've taken me down and you will have to escape...Epifanio Vargas said, Teresa you're going to escape, I have a friend in Spain, he can wait for you there, he owes me a lot of favors and he'll have to help you...Manolo Cespedes said, Teresa is too risky, she sells drugs to France, Africa and Italy too, even the Russians buy from her, she is a very heavy *tía*. (Spoken) "She learned the accent that is used all over Spain, she demonstrated her hierarchy as the noblest madam she impressed many of them. Teresa the Mexican at times dressed in leather, remembering her native land, with crocodile boots and ostrich jacket, she'd wear *piteado* belt and tequila when she cheered." It was the Queen of the South there in her native land, Teresa the Mexican, from the other side of the ocean; she was a very valiant woman that will not be forgotten. One day, she disappeared, Teresa the Mexican is said to be in prison, and others say she lives in Italy, in California or Miami or in the United States (Author's translation, 2007).

There are several noteworthy items the listener should be aware in this narcocorrido; first, Teresa, the character in the song was born in Sinaloa, a Mexican state known for its large production of cocaine and the birth place of several high level drug traffickers. Second, the reference to *Guero* in the lyrics may be referring to Hector Palma Salazar also known as "El Guero Palma," former leader in the Sinaloa Cartel of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, who was captured in 1995 by the Mexican military after his plane made an emergency landing in Jalisco and after serving his prison sentence in Mexico. El Chapo is now being extradited to the United States on charges of drug trafficking. Finally, according to the narcocorridos, Teresa does seem to have had an amorous relationship with the drug trafficker described in the song, but this was also a business relationship. This is evident because after his capture she not only needed to escape to avoid being captured by law enforcement, but she had access to high level drug contacts that helped her escape and continue the drug trafficking business even at a larger scale. Even though, this as well as other narcocorridos may not be strictly based on facts, they are generally based on real events (see Edberg, 2004 & García, 2006) and this fact gives its listening audience as

well as scholars the gender composition and changing trends that may be occurring in high level drug trafficking circles.

Statement of the Problem

In the 1970s, President Richard Nixon declared a war on drugs resulting in a variety of social policies intended to address drug demand and drug abuse as well as initiatives to counter drug trafficking activities domestically and abroad. In the quest to win this drug war, the U.S. has build relationships with source countries in Latin America including Columbia, Peru, Panama and Mexico, among others. Some of these relationships have flourished at times and at other times have suffered greatly depending on the political environment or events developing in these countries. As already discussed, among these diplomatic relationship that resemble that of a rollercoaster in motion is the bilateral relationship that the U.S. and Mexico have had for several decades with respect to the drug war (see Cottam et al., 2004; Cottam & Cottam, 2001; Cottam & Marenin, 1999; 2005). Despite being neighbors and the largest trading partners, Mexico and the U.S. have yet to fully build trusting relationships where they share intelligence about transnational criminal networks as they have with Canada, its northern neighbor. The inability of these governments to build strong relationships among law enforcement agencies and other government and financial institutions on both sides of the border will inhibit their ability to protect its citizens from cross-border violence.

According to the literature on organized crime, the debate about its organizational structure and modus operandi is yet to be determined. Some scholars (see Cressey

1967a; Rogovin & Martens 1997; Fukumi, 2003; Nicaso & Lamothe, 2005; Mendoza-Nakamura, 1999) describe these criminal networks as organized with a hierarchical corporate type structure with different members of the organization performing different duties and responsibility. Other scholars (see Albinni, 1971; 1986; 1988; Firestone, 1997; Desroches, 2005 & Adler, 1985 among others) argue that organized crime does not operate in a rigid organize and bureaucratic like style, instead, these criminal networks operate in a loose network of patron-client relationships. Yet, other studies have described the organizational style of organize crime as having elements of both bureaucratically and independent business entrepreneurs loosely connected to their suppliers and clientele. Judging from the literature, court observations and interviews of law enforcement officials it seems clear that the U.S. government has successfully adopted the same investigative and prosecutorial practices they used against organized Mafia figures during the early 1970s to prosecute high level drug traffickers in the U.S.

As already mentioned, the drug war has resulted in harsh penalties for those who have been found guilty of drug offenses due in large part to the adoption of policies such as mandatory minimum sentences for first-time drug offenders. This has lead to an exponential increase in the prison population that was unforeseen three decades ago, with members of minority groups sustaining disproportionate rates of incarceration in this decades-old war on drugs. As a result, many states like California have declared prisons to be in a state of emergency because this increase has been so dramatic that their budgets cannot keep up with building new prisons nor support the crowed prisons they already

operate. Despite the harsh punishments in place for drug trafficking, this unlawful activity does not cease, nor does it even seem to slow down.

Long prison terms and other harsh punishments for those convicted of drug trafficking do not seem to lower the availability and potency of drugs in American cities; new members continue to be recruited into these organizations as state law enforcement and judicial systems struggle to keep them behind bars. For these reasons, several questions emerge, including—Does engaging in drug trafficking really pay off as Desroches (2005) claim? If not, is there a lack of legitimate business opportunities, lack of education and technical skills that individuals are forced or persuaded to engage in the drug trade in order to achieve the material wealth they are striving for? How profitable is joining drug trafficking organizations that members are willing to risk their lives behind bars and jeopardize the physical and psychological stability of themselves and their families? Have those convicted of drug trafficking in the U.S. become better off or worse off for having joined drug trafficking organizations? Have these members accumulated the material wealth they sought to accumulate? Are those seeking membership in these organizations pursuing only material wealth, or are they also in the quest for status, respect and belonging? What types of membership are these drug trafficking organizations composed of, particularly those which are of Latin American descent? Are Latinos and other minority groups at higher risk of being recruited into these organizations? If so, what can be done to curb this trend?

Additionally, do these organizations have a tendency to be violent? Are the drug trafficking organizations operating in the Northwest less violent than those operating in

the Southwest? What about drug cartels that operate from Mexico, do they have a tendency to be more violent than their counterparts who operate in the U.S.? If so, what are the factors that make these organizations unleash violence against competitors, law enforcement and civilians in one geographic location versus another? To what extent are the institutions which are supposed to quell these violence and unlawful activities responsible for creating an environment that is ripe for the these organizations to grow and develop into entities that threaten the authority of the state as well as the security and stability of the communities in which they operate?

These are among the questions this study intends to address, particularly with respect to higher level narco traffickers who are of Latin American decent. Utilizing Social Learning Theory (SLT), Social Identity Theory (SIT), Group Theory (GT) and Image Theory (IT), I will attempt to better understand the social and economic characteristics of higher level narco traffickers; the type of environment in which they were raised and the reasoning behind their diligence in achieving economic wealth via drug trafficking, despite aggressive law enforcement and judicial practices. The gender composition of these criminal organizations and the manner in which these higher level drug traffickers got started and the length of time they remained in the drug business before they got apprehended as well as their connection to Mexico and other Latin American countries will also be explored.

Their goals, motivations, ambitions, emotions and psychological drawbacks experienced as a result of their illicit drug trafficking operations will be considered. The working relationships of higher level drug traffickers with their clients, suppliers,

associates and employees, the hidden norms that exist within these organizations and the consequences for those who violate these rules are other issues that will be explored. Finally, this study will look at ways in which ordinary individuals become higher level drug traffickers, the images they have of U.S. and Mexican law enforcement, and the propensity they display to use violence against these groups in order to achieve their financial goals. This work will also look at the images government officials have of drug traffickers and the reasoning behind the long prison sentences given to those who are caught either selling or conspiring to sell illegal narcotics in Mexico and the United States.

Chapter Outline

In Chapter 2, I discuss in detail the major tenants of Social Learning Theory, Social Identity Theory, Group Theory and Image Theory. This chapter provides a detailed description of the major contributors of these theories, its assumptions and why they are suited to analyze higher level drug trafficking.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology being employed in the study, the techniques used to gather data on this controversial topic and a brief description of the different pieces that were required to put together this study. This chapter also provides a description of the subjects, the conditions in which they were interviewed and the tools that were developed to analyze them. Some literature on content analysis, its validity, and acceptability in the discipline is also provided. Finally, a brief description of the

methods used to analyze the narcoballads, details of the observations conducted and the way images were identified are also provided in this chapter.

Chapter 4 explores whether or not SLT holds up in explaining the type of environment in which those who engaged in drug trafficking come from and the ways in which they learned this unlawful behavior. The type of friends they associated with, history of employment, family background and explanations as to why these subjects made a decision to engage in drug trafficking and other criminal enterprises in order to make a living are all investigated. The data gathered for this analysis will also be presented and interpretations of the findings will also be provided in this chapter.

Chapter 5 attempts to determine the suitability of SIT and GT to explain the reasoning for members of our community to abandon their law abiding lives to join a group that engages in unlawful activities in order to achieve material wealth. Furthermore, this chapter also looks at the suitability of these two theories in explaining higher level drug trafficking and the propensity for the members in these criminal organizations to utilize violence whenever the existence of their criminal enterprises is threatened. This chapter also looks at their socio psychological needs including the need for belonging, respect, the formation stages of these groups and the way in which they internalize their newly adopted group norms. Findings derived from the analysis of the narcocorridos, as well as the interpretation of the data collected, are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 6 looks at the images drug traffickers have of law enforcement and the images government officials have of higher level drug traffickers and whether or not

images these actors have of each other will lead to violence. An assessment is made of whether or not the images that Judges, Prosecutors and law enforcement have of higher level drug traffickers lead to disproportionate high prison sentences for these defendants, even when it is evident that some members of these organizations are only loosely connected to these criminal networks. This chapter also looks at the suitability of IT to analyze higher level drug trafficking and its ability to assess the images drug traffickers have of others who live law abiding lives.

Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes the findings of this study, provides an assessment of the suitability of an interdisciplinary approach for studying societal problems (particularly criminal activity) and offers some recommendations on how to properly address the prevention of recruitment of new members into these criminal organizations. This chapter also provides a discussion on the potential for cross-border violence and other criminal activity if both the U.S. and Mexico failed to put their differences aside and build strong and trusted networks of law enforcement, with the ability to share information of criminal networks on both sides of the border. Finally, some domestic and foreign policy recommendations are offered for consideration.

CHAPTER TWO

A THEORETICAL APPROACH TO HIGHER LEVEL DRUG TRAFFICKING

Due to the complexity and the effects of higher level drug trafficking, and in order to examine and explain this phenomenon as fully as possible, I have taken an interdisciplinary approach using theories present in the international relations, political psychology and criminal justice research literatures. In this study, using social learning theory (SLT), social identity theory (SIT), group theory (GT) and image theory (IT), I analyze higher level drug trafficking. SLT is used to determine the type of environment in which higher level drug traffickers grew up, and the factors that lead them to a life of crime—including their socioeconomic background, family history, relationship with others, and the circumstances that prompted these individuals to engage in the drug trade. Additionally, SIT and GT are used to explain some of the techniques being employed to recruit individuals into drug cartels; the labels, stereotypes and images of the ingroup versus the outgroup and the similarities that exist in the socialization and recruitment process of the narco versus other criminal organizations. Finally, IT is used to assess the images that higher level drug traffickers have of law enforcement, the perception that drug traffickers have of government officials both in Mexico and in the U.S., and whether or not the images that they have of each other (government officials of drug traffickers and drug traffickers of government officials) has the potential of leading to violence.

Social Learning Theory

According to Vold, Bernard and Snipes (2002) the major focus of learning theories relate to the content of what is learned and the process by which the learning takes place. Vold et al. cite Aristotle's work on the different ways in which individuals learn by association. According to Aristotle, "all knowledge is acquired through experience and...none is inborn or instinctive" (Vold et al., 2002, p. 155). With this in mind, Aristotle constructed four laws of association; the

law of similarity, the law of contrast, the law of succession in time, and the law of coexistence in space (Vold et al., 2002, p. 156). These authors argue that learning theories are divided into two domains, cognitive and behavioral, the latter representing knowledge acquired through the “association of stimuli with responses...[and] the learning occur[ing] primarily through trial and error” (Vold et al., 2002, p. 156).

In construct, cognitive theorists claim that one gains “factual knowledge through the association of memories, ideas, or expectations...taking place through insights into problem solving” (vold et al., 2002, p. 156). According to cognitive learning theorists, there are three simple forms in which individuals learn through association; *classical conditioning* (Pavlov) in which a certain stimuli produces a response (for example, a dog salivating after being presented with meat); *operant conditioning* (Skinner), where rewards and punishment are used to induce a certain type of behavior; and *social learning* whereby individuals will learn expectations by simply observing the consequences of the actions of others (Vold et al., 2002, p. 156-7).

The theory of social learning has gone through long evolutionary process, and perhaps one of the first proponents of social learning theory was Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904). His social learning theory rejected Lombroso’s theory of abnormality and instead proposed his theory of imitation. Tarde’s theory of imitation featured three rules; the first is that the frequency with which an individual comes in contact with a deviant group will dictate how much they imitate their behavior; second, the inferior or less successful will imitate the superior or more successful criminal and the third rule is that the methods of committing crimes will eventually be replaced with new techniques.

Tarde’s theory would in time be replaced by Sutherland’s social learning theory. Sutherland borrowed heavily from Tarde’s basic principle of imitation and presented the

following major points regarding offenders (Vold et al., 2002, 159-60): 1) criminal behavior is learned; 2) this learning takes place through communication in the process of interaction with others; 3) the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate criminal groups; 4) during this process, techniques on how to commit crimes along with the reasoning, motivations, drives, rationalizations and attitudes for committing those crimes will be learned. The 5th point includes the favorable and unfavorable definitions of the legal codes will depend on the groups of people with whom an individual socializes, some favoring the violations of these norms while others being respectful of these rules.

Akers (1977) describes this process as individuals learning “criminal behavior in a process of symbolic interactions with others, mainly those in his primary group, who present[ed]...both criminal and anti-criminal patterns, techniques, motivations, and definitional stances towards the legal norms” (p. 41). In other words, a person who is frequently in contact with deviant groups and becomes emotionally attached will most likely turn to criminality as opposed to a person who does not become emotionally attached and comes in contact with deviant groups less frequently. The 6th step, and the major principle of Sutherland’s theory, holds that while in these criminal groups if the individual gets repeated definitions of behaviors that are law abiding the result will be conformity social norms. On the other hand, if the individual gets excessive definitions of behavior that are in violations of the law, the results will be criminal deviance.

The 7th step in Sutherland’s social learning theory is differential association, which can vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity. For example, parental intervention may offset the influence of deviant peers by acting as a barrier, hence preventing extended exposure to deviant values. In short, time spent with parents can simply reduce the time children will spend

with deviant groups, with those who are more attached to their parents being less likely to make deviant friends and therefore be less likely to engage in criminal activities. Sutherland's 8th assertion claimed the learning process followed similar patterns in criminal and non-criminal behavior. For example, a person who learned how to earn a living as an apprentice in an auto body shop would first have to sweep the shop, clean the toilets, put away the tools, learn the different parts of the vehicle, then get started by repairing small dents until things finally reached the stage where the apprentice got to paint an entire vehicle and observe the finished product. This same principle and learning process would apply for individuals who were learning how to earn a living by engaging in criminal behavior.

Finally, the 9th and last step in Sutherland's social learning theory postulates that criminal as well as non-criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values; however, this behavior is not explained by these same needs and values. In other words, criminals as well as non-criminals have to engage in activities that will ultimately allow them to provide for themselves and their families regardless of whether or not this behavior is criminal or lawful in nature. According to Vold et al. (2002), these elements incorporated cognitive elements because they all involved ideas on criminal behavior that were learned during the socialization process among intimate friends or groups. This idea was derived from Symbolic Interactionism theory developed by Herbert Mead, a sociologist who claimed that individuals frequently behave based on the meanings they had attached to things from past experiences in their own life. For this reason, he explained, individuals who had the same experiences will frequently develop different ways of looking at the world. For example, brothers who have endured the same trauma of having their father brutally murdered may choose to avoid inflicting pain against the perpetrators

of this violence while others may seek revenge and view the world as a violent and distrustful place in which to live where only the strongest survive.

Sutherland's theory paved the way for cultural and subcultural theories, whose advocates claim that different groups may have different definitions of what is acceptable behavior and what is not. For example, Miller (1958) illustrates this point when he argues that within the lower class a subculture had developed in which getting in trouble, toughness, smartness, excitement, fate, and autonomy was valued more than in the dominant society. These subcultures emphasized the importance of honor, and human life was not valued as much as that of the dominant culture. Additionally, deviant behavior resulted in admiration in the lower class versus ridicule in the dominant culture. The major emphasis of these theories reflected the view that the ideas and definitions individuals had formed, rather than the environment in which they lived, resulted in criminal behavior. Among the most recent contributors to Social learning theory is Akers' (1994) work on *Criminological Theories*. Akers explained the learning of criminal behavior in similar ways as did Sutherland, but differed in one important respect; in addition to learning antisocial behavior from others, he argued that non-social conditions also contributed to the criminal behavior of individuals. For example, the environment in which individuals reside could either reinforce or weaken criminal behavior.

Utilizing social learning theory (SLT) will enhance the ability of the study participants to transition from discussing their background before they get into the drug trafficking activities that landed them in prison. The tenets of SLT will help us understand the cognitive and behavioral factors that prompted law abiding individuals to choose an unlawful alternative of making money, in this case by joining drug trafficking organizations. Among these factors in which SLT will help us discover include the socioeconomic background and the environment in

which these higher level drug traffickers grew up; the types of friends, family members and educational background these participants experienced before engaging in this illegal activity. Moreover, as outlined in Chapter three, the questions deducted from SLT will advance our understanding about higher level drug traffickers by allowing me to dig deeper into the lives of these individuals, including assessing the relationship they had with parents and other supervising adults during their childhood to see how these factors affected their behavior as they matured. SLT will assist me in determining the physical environment in which higher level drug traffickers grew up, the impact if any it had on them, the types of relationships they formed with their peers, and whether or not these relationships contributed to their decisions to engage in drug trafficking activities in order to achieve the material wealth they wanted to possess.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory blends cognitive and group theories and maintains that we classify ourselves as well as others into in-groups and out-groups. Cottam, Mastors, Dietz-Uhler and Preston (2004) describe social identity theory as the way individuals compartmentalize and organize information into categories or groups in order to facilitate information processing, which then leads to schemas, heuristics and stereotypes. These schemas and stereotypes allow individuals to process large amounts of information and function without constant evaluation of everything they encounter and experience in their daily lives. Cottam et al. suggest that when we categorize things into stereotypes or groups we inevitably differentiate between ourselves and those who are different than us; this grouping is deducted from a need that individuals have to belong (or the need for affiliation) and to see themselves as different from other groups (see, Tajfel, 1972, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; cited in Cottam et al., 2004).

Cottam et al. (2004) summarized Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory in terms of three steps; "first, group members strive to achieve or maintain a sense of positive social identity; second, group members base this social identity on favorable comparisons that can be made between in-group and relevant out-group members. These social categories...individuals are members of provide...a social identity by enabling them to compare their in-group with out-groups" (p. 89-90). Third, group members will make an attempt to join other groups that in their view have a better social identity than the group in which they were a member. Tajfel and Turner (1979) suggested three other variables that influence inter-group differentiation; first, "members of a group must have internalized their group membership as an aspect of their self concept. Second, the social situation must allow for inter-group comparisons; and finally the out-group must be perceived as a relevant comparison group" (cited in Cottam et al., 2004, p. 90).

Tajfel and Turner (1979) described the strategies groups typically use to deal with a negative social identity; these include social mobility, social creativity and social competition. Social mobility is described as an attempt to enhance one's own social identity by joining a group of higher status. On the other hand, group members who employ social creativity use three strategies to cope with this mindset; first, they will compare the in-group with the out-group at a different level; second, "they reevaluate the comparison dimension such that previously negative dimensions are perceived as positive; and third, comparing one's in-group to a different or lower status out-group" (p. 91). In-group members who use social competition to enhance their social identity will compete with the out-group in order to gain a more positive distinction. According to Ellemers, Wilke and Knippenberg (1993) the strategies used to enhance the individual's social identity depend on how easy it is for individuals to join other

groups or remove themselves from their current groups. With regards to in-groups and out-groups, the out-group is viewed as threatening and as the threat perceptions increase the out-group is considered more homogeneous and extreme (Corneille, Yzerbyt, Rogier & Buidin, 2001, cited in Cottam et al., 2004). Linville (1982) suggests that individuals or groups with more complex cognitive processes are associated with more moderate reactions.

According to Cottam et al. (2004) when an in-group experiences negative emotions as a result of not achieving their goals they will express anger towards the out-group, these feelings can produce a drive to regain control of events, eliminate the obstacle of obstruction, and if necessary attack the source of injury (see Frijda, 1986, p.89; Izard, 1977, p. 80; Lazarus, 1991). Cottam et al. found that “whether a person acts on his or her anger depends on the situation, norms, values and the characteristics of the offending party... [other factors such as]...frustration, resentment, contempt and disgust... can trigger repulsiveness by the actions or characteristics of the out-group to the point of wanting to destroy or wipe out completely the offending group” (p. 97). For example, Smith (1993) determined that minority groups who felt they had “low power felt fear in regard to high power or majority groups; members of high status groups felt disgust in regard to low-status groups; contempt was felt by any group toward any out-group; anger was felt by members of high power or majority groups when low power or minorities made demands or threats; and jealousy emerged among low status groups toward high status groups” (Cited in Cottam et al., 2004, p. 99).

Finally, hostilities are not only expressed between high status versus low status groups, but conflicts can also arise between groups considered equal in power. For example, Tajfel (1970) claimed that there were certain factors about the membership of a group that triggered clashes with other groups that were equal in status. For example, being a member of a group

made sure that there was a reason to discriminate against the other, since an individual on their own had nothing to gain from being hostile or negative against the other; these “inter-group” biases resulted from the psychological need that individuals have to evaluate their own group more positively.

The principles outline by social identity theory (SIT) regarding in-groups and out-groups are properly suited for exploring the justification for joining drug trafficking organizations and for determining if the individuals who joined these groups did so because they perceived them as higher in status than the previous group in which they held membership. SIT will allow me to assess the resistance, if any, that my participants encountered when they attempted to join drug trafficking organizations, how well these subjects internalized the norms of their newly acquired group, what happened when these unwritten rules were broken, and how well they coped with knowing that the activities they were engaging in could land them in prison for a lifetime. Because SIT is also based on cognitive traits, it will help us determine whether or not this membership fulfilled their needs of acquiring status, respect, belonging and power; these are traits that might have been lacking before, and potentially the biggest factor that lured them into joining drug smuggling organizations. Finally, SIT will enhance our understanding about the way these organizations will react whenever their existence is threaten by law enforcement or competitors, and how individual members of these criminal networks perceive others who are considered out-groups.

Group Theory

According to Cottam at al. (2004), even though most social psychologists define a group as a collection of people who are perceived to belong together and are dependent on one another,

there are other ways to conceptualize groups. From the beginning of times humans as well as animals have gathered in groups for practical reasons, including to promote survival needs such as feeding, defense, nurturance, and reproduction (see, Bertram, 1978; Harvey & Greene, 1981; Scott, 1981; cited in Cottam et al., 2004). Additionally, Mackie and Goethals (1987) found that groups form because they fulfill certain needs for individual members; they called this need the *functional perspective* and suggest that individuals join groups for the social benefits that they may derive from this association. Among the needs or benefits derived from joining groups are psychological benefits, which include the need for affiliation, inclusion, affection and the need for power. Social support is also gained by group membership, including emotional sustenance, helpful advice, and protection from the harmful effects of stress (Barrera, 1986). Within groups members can compare their own beliefs, opinions and attitudes so that they can better understand their shared social reality (cited in Cottam et al., 2004, p. 126).

Lickel et al. (2000) identified four categories of groups-namely, intimate groups, task oriented groups, social groups, and weak social relationships or associations based on common interest or concerns. Cottam et al. (2004) described the types of groups, which come in all shapes, sizes and compositions and can be as small as three (Desportes & Lemaine, 1988) and as large as thousands of people to include entire societies. When it comes to the membership and participation of these groups, there is an inverse relationship; as the group membership increases, less participation on the part of the members occurs; as group size grow members show less dedication and groups experience more tardiness as well as a higher rate of loss of membership over time (see, Patterson & Schaeffer, 1977; Widmeyer, Brawley & Carron, 1990; Durand, 1985; Spink & Carron, 1992; cited in Cottam et al., 2004).

Cottam et al. (2004) suggest there are other dynamics that seem to be affected by group size, including a higher likelihood of friction among the members (O'Dell, 1968), less harmony and less collaboration (Brewer and Kramer, 1986); difficulties abiding by group rules (Olson and Caddell, 1994); difficulties between group members (Diehl and Stroebe, 1987; Williams and Harkins, 1979), resulting in poor group performance. Additionally, according to these authors, we first tend to be attracted to those who are most similar to us with regards to attitudes, beliefs, socioeconomic status and physical appearance; this is known as the interpersonal attraction perspective (Newcomb, 1960, 1961, 1979; Festinger, Schachter & Back, 1950). Moreover, in larger groups it is easier to become a free rider without being noticed, causing the performance of the group to falter (Karau & William, 1993, cited in Cottam et al., 2004, p. 119). Cottam et al. suggest that the characteristics of individual group members such as sex, race, ethnicity and physical attractiveness can be very important to the functioning and performance of the group, and as the degree of diversity increases group members tend to communicate with each other less frequently and in more formal ways (see, Zenger & Lawrence, 1989).

When groups first form, they go through an evolutionary process before they are fully developed. The stages that groups undergo before they mature are commonly referred to as the forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning phase (Tuckman, 2001). In the forming stage, individuals who will eventually become part of the group are hesitant to reveal their real identities because they have yet to develop a concrete idea of the norms of the group; once the group norms have been established, group members feel more at ease and begin sharing more with other group members until the group solidifies into a fully functioning collectivity (Cottam et al., 2004). The storming stage is referred to as one of “resistance to group influence and task requirements...[also known as] intragroup conflict.” The third stage, norming, is where group

members tend to open up more to other members and their group begins to experience more “cohesiveness; new standards evolved and new roles are adopted” (Tuckman, 2001, p.66). According to Tuckman (2001), the fourth stage of group development termed performing is when the structure of the group has solidified and its members can focus in achieving objectives for the group. Finally, the last stage of the group cycle termed adjourning is where members express dissatisfaction, “anxiety about separation and termination; sadness...[and]...self evaluation” (Tuckman, 2001, p.66).

According to Cottam et al. (2004), when individuals violate group norms, there are strong sanctions that can be applied to individuals who engage in this practice, including expulsion from the group. However, in order for individuals to be expelled from the group; it generally takes extreme violations of norms, such as challenging the core values of the group. On the other hand, Cottam et al. suggest that adherence to norms improves the performances and cohesion of a group (Seashore, 1954), with these norms not necessarily being clearly defined, where members only need to be socialized into the group with the ability to easily adopt and internalized them to the point of losing their own identity—a process known as de-individuation. Individuals who join groups such as narcotraffickers, gangs, cults, skinheads, KKK and others can become de-individuated while participating in group activities and change to their normal routines after the task at hand has been accomplished.

Cottam et al. (2004) suggest that a group’s cohesion can be improved when it is working towards a common goal, and when it experiences external threats; encouragement of warmth feelings among group members by its leader as well as the rewards deducted from the association also tends to improve the performance of the group (see, Lott & Lott 1965; Dion, 1979; Ruder & Gill 1982; Griffith & Greenless, 1993). There are other unconventional ways

that groups utilize to improve cohesion, including ritualistic initiation into the group, hazing, blackmailing and shaming. Cottam et al. suggest that groups can maintain cohesion even when they fail at reaching their goals by blaming an external entity for their failures; however, the potential for endemic violence with catastrophic results (including genocide) is real if these groups have experienced this cohesion in the past and then fall apart. Leaders, however, can play a crucial role in maintaining group cohesion.

Cottam et al. (2004) suggest that working in groups can be advantageous for various reasons, including a larger availability of resources, an increase in productivity, increase in power, cohesion and other benefits; however, working in groups can also lead to negative consequences, including a phenomenon known as *Group Think*—a constrained style of thinking that causes group members to make poor decisions (see, Janis, 1982). Interesting dynamics develop in group think, including a strong pressure to conform to the group's attitudes and beliefs. The group becomes self-censor—not expressing their disagreements openly, apparent unanimity—where group members seemed to agree with one another, illusion of invulnerability, illusions of morality—group members not questioning the morality of their decisions and finally the biased perceptions of other groups (Cottam et al., 2004, p. 154-5).

Utilizing group theory (GT) to analyze higher level drug traffickers will give me an opportunity to learn how drug trafficking organizations are formed, the stages they go through before they are fully developed, the psychological and environmental factors that lead individuals to joining these criminal networks, and the effectiveness or lack thereof in which they operated despite law enforcement efforts to diminish their activities. Additionally, GT will play a key role in determining the type of membership these groups are composed of, informal channels of communication utilized to gather information about potential drug markets, prices, and

techniques on drug smuggling routes, and how to avoid law enforcement detection and apprehension during their criminal careers. Group theory will also help me determine the size of these drug trafficking organizations, their internal group dynamics, an overall assessment of their ability to internalize the norms of this newly acquired membership, whether or not they strictly abide by these norms, and what happens when these rules are violated. Furthermore, GT will assist me in determining if the size of these drug trafficking organizations affects their ability to carry out their illegal activities, their propensity to resort to violence as the organization grows and their vulnerability to law enforcement detection, apprehension and prosecution as the organization expands. Finally, GT will also play an important role in exploring the type of leadership under which some of these organizations function, what happens to these criminal networks when these leaders are incapacitated, and whether or not this incapacitation leads to the cohesion or decomposition of the group.

Image Theory

Image theory (IT) was developed by Richard Cottam in the 1970s to describe how individuals process information. This theory was originally intended to model perceptions of other states in international politics (Cottam & Cottam, 2001). However, image theory is not restricted to the state as the main unit of analysis; it can be adapted to the state and local levels to include other factors affecting the behavior of states. Among these factors are Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO) and Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO), including drug trafficking groups and other criminal networks operating within and across international borders (See A. Jackson, 2001; M. Infranco, 2005). Cottam and Cottam contend that groups are classified into cognitive categories and those images function much like stereotypes such as the enemy or the

ally (see, M. Cottam, 1986, 1994; R. Cottam, 1977; Blanton, 1996; Hermann, 1985a, 1985b, 1988, 1991; Herman, et al. 1997; Holsti, 1962; Schafer, 1997).

According to Cottam and Cottam (2001, p. 96), images contain information about a group's capabilities, cultures, intentions, the kinds of decision making groups (lots of people involved in decision making or only a few), and perceptions of threat or opportunity. These capabilities include the stability, strength and the access of resources to be able to plan and execute operations that will enhance the reputation and influence of the group. Cultural attributes consist of judgments of cultural sophistication. For example, when assessing other actors groups or leaders will judge whether their capabilities and culture are equal, inferior, or superior to that of their own groups. Other assessments include whether the group has threatening or defensive intentions, or presents an opportunity to achieve an important goal.

Martha Cottam (1986) extended image theory in a new direction focusing on the cognitive process of categorization, specifically focusing upon the assignment of characteristics to external entities. Images are considered the product of group leaders who must use them to simplify the world in which they live. Once these images are formed, these cognitive constructions become filters through which information passes and upon which decisions are made. M. Cottam developed seven different images that characterize an individual or group member's view of another peoples or groups. These seven images are the following; enemy, ally, barbarian, imperial, colonial, rogue, and degenerate. Table 4.1 provides a detailed description of these images.

Table 4.1
 Image Attributes
 From Cottam and Cottam, 2001, p. 98

	Capability	Culture	Intentions	Decision makers	Threat/ Opportunity
Enemy	Equal	Equal	Harmful	Small elite	Threat
Barbarian	Superior	Inferior	Harmful	Small elite	Threat
Imperialist	Superior	Superior	Harmful	A few groups	Threat
Colonial	Inferior	Inferior	Benign	Small elite	Opportunity
Degenerate	Superior or equal	Weak-willed	Harmful	Confused, differentiated	Opportunity
Rogue	Inferior	Inferior	Harmful	Small elite	Threat
Ally	Equal	Equal	Good	Many groups	Threat

Even though image theory consists of seven tenets, the enemy, imperialist and rogue images are the stereotypes relevant in this study; hence, they will be discussed in more detail. The enemy image is defined as the "stereotype of a people who are equal in comparison to one's own group and whose intentions are very harmful" (p. 97-98). In its most extreme view, the diabolical enemy, the image of the threatener is seen as "aggressive in motivation, monolithic in decision structure, highly rational in decision making to the point of being able to generate and orchestrate multiple complex conspiracies and owes its power advantage to a greater will and determination..." (Cottam & Cottam, 2001, p. 106). Cottam and Cottam contend that the success of the enemy is considered unfair, and when bad things happen and goals are not met the enemy is blamed and a strategy of containment is all that the perceiver can hope for under the circumstances. When countries or groups use this approach, the enemy can only be prevented from becoming more powerful.

This image can become a self-fulfilling prophecy since the perceived enemy sees itself as having been aggressed against, resulting in the development of an enemy stereotype of the other side—hence, adopting the very strategies that had been expected of the actor (Cottam & Cottam, 2001). This strategy usually results in an unnecessary and ultimately debilitating security dilemma difficult to overcome; any efforts made by an actor to defend him or herself are simultaneously seen as threatening to its opponents, even when those actions were not intended to be hostile. In other words, the diabolical image is virtually non-falsifiable, and whether or not an actor behaves contrary to its stereotype this stereotype will remain. This security dilemma usually leads to spiral conflicts in which both actors are hesitant to withdraw from any conflict for fear of being viewed as weak.

In the case of higher level drug traffickers, despite all of the efforts the U.S. government has made to counter drug trafficking activities domestically and abroad, drug traffickers have managed not only to continue smuggling drugs across the U.S.-Mexico border but have moved their operations to the U.S. to grow and produce drugs that are more potent than those originally produced in source countries. After having confronted drug cartels directly with brute force and not having accomplished its goal of exterminating this enemy, the strategy of U.S. law enforcement has shifted to one of containment rather than the complete eradication of these criminal elements. The methods used to contain this enemy include crop substitution programs, foreign assistance to countries in the form of military aid, training of foreign law enforcement officers in drug fighting techniques, policies intended to prevent drug traffickers from acquiring materials used to produce drugs, and shutting down drug smuggling routes.

Additionally, the strong rhetoric and action taken by law enforcement agencies (including the DEA) against drug cartels domestically and abroad, harsh sanctions against those who are

caught selling drugs, extradition treaties to bring higher level drug traffickers to face justice in the U.S., and the fact that policy makers have attempted to apply laws that are intended for terrorists (a real enemy capable of inflicting real physical and psychological harm) to prosecute drug traffickers are examples of the enemy stereotypes both of these actors have of each other. For these reasons, it was originally hypothesized that the enemy image was held of drug traffickers by the U.S. government and the same stereotype was held by drug traffickers of the U.S. government. All these variables seemed to be consistent with the enemy image that both actors might have had of each other. However, upon closer examination of the data gathered it was determined that the rogue image of the drug trafficker was held by the U.S. government and the imperialist stereotype was held by the drug traffickers of the U.S. government.

The imperialist stereotype is that of "people who are superior in culture and capability and whose intentions can be either harmful or benevolent" (p. 97). The imperial image develops when individual groups perceive a threat from another group which is viewed as superior in capability and culture. In this image, the intention of a group which is viewed in imperial terms is to exploit the resources of the colonized people. For example, depending on the circumstances, political environment, and implementation of policies, terrorists groups, drug traffickers and other criminal nearly networks may perceive the actions of law enforcement officials and the government as exploitative in nature. This is evident in interviews of higher level drug traffickers who believed the U.S. government possesses a type of magic crystal ball which allows it to see and hear events in the world and in a moment's notice have the capability of apprehending drug traffickers or other criminals anywhere in the world.

Cottam and Cottam (2001) maintain that according to their perceived status, groups may want to either change, modify or maintain the status quo. For example, a group that sees another

through the imperial image may, if it has the opportunity, engage in "social mobility" in order to advance its status and be in a position of strength against its opponent. Innovative tactics can occur when actors believe the "relationship in which one's own group is disadvantaged, is seen as just, and legitimate...when no other option is available...[and] when possible, social competition could occur" (Cottam & Cottam, 2001, p. 99). According to M. Cottam (Seminar; Fall, 2004), images when compared to beliefs and attitudes are considered more difficult to change; an image can change, but it will take considerable effort to bring about that change. After an image has been sold, it is extremely difficult to change and a virtual disaster has to occur before that image can start to shift and the learning take place. In order for an image to change, actors must be very consistent in their actions, and if the change materializes this change can occur from top to bottom as well as from the bottom up. M. Cottam contends that many times images may change but only in intensity as opposed to basic content. Individuals or groups are usually resistant to new information and it is rather difficult to disconfirm evidence that already has been processed and consumed. Sometimes images can become non-falsifiable for groups or actors; this is due to several factors, including the justification or explanation for the results of particular events regardless of whether those events result in the expectations of the actors.

In the rogue stereotype, actors or groups are viewed as "inferior in capability and culture but harmful in intentions. This is the 'bad seed,' the 'irresponsible' child that...should be punished until it reforms its ways" (Cottam & Cottam, 2001, p. 97). In this image, there is reference to family when referring to groups that at times need to be thought a lesson by punishing them, usually through the use of force. The "responses to this type of actors are driven by a sense of superiority, hostility, and antagonism" on behalf of the image holder (M. Cottam, 2005, p. 9). According to Cottam (2005) "the behavioral predispositions [of those holding the

rogue image of another group] include a tendency to issue orders and ultimatums, and with little provocation [be] aggressive, [and] often [engage in] pre-emptive attacks” (p. 9). These attitudes are reflected in many forms of behavior, and it can range from the enactment and implementation of policies that were not originally intended to influence the actions of these groups including laws targeting terrorists being used to prosecute drug traffickers. Additionally, the shooting of drug traffickers for failing to follow orders in the process of being arrested, long prison terms for those who do not submit to the will of the prosecution and cooperate with the government, and the unwillingness to make concessions even if they may be as simple as expressing their affection towards their love ones before being hauled away to serve their prison sentences are some of the forms in which the rogue image the government holds of higher level drug traffickers are reflected.

Moreover, in negotiations with drug traffickers who have made a decision to cooperate with the government, prosecutors will judge whether or not they have given up enough drug conspirators to deserve a reduction of their prison sentences. If the prosecutors and law enforcement believe the information provided by these drug offenders is not sufficient or has not lead them to the discovery and confiscation of enough drugs and “bigger fish,” they will demand that more people be handed over even when these informants may not have information that will lead them to other drug traffickers. If these conditions are not met, the results will be years of prison time as punishment so that they can be thought a lesson in hopes they “reform their ways” in the future. After all, if mistakes are made resulting in longer prison terms for those involved, there is no real threat of retaliation given they are “inferior in capability and culture” as compared to us.

Finally, the use of image theory (IT) to analyze higher level narcotraffickers will provide valuable feedback about the perceptions drug traffickers have of U.S. law enforcement and the images U.S. law enforcement and government have of drug traffickers and other criminal groups. Moreover, because image theory is based on cognitive elements it will provide valuable feedback about the way members of these organizations process and act on the information and stereotypes they have about the world in which they operate. This theory will assist in determining if the stereotypes these actors have of each other will result in violent confrontations among themselves and with law enforcement leading to the destabilization of the communities in which they operate. This theory will also address the capabilities these groups believe they possess and the willingness to engage in violent acts to achieve their desire goals. Depending on the images these actors have of themselves and other groups, the way they behave in the communities in which they operate will be a reflection of these images. Image theory will assist in determining if images the U.S. government and law enforcement have of these drug trafficking organizations is what has lead to the long prison sentences handed down to members of these criminal networks for drug trafficking offenses. Finally, IT will aid in determining potential consequences resulting from a change of images these actors hold of each other.

Conclusion

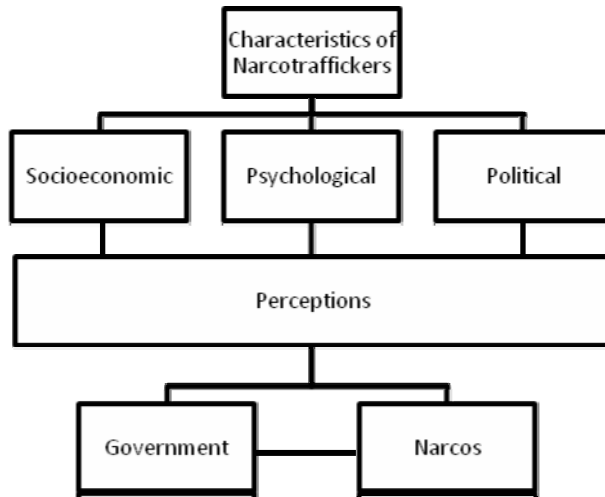
In order to deal effectively with drug trafficking and its effects, one must look at a variety of factors causing this unlawful behavior, both at the domestic and international levels. For these reasons, the theories presented in this chapter are intended to investigate the economic, social and political factors which may have prompted individuals to join drug trafficking organizations. Social learning theory (SLT) addresses the socioeconomic factors present and the socialization

process which lead individuals who have been convicted of higher level drug trafficking to learn the trade and ultimately join these criminal networks and become dependent on this profession for their financial well-being. Social identity theory (SIT) addresses the psychological factors which lead individuals who at one time or another were law abiding citizens to choose to leave this social group in order to join a group they perceive as higher in status because of their material wealth and/or power. Additionally, group theory (GT) is used to determine the factors that are deemed attractive about joining a group that makes a living by engaging in unlawful activities, and the benefits that its members are believed to derive from this group membership and network of associations. Group theory also gives us an insight on how these organizations are formed and the stages they go through before they reach their “adjourning stage”. Finally, image theory (IT) is used to determine the images members of high level drug trafficking groups have of U.S.-Mexican law enforcement and vice-versa, how these images affect interactions among these groups, and ultimately how these stereotypes will affect the communities in which these organizations operate.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Despite the harsh prison sentences handed down to individuals who are convicted of smuggling, trafficking, distributing and possessing controlled substances in the United States and Mexico, we continue to see rising incarceration rates for these types of offenders. In order to try to gain better understanding of this phenomenon, I have developed a graphic model that displays the characteristics and perceptions of the subjects being studied. Figure 4.2 describes the socioeconomic, psychological and political characteristics of individuals who engage in this type of unlawful activity.

Figure 4.2



This model also attempts to organize conceptually the perceptions of both the individuals who engage in drug trafficking activities as well as those who have been entrusted with the powers and authority to apprehend, prosecute, judge and punish them for their unlawful activities. In order to assess this drug trafficking phenomenon, I used a content

analysis approach, which involved the systematic coding of court transcripts from trials of higher level drug traffickers, personal letters written during their incarceration, police reports, notes from interviews conducted with drug traffickers, law enforcement and other government officials as well as the observation of pre-trial and sentencing hearings and direct observations of higher level drug traffickers in their natural environment.

Content Analysis

A content analysis is a “research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text...[it]...can be used...[among other things for]...quot[ing] open-ended questions in surveys; identify[ing] the intentions and other characteristics of the communicator[s]; determine[ning] the psychological state of persons or groups;...[and for] reflect[ing] cultural patterns of groups, institutions, or societies” (Weber, 1990, p. 9). The content analysis of documents, including “speeches, interviews, writings, and other verbal or written materials” has been a common practice in political science for quite some time (Cottam, Mastors, Dietz-Uhler, and Preston, 2004, p. 29). Although this research technique has been used mainly to analyze political leaders at a distance (see Hermann 1984, 1987, 1989; 1999; Hermann et al., 1996; Kaarbo and Hermann 1998; Mastors 2000; Preston, 2001; Preston & t’Hart, 1999; Taysi & Preston, 2001; Winter et al., 1991 among others, quoted from Cottam et al., 2004, p.28), these materials are also well suited to analyze the data collected for this study.

In this study, I thematically coded and analyzed the behavior of individual drug traffickers, government officials and conducted content analysis of numerous

narcocorridos. According to Holsti (1963), a *theme* is “a unit of text *having no more than one each of the following elements: (1) the perceiver, (2) the perceived or agent of action, (3) the action, (4) the target of the action*” (quoted in Weber, 1990, p.22). The unit of analysis for this study is higher level drug traffickers as a group, with the units of observation being the spoken words and/or behavior of individual drug traffickers, law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and others who play a role or are knowledgeable about the issue being studied.

Definition of Higher Level Drug Traffickers

For the purpose of this study, higher level drug traffickers are those individuals who have managed to climb the ladder of success in the drug business, either by getting connected to wholesalers via family networks, friends, and associates or rising to the top by starting to deal with small quantities on the street corner saving their profits until they could afford to purchase larger quantities for cheaper prices and sell them to a smaller number of lower level distributors. High level narcos also include those who get large quantities of merchandise via contacts in source countries and who lead or are part of a group of three or more individuals that plans and executes the smuggling and/or distribution of illegal drugs for the purpose of financial gain. Additionally, higher level drug traffickers are considered those who traffic larger quantities of Schedule I and II drugs, including heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana.

In higher level drug trafficking the stakes are typically quite high, so drug traffickers will not usually engage in the reckless pursuit of new clients as the street-level

dealer might do. Engaging in such endeavor can blow their cover, expose them to law enforcement apprehension and run the risk of loosing large quantities of merchandize for which they may have to repay their suppliers if it is determined that their recklessness lead to the confiscation of the drugs. Higher level drug traffickers are usually highly motivated, innovative, resourceful, resilient, secretive and goal driven in their drug trafficking activities. Higher level drug traffickers generally view their work as a business, and their principal whole purpose is to make a great deal of money.

On the other hand, higher level drug traffickers are *not* those who engage in street-level drug dealing that have to defend their territory or street corner using threats, intimidation and violence in order to maintain their drug business. Higher level drug traffickers will not expose themselves as the street-level dealer would while conducting their drug transactions. Street-level dealers have to contend with being in the spotlight dodging attempts by undercover officers to make purchases, or on the lookout for new clients and potential invasion of their territories by new dealers. Street-level dealers often rely on their profession to maintain their drug addiction, and their profits are often consumed by the dealers themselves, hence preventing their natural ascension into the higher echelons of the drug business. Finally, the drug consumption of street-level dealers makes them ineffective business entrepreneurs negatively affecting their relationships with their clients and their suppliers. This dynamic interrupts the constant flow of drugs, hence negatively affecting the loyalty of their clients, hence eventually leading to their downfall.

Sample of Subjects

The Snowball Sampling technique was used to identify subjects who were knowledgeable about higher level drug trafficking. According to Babbie (2004), “this technique is appropriate when the members of a special population are difficult to locate” (p. 184). The subjects were selected from referrals by probation officers, inmates and government officials that had extensive knowledge in higher level drug trafficking. Additionally, government officials who participated in arrests and prosecutions of higher level drug traffickers were also interviewed. The sample was composed of a total of forty-two subjects (N=45), including a judge, defense attorney, law enforcement officers, probation officers and higher level drug traffickers who were of Mexican or Latin American decent and who had served prison sentences for drug trafficking. The drug trafficking subjects in the entire sample belonged to a total of ten drug trafficking organizations composed of two to twelve members who at the time of their arrest were actively pursuing financial gain and making a living from illegal drug trafficking activities. Because this study was exploratory in nature, the subjects selected for the study were not randomly selected, and the sample was not large enough to constitute a representative sample of the population studied. As a consequence, these theoretical findings should not be interpreted as being generally applicable to all higher level drug traffickers and all government officials. Further systematic studies with larger samples, and if possible randomly selected subjects should be undertaken to further test these findings.

Drug Trafficking Subjects

The drug trafficking subjects in my study were prosecuted and served prison sentences starting from the late 1980s until the present. The sentences handed down to some of these subjects ranged from as little as two years (for those who cooperated with the government) to as much as forty-five years in state or federal penitentiary for higher level drug trafficking. The charges for which these subjects were prosecuted included conspiracy to smuggle, distribute and sell cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines and large quantities of marijuana as well as weapons violations. The quantities of drugs found by law enforcement in the process of their investigations ranged from as little as 1 to 1044 Kilos of cocaine, 103 to 600 pounds of marijuana. Additionally, several other felony charges including the illegal use of tools such as vehicles, cellular phones and other technology used to carry out crimes were among the counts brought by the prosecution against these subjects. The number of charges these defendants faced ranged from as little as five counts to as high as seventy counts.

In order to verify the accuracy of the information provided by the subjects, personal correspondence, court transcripts, police reports and other government documents which directly linked the individuals to higher level drug trafficking were acquired for this analysis. The following is a breakdown of the Materials and sources used for this study: 1) The “Texas” case was a Federal indictment wherein a total of seven defendants were involved, all of them were of Mexican or of Latin American decent except for two of the subjects. 2) The “Chicago” case was a State indictment in which a total of four defendants were involved. 3) The “Seattle” case was a Federal

indictment wherein a total of thirteen defendants were involved, with the youngest member being 24 and the oldest 59 at the time of sentencing; the shortest sentence was five years, with the longest sentence being forty-seven years. 4) The “Washington” case was a State indictment where a total of three defendants were involved. The “Yakima” and “Spokane” cases involved court observations only, where a total of 15 defendants pleaded guilty to drug trafficking activities after a co-defendant on each case became a confidential informant (CI) and cooperated with the government.

Interviews

To further assess drug trafficking and its effects, interviews of law enforcement officers, Probation Officers, a Judge, a DEA agent and a Defense Attorney as well as higher level drug traffickers who are currently serving prison sentences or completed their prison terms for their role in higher level drug trafficking were conducted. The higher level drug traffickers who agreed to be interviewed were either serving prison terms during their interviews, had already completed terms of incarceration or were under some sort of probation or community supervision after their incarceration. No effort was made to include subjects of a different racial/ethnic background because the purpose of this study was to include only those who were of Mexican or Latin American decent.

A total of five personal interviews of higher level drug traffickers were conducted, four of which were audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Of these subjects, three were male and two were female. The interviews range from half an hour to one hour and forty-five minutes each. The subjects who had completed their prison

terms and were now living in the community were interviewed in a location of their choosing. Locations where the interviews took place included the subjects' own homes, a family member's home, and Federal penitentiaries in the Northwest. The subjects were informed that a minimum of one hour would be required for the entire interview. They were notified that I was interested on hearing their story about their drug trafficking conviction and about drug trafficking in general.

In an attempt to get a well-rounded view of higher level drug trafficking activities, other subjects that were interviewed and audio-recorded included a Federal Judge with extensive experience in sentencing higher level drug traffickers, a DEA agent whose primary responsibility is to counter higher level drug trafficking activities. Furthermore, two Probation Officers whose job it is to recommend prison sentences and to supervise higher level drug traffickers after their prison terms have ended were also interviewed. Finally, a local law enforcement officer whose membership in the local SWAT team and whose fluency in Spanish and knowledge of the Latino culture provided him with ample opportunities in arresting drug trafficking subjects was also interviewed. This subject also actively participates in the cultivation of Confidential Informants (CI) to work for DEA agents in controlled purchases of illegal narcotics in hopes of catching higher level drug traffickers who operate in the area. Finally, a total of three family members of a drug trafficker who was murder as a result of being involved in higher level drug trafficking activities were also interviewed, the data analyzed and incorporated in this study.

According to Margaret Herman (1999), interviews are considered one of the most reliable sources of research material that can be used, especially when these interviews are conducted in a “spontaneous” manner and “verbatim... [and] the full text as spoken...” is available for analysis (p. 3). The defendants were notified ahead of time of the interviews, but were not provided with a copy of the questionnaire that was used to conduct the interviews. The questionnaire assimilated for the interview was derived from the theories already mentioned.

Direct Observations

In order to further assess their behavior, emotions, background, goals, hidden norms and other characteristics that would not be deducted from written documents and personal interviews, informal direct observation of drug traffickers were also conducted in local clubs, concerts and other social functions where higher level drug traffickers are known to attend and socialize. Court observations in Washington State yielded a total of eight additional defendants in four different Federal indictments. The observations conducted were at their pre-trial and sentencing hearings for higher level drug trafficking at the Federal level.

Narcoballads

In order to get a more complete image of higher level drug traffickers, an audio-recorded content analysis of the narcocorrido—ballads describing and glorifying the activities of drug traffickers—is also included in this study. Throughout my life I have

attended concerts of musicians who have made a name for themselves playing narcoballads, including Los Tigres del Norte, Los Tucanes de Tijuana, Exterminador, La Banda el Limon, and others. Additionally, while growing up in Mexico and in the U.S I have observed and listened to individuals who are known by community members to be drug traffickers play narcocorridos while cruising the streets, while at bars, and clubs and at other social functions where they can be seen showing off their riches. I grew up among community members (not necessarily drug traffickers) who have listened to this type of music since an early age, I have frequented music stores and listened to Spanish radio stations where audio-recordings of narcocorridos were frequently played, marketed and sold. For these reasons I have an uncommon understanding of the psychological effects that this type of music exerts among their listening audience. This knowledge and these experiences allow me to describe accurately and interpret correctly the behavior of higher level drug traffickers in these informal settings where these types of musical lyrics are being played. An original version of this methodological approach was previously published in the *Global Crime Journal*, see Meráz García (2006). This content analysis is used to determine the role narcocorridos play in the recruitment process of new members into drug trafficking organizations.

This content analysis is used because the narcocorrido is a musical tool that not only drug traffickers use to their advantage in luring others into following their footsteps. Other groups, including terrorists, racist groups, revolutionary and non-revolutionary movements alike have used music lyrics and video footage as a tool to achieve their goals. For example, videos of jihad—a crusade by Muslims against all those who are

perceived to be hostile toward the Islamic faith—are known to be used effectively for the recruitment of terrorists to commit violent acts, including the carrying out of suicide missions (see, Docherty, 2005). Additionally, movies produced by legitimate organizations (including Hollywood studios) for public consumption have served as an inspiration for individuals to commit acts of kindness as well as evil acts. For example, Ishmael Beah, a former child soldier in Sierra Leone, described how after being high on drugs and watching Rambo movies he would attempt to implement some of the techniques he had learned by watching these movies while carrying out attacks against rebel groups (Beah, 2007).

Music has also been used by much larger groups including nation states such as Nazi Germany and the U.S. as a “geo strategic weapon” (Kwame, 2006, p. 422). Von Eschen (2004) describes how the U.S, through the State Department, used Jazz “between 1956-1978...as a political and foreign policy weapon...[to advance]...its geo-strategic interests across the globe” and to fight an ideological war against Communism during the Cold War (Dixon, 2006, p. 422-423). The lyrics in these narcocorridos are considered very powerful and effective at enticing individuals into joining their criminal organizations because their words about glory and riches appeal to the emotions and psyche of the individual listener mainly because it is believed that the songs played are based heavily on facts.

The methodology employed for the analysis of the narcocorridos included the collection of tapes and CDs that I have acquired and translated over the courses of 15 years. The narcocorridos selected for this study represent only a small fraction of my

collection, and in no way constitutes a random or systematic sample of narcoballads. However, the narcocorridos included in this study provide an important degree of insight on the thought process, aspirations and general feelings of individuals who are higher level drug traffickers and those who join drug trafficking organizations.

Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses presented here are intended to analyze higher level drug trafficking and its effects. The first hypothesis is intended to uncover if the association with peers who had knowledge about the illegal trade, their racial or ethnic background, family or friends and an overall lack of economic opportunities is what lead these individuals to join drug trafficking organizations. The second hypothesis is intended to determine whether or not higher level drug traffickers join these criminal organizations because of economic pressures, including their inability to acquire the material goods perceived by our materialistic society as symbols of wealth that would bring about status, power and respect. The third hypothesis explores the ability of drug trafficking organizations to form and attract memberships that will ensure their survival by seeking out members that are of the same race, gender, nationality and cultural background. The fourth hypothesis deals with the enemy image believed to be held by U.S. and drug traffickers alike. The fifth image deals with the rogue image the U.S. government and law enforcement have of drug traffickers, and whether or not this image influences the aggressiveness with which these entities go after these criminals resulting in punishment exceeding those of other criminals who have been convicted of violent crimes such as

murder, terrorism and rape. The sixth hypothesis addresses the imperial image drug traffickers may have of the U.S. government and law enforcement, and whether or not this view has kept violence from crossing the U.S-Mexico border into the United States and causing panic and widespread destruction as they recently have in Mexico.

H1: Variables associated with social learning theory are what creates the ripe environment for individuals to join drug trafficking organizations.

H2: Social identity theory variables, including social and environmental factors in which drug traffickers are raised, the need for belonging, respect and pride are among the major factors prompting individuals to join drug trafficking organizations.

H3: Variables associated with group theory such as race, gender, language, nationality and cultural background are crucial in determining whether or not individuals are allowed to join drug trafficking organizations, as well as the size of the group, plays pivotal roles in the performance and cohesion of drug trafficking organizations.

H4: Variables pertaining to the enemy image are what has prompted the U.S.-Mexican government to declare war on drugs, resulting in the allocation of a significant portion of the defense budget to fight this enemy; those engaged in this activity have responded in kind by utilizing all available resources to fight a much more powerful enemy.

H5: Variables pertaining to the rogue image held by the U.S.-Mexican government and law enforcement regarding drug traffickers are among the factors which have lead to excessively long prison terms being awarded and aggressive tactics being used against those believed to be engaged in drug trafficking activities.

H6: Variables pertaining to the imperial image held by members of drug trafficking organizations of the U.S. government and law enforcement is what has kept a lid on drug violence in the United States.

Measurement Instrument

The lack of measurement instruments in the literature on organized crime and higher level drug traffickers in particular that would yield meaningful answers to my research questions lead me to create a total of thirty-one questions for the interviewees. These questions were deducted from the major tenets of Social Learning Theory, Group Theory, Social Identity Theory and Image Theory (see Appendix A). A separate, set of questions was adopted from the same questionnaire and underlying theories in order to assess the opinions of government officials and others who were particularly knowledgeable about higher level drug traffickers and of drug trafficking in general (see Appendix C).

Before the study got under way, it was hypothesized that drug trafficking activities were directly related to poverty, lack of opportunities, mentors and other socioeconomic factors that led these subjects to engage in these highly sanctioned unlawful activities. Additionally, the environment in which these offenders grew up and the individuals they socialize with was believed to be a major contributing factor in whether or not these individuals engaged in the drug trade. For these reasons, questions derived from SLT (1-12) were created with the intention to get an overall assessment of the drug trafficking subject's socioeconomic background, socialization with other peers,

environment in which they grew up, type of supervision received from adults while being raised, willingness to engage in deviant behavior, education, autonomy, ego, fate, and general willingness to engage in violence.

Additionally, the questions derived from SIT and GT (13-25) were, among other things, intended to assess the subjects' psychological state of mind before, during and after their participation in drug trafficking activities, whether or not they perceived themselves different than other law-abiding members of society, hidden codes that existed, and the consequences resulting if these rules were broken. Moreover, these questions were intended to determine whether or not these subjects experienced difficulties gaining membership into these organizations, how they dealt with the psychological drawbacks (if any existed) of engaging in illegal activities, their reactions and willingness to engage in violent acts resulting from law enforcement intervention, their attitudes towards competitors, their overall loyalties to their drug organizations, and the type of music they most enjoyed.

The questions derived from IT (26-31) were intended to get an overall psychological assessment of the images drug traffickers had of law enforcement and of the U.S.-Mexican government, and to assess whether or not these perceptions would result in violence. Moreover, the purpose of these questions was to measure the confidence level drug traffickers had in conducting drug trafficking operations in the U.S. even with substantial law enforcement intervention being present

Finally, a coding scheme was developed based on the major components of SLT, SIT, GT, and IT theories, and these indicators are listed in Appendix D, E, and F,

respectively. Given the perceived successful efforts of the U.S. government at apprehending higher level drug traffickers, it was originally hypothesized that drug traffickers would have an enemy image of U.S. law enforcement. These assumptions lead me to create a set of indicators for the enemy image. However, evidence from the court transcripts and other documents used in this content analysis, as well as in the interviews with drug trafficking subjects, law enforcement and other government officials disproved this assumption.

Identifying Images

It is important to note when analyzing written material for the identification of images that these images may not be mutually exclusive. According to M. Cottam (2005), the seven images discussed in the second chapter are considered the “ideal types, that is, the most extreme form of the image and it is possible that an actor 'fits' into an image, but not perfectly” (p. 12). According to this author, not having the “ideal” fit is an important factor one must consider when attempting to identify images because this will affect the behavior of the actors. In other words, an actor can have a combination of the imperial image and as the capabilities of the actor increases this image may start to shift towards the enemy image, as was the perceived world view of Fidel Castro of the U.S. during 1960 to 1972 (M. Cottam, 2005, p. 19). Similarly, some of the perceptions drug traffickers have of U.S. law enforcement and vice versa may have attributes of two images that may tilt towards one side or the other as their status changes with serious consequences for both actors. For example, as the war on drugs intensifies, well

established drug cartels may perceive U.S.-Mexican law enforcement as the enemy and as law enforcement activity against the cartels diminishes the image may change to that of the imperialist.

Conclusion

The methodology outline set forth above is designed to address the issue of higher level drug trafficking and provide an overall assessment on this illegal activity that attracts large numbers of poor and uneducated members of our communities with life changing consequences for those who get caught up in the criminal justice system. The methodology and combination of data sources used in this study will provide insights on their motivation, socialization, background, willingness to use violence against others and the factors that lead these individuals to joining these criminal organizations. Additionally, this methodological approach seeks to address the opinions and attitudes of law enforcement and government in general about drug traffickers, and show how these various factors affect the way they counter drug trafficking activities and the impact it is having on our communities throughout this country and abroad.

CHAPTER FOUR

TESTING SOCIAL LEARNING VARIABLES

The intent of this chapter is to determine the background of higher level drug traffickers, including the type of physical, economic and social environment in which they were raised and whether or not SLT is well suited to help explain higher level drug trafficking. As noted in the previous chapter, SLT addresses some of these, major themes and for that reason a set of questions based on the major tenets of the theory were created to collect the information required to assess the type of background in which these individuals were raised. First I will lay out the findings derived from the data with respect to the general needs and values the participants exhibited. This analysis will be followed by information on their background, the learning process experienced, and their justification for joining the drug trade while interacting with intimate groups. Next, the definitions these drug traffickers attached to legal codes will be analyzed. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the suitability of this theory for the analysis of higher level drug trafficking.

The Socioeconomic Background of the Narco

It was originally hypothesized that the majority of those involved in higher level drug trafficking would come from lower socioeconomic status, and the principal purpose for joining drug trafficking organizations would be for economic mobility. The results of the data gathered suggested drug trafficking participants in this study displayed some

common background characteristics, including low educational attainment and the holding of unskilled labor jobs in restaurants, bars, canneries, meat packing plants and farm work. Additionally, most of the study participants were brought to the United States by their parents at an early age or had migrated as young adults carrying with them high expectations of acquiring material wealth. These expectations were formed as a result of seeing and hearing stories from friends and neighbors who had come to the U.S. and gone back to their home towns in Mexico displaying riches and telling stories about how easy it was to make money. When these participants arrived in the U.S. they realized how difficult it was to accumulate this material wealth performing the minimum wage jobs they could find, and many made a conscious decision to try their luck in the drug business. Other participants engaged in the drug trade without fully knowing the potential consequences their actions would have if they were caught.

General Needs and Values

Most of the participants who engaged in the drug trade and became higher level drug traffickers reported to have done it for economic reasons and to help their families ease the burden of poverty. Some were disabled and/or unemployed, others were attending high school and working long hours and were still not able to make enough to satisfy what they perceived to be essential needs such as possession of a car, proper clothing, and adequate housing and food to provide needed items for their younger siblings and families. Others were more recent immigrants who were working minimum wage jobs and were not able to acquire the material wealth they had expected. As a

result, these participants decided to engage in the drug trade in order to achieve the material wealth and status they had anticipated they would acquire after working in the United States. Although it was considered illegal to engaged in the drug trade, it was deemed low risk and more acceptable than engaging in other unlawful activities such as robbing a bank, joining a gang and enduring the effects of poverty. This idea summed to stem largely from their own observations of drug traffickers who were displaying the spoils of their profession as they spent money on goods and services in their own communities without much law enforcement intervention.

These participants had little to no technical and/or business skills; they had no access to credit institutions with which to acquire loans and start legitimate businesses of their own. The role models with which these subjects were acquainted before they became higher level drug traffickers were often those who displayed this material wealth, including new cars and expensive jewelry, because they were already engaged in the drug trade. Intimate friends were often those who were aspiring to acquire material wealth using whatever means possible, including engaging in unlawful activities such selling drugs or joining gangs. Most of these participants were commonly recent immigrants who grew up in rural areas where growing marijuana or being involved in the trade was perceived almost as normal as growing corn and selling it on the free market to the highest bidder. The market barriers to joining the drug trade were virtually non-existent, and it was common to have someone who offered them an easy way to make money by simply driving a load of drugs from one city to another for a couple thousand dollars. This seemed to many study participants as an attractive business proposition entailing

little risk and the ability to make the money they believed they needed in order to fulfill their basic needs.

Background of Higher Level Drug Traffickers

Most participants reported similar childhood experiences, including living under disadvantaged socioeconomic circumstances. Some of these subjects came from rural areas where social services such as schools, health clinics, religious services, roads, government service agencies and access to legitimate sources of income were virtually non-existent. The only interaction some of these higher level drug traffickers had before emigrating to the U.S. included contacts with government officials about once a year when Mexican Army soldiers were sent on foot with the mission of destroying marijuana plantations scattered throughout the region that some of these peasants had substituted for corn. Some of these peasants were forced into this practice because the price of corn had dropped to such low levels that farmers in these areas were virtually starving and had no other source of income to feed their families. In interviews with higher level drug traffickers, the following excerpts described the typical environment in which they grew up while residing both in Mexico and the U.S.:

[1] I grew up in a small town in Mexico, I cannot say it was that nice...but I worked since I was probably eight, nine years old. Sometimes shining shoes...or, um cleaning cars, washing cars, trucks, um making bread at bakeries um, let's see what else, um unloading big cars, big trucks...of boxes of things like beer and other stuff... Sometimes I would wait for the bus to arrive to the small town, so I could help people carry their luggage home, so I could make a little bit of money. By the age of eleven I started working in building...construction basically in Mexico. I worked in construction for about three years [before migrating to the U.S.].

[2] I was born in México and grew up in Michoacán until I was twelve years old and my dad was over here [U.S.], I came with my mom...and two other sisters, we came here to Washington...I was twelve so that was in 1976... We went to school and finished sixth grade...we didn't really have friends...not that we can go and spent time with... [sic].

Our time out when we were out of school was to go work...at the potato packaging thing and at the fields...picking apples and pears. I was twelve when I started working.

[3] Bueno yo mi niñez la pase... en México en el Estado de Michoacán, fui un niño pobre como todos...de allí trabajamos hasta donde más pudimos...[no teníamos] muchos amigos, porque ahí en el rancho donde nosotros vivimos no había muchas familias con quien este jugar..., muy pocas amistades teníamos allí...

Well, during my childhood, I lived in...Mexico in the State of Michoacán, I was a poor child like everyone...from there, we worked until we could no more... [We did not have] too many friends because there in the farm where we lived there weren't too many families with whom to play with..., we had very little friends there... (Authors translation, 2007)

[4] Nací en un rancho [vivimos allí] hasta que tenía 10 ½ y después de ahí nos movimos al pueblo y vivimos ahí más o menos seis años y ahí vendíamos paletas, boleábamos, vendíamos dulces de todo. Amigos que teníamos no hacían nada, jugábamos, pero no hacían nada, iban de aquí de los E.U. En el rancho teníamos camaradas que trabajaban desmontando, yo araba la tierra, desmontes, cosechar maíz, cosas de esas... No mucho tiempo juntos con estos amigos, por allá cada seis meses al año...

I was born in a farm [we lived there] until I was 10 ½ after being there we moved to town and we lived there approximately six years, there we used to sell paletas (ice cream), we shined shoes, sold candy, everything. Friends that we had didn't do much, we played, but they didn't do anything, they would come from the U.S... In the farm, we had friends that worked clearing the land; I used to plough and cleared the land, harvest corn, things of that nature... Not very much time together with these friends, approximately once every six months (Author's translation, 2007).

Several conclusions can be deduced from these statements; for example, it is evident that these subjects were compelled by the socioeconomic environment in which they were raised to search for opportunities to make money at an early age. Some of these subjects grew up in the street and were responsible for bringing money home to help raise their families; many did not attend school because they were busy in the street attempting to survive physically and financially by performing whatever jobs they could find. Others had to contend with physical threats by older males while performing some of their tasks that allowed them to earn money. Finally, others were living in rural areas where schools, social services and interactions with people from urban areas were not possible due in large part to the unavailability of transportation routes into these areas.

For some of these higher level drug traffickers, violence was a common occurrence during their childhood. For example, the father of one of these participants was murdered when he was only eight year old and his mother was left to care for nine siblings. Moreover, at the age of eleven, while scraping together a living shining shoes he witnessed a drug trafficker being murdered by an assassin and a stray bullets killed one of his shoe shiner colleagues and injured another. Being exposed to this type of violence in the environment in which they grew up at such an early age results in psychological trauma for which they never get treatment. The consequences of these traumas are reflected in several ways, including the inability of these children to cope in school and social settings resulting in school dropouts and drifting to deviant activities, which later turn into more serious criminal behavior. This behavior is further encouraged when those who commit such acts are not brought to justice by the local authorities and made to pay for their crimes. According to this drug trafficker, after the assassin had discharged his weapon on the victim's body, the assassin loaded his weapon with another clip while calmly walking away from the scene of the crime which was only a couple hundred feet away from the Presidencia—the Courthouse where law enforcement officers are stationed. Later, local police officers showed up at the scene of the crime after the assassin was long gone.

The lack of accountability for those who commit violent acts does not elicit very much respect for law enforcement officers as these study participants grow up to become members of their communities. Even if rumors that the local police had been paid not to interfere or show up when they heard shots fired, as this drug trafficker claims, were

unfounded, the slow response on behalf of law enforcement does not inspire other honest, courageous and law abiding young adults to join law enforcement to serve and protect the communities in which they reside. Instead, the ridicule and negative gossip these participants experience while growing up regarding the performance of law enforcement steers them away from these professions and into joining drug trafficking organizations in part because they elicit more respect from the local population.

Additionally, most of these subjects also come from large families where love towards them was rarely expressed by their parents, resulting in feelings of alienation and lack of self worth. The following response was provided by a higher level drug trafficker when he was asked about the type of relationship he had with his parents.

Um, from what I remember, I would say that we had a good relationship, but back in those days or many years ago, it wasn't or maybe parents were not permitted themselves to show, how would I say, to show their love and care for you, because that's just how it was back in the days.... They wouldn't tell you how much they would love you, even though they would love you so much, they would not show it by hugging you...I still feel that we had a great relationship and there was a lot of love, but...they wouldn't show it. Maybe one, because there was too many brothers, too many sisters, that could be one thing, then the other one is just parents are not used to act that way, specially out in the country where there is no love, there is no.., probably not even schools around so, it is not that is not permitted but is just that parents...have kids and you know, [you] feed them and probably just change their diapers or clothing and am that's about it...No party [referring to kid's birthday party] or anything like that because they was no resources to maybe make a little birthday to somebody or anybody [sic].

These feelings of low self esteem and alienation lead these children as they are growing up to seek this love and affection among individuals who do not have their best interest in mind when they provide the much-needed attention their parents never provided. Often times, the households where some of these participants were raised are headed by single mothers because their fathers have abandoned them; others have been murdered, or have emigrated to the U.S. in search of better opportunities and they must work in whatever

jobs they can find in order to help put bread on the table. For some of these single parents, having to fulfill several roles, including the bread winner, the disciplinarian and nurturing the children, puts these families in severe strain causing the relationship with the children to falter, hence leading to further alienation. For instance, criminology scholars contend that “parent’s coercive workplaces tend to correspond to coercive discipline of children in the home” (Colvin, 2000, p. 15). These scholars contend that family interactions in the work place affect the way parents control and discipline their children; this in turn affects and at times predicts how children will behave in the future. The following subjects discuss the type of discipline they received as they were raised.

[1] Well,...[I got] a lot of spankings (some laughter) when they were needed. I would be home late, sometimes because I just wouldn’t look at the clock and go home too late, probably after ten or eleven and in Mexico...its um like against the rules of the house to be home probably after ten, especially if you are around ten years old or eleven maybe. So, sometimes I got a few spankings from my mom for being home late or sometimes I would wait for the bus to arrive to the small town, so I could help people carry their luggage home, so I could make a little bit of money.

[2] I run away with my boyfriends when I was fourteen. My dad was really strict; we were not allowed to go nowhere, just to school, work if we were working and back home. And never have friends at our house, never [sic]. If somebody was going to spend the night, we couldn’t go to our friends, they had to come and spend the night at our house...very strict, he got to the point where he put nails on the windows to make sure we weren’t climbing out...of the house... Only if we were bad they would reprimand us...

Most of these subjects never had a childhood because of their financial circumstances and the environment in which they lived forced them to mature and take on adult responsibilities at an early age. They grew into adulthood and the dreams, ambitions and other material wealth they had aspired to as children never materialized regardless of how hard they worked. Poverty and the lack of opportunities forced these participants to migrate to the United States. When they arrived in their newly adopted country, some of these children were further placed at risk of alienation when they were enrolled in schools

that were unprepared to handle their educational and emotional needs. When these children are situated in an unfamiliar environment with language barriers, social deficiencies and lacking the cultural capital necessary to succeed in school, it diminishes their opportunities to succeed and develop a healthy childhood experience that will prepare them for adulthood. After their arrival, these new immigrants find themselves in debt and must work long hours to repay the money they borrowed to make the long journey to the U.S. Due to the long working hours required to survive financially, parents are no longer the direct caregivers, hence “these children develop more alienated bonds to parents...[and] as they entered school, they bring with them these alienated bonds” (Colvin, 2000, p. 15), which then lead into alienated behavior and ultimately to criminal behavior.

All the participants in this study never finished high school; most only completed the sixth grade, and the remaining never went to school but learned how to read and write in their own home. The following drug trafficker who spent seven and a half years in a Mexican prison for transporting twenty-five kilos of marijuana across Mexican territory in route to the U.S., shares his financial circumstances and the reasoning for his decision not to continue his education:

Fui hasta el sexto grado...porque no había modo de estudiar. ¿No se alcanzaba uno ni para comprar una hamburguesa, entonces que podías estudiar sin comer, verdad? ¿Y viendo a todos comer a toda madre entonces, yo pienso que es difícil estudiar de esa manera, no? Entonces yo lo veo difícil y mejor a chingarle al jale.

I attended school until the sixth grade...because there was no way to study. One couldn't even afford to buy a hamburger, hence what type of studying could you do without eating right? Watching everybody eat and all that, I think is difficult to be able to study in that manner right? I think is difficult, so instead, one must get to work (Author's translation, 2007).

A Federal Judge with 11 years of experience dealing with federal drug trafficking cases provided the typical profiles of most defendants who are prosecuted for drug dealing in his court, echoing the statement from these drug traffickers:

Normalmente, [narco traficantes crecen] sin mucha educación, sin mucha preparación educativa, sin mucha esperanza. La pobreza en México no tiene muchas oportunidades...por eso a veces las oportunidades son de participar en actividades ilegales para ganar dinero y en los Estados Unidos los hijos de los recientes migrantes muchas veces piensan que no tienen esperanza también...Por eso a veces empiezan una vida de mal comportamiento en la juventud y después, porque normalmente sus padres trabajan, los dos, en los campos en posiciones bien humildes, entonces sus hijos no tienen tanta atención de sus padres porque...están trabajando. Además a veces las escuelas no están tan buenas como las escuelas de los otros ciudadanos o personas en la comunidad. En mi opinión la pobreza y delitos son sinónimos.... Es como muchas cosas, cuando una persona tiene una inversión en su ciudad y esta recibiendo algo por su trabajo, no cometen delito, pero si no tiene nada, no tiene esperanza...La mayoría de las personas envueltas son del mismo pueblo, son vecinos...conocidos.

Normally [drug traffickers grow up] without much education, without much...skills, without much hope. Poverty in Mexico does not have too many opportunities...for this reason many times the opportunities they do get is to participate in illegal activities in order to earn some money and in the U.S., the children of recent immigrants often time feel that they too do not have any hope... For this reason often times they begin a life with behavioral problems in their teenage years and...normally both parents work in the fields...this results in their parents not paying much attention to their children because they are working. Additionally, often times the schools are not as good as those of other citizens or community members. In my opinion, delinquency and poverty are synonymous... It's like many things, when a person has an investment in a city and is receiving something for its work, they do not commit illegal acts, but if they don't own anything, they have no hope...The majority of people who are involved are from the same town, neighbors [and] acquaintances (Author's translation, 2007).

As the federal judge alludes in the above statement, these newly arrived immigrants, after having worked for some time they realized the material wealth they desired is going to be difficult to acquire even in the U.S.; consequently, some of these participants give up hope and made a decision to engage in illegal activities in order to achieve material wealth. Often the newly arrived immigrants are able to endure the burdens and hardships associated with low skill jobs they must perform; however, their children who were brought here at an early age or were born and raised in the U.S. have, by now, adopted

many of the American cultural traits including the material consumption of goods and services that the media encourages our society to acquire. The income their parents earn is not enough to satisfy many of the needs and wants these children expect from their parents. These second-generation immigrants having been exposed to the mass media expect the immediate satisfaction of this material wealth, and when it does not materialize through legitimate means they tend to drift into unlawful activities in order to acquire what they believe they rightly deserve. A law enforcement officer who uses his Latino background, cultural knowledge, and native Spanish abilities to apprehend drug trafficking suspects also discusses the type of socioeconomic background from which most of these higher level drug traffickers come:

My belief is that these individuals come from very poor families; you don't normally see a middle class family or an upper class family get involved because normally...when they grew up, they...had the dreams that they've always wanted and they never needed anything so they don't feel the need to resort to doing something illegal like that to obtain the status that they've always wanted. I mean, we're talking about very poor individuals who grew up and who don't consider themselves to be anybody.

Additionally, two probation officers with extensive experience dealing with higher level drug traffickers before and after they have been prosecuted for drug trafficking offenses also discussed the typical background from which these individuals come:

[1] I don't know if you can necessarily separate drug traffickers from any other...offenders that we see. I mean, typically... [we] see...more often than not, broken homes...dysfunctional families, abuse..., poverty..., not great financial support as kids, not a great education. If they finished high school that's unusual... I think in this area at least...overall the offenders or defendants that we see...they tend to come from the same backgrounds and it's really hard to try to differentiate between drug traffickers and...people convicted of firearms possession and stuff like that.

[2] I don't know that we've ever had any drug trafficker that's had anything higher than maybe high school...drug traffickers usually don't go any higher than high school...they don't have any degrees or anything like that...

A defense attorney with twenty-one years of experience providing legal defense to those accused of drug trafficking also provided the following statement regarding the typical background of those who engaged in the drug trade:

[Their] background is usually from poverty, cultures where there isn't tremendous amount of opportunity for economic advancement or educational opportunities that are available.

This economic deprivation, dysfunctional families and low educational attainment common among these young adults usually results in a self-selection process where individuals will, because of their similar cultural traits, language and socioeconomic background, bond together to form groups with similar aspirations, ambitions and values. In other words, as Colvin (2000) would put it, these children while in school begin to connect with each other "creating coercive relations among themselves. Some of these alienated young people become connected to criminal subcultures that offer material rewards through selling drugs or stolen merchandise" (p.1).

Moreover, in the opening statements of the Seattle case, defense attorneys also showed that most of their drug trafficking clients involved have little to no education, all with less than a high school diploma. Most have worked in restaurants, farms, bars, home and other low skill jobs including the co-conspirator in the Seattle case who is being used by the government to testify against its drug associates. It is evident from her testimony in which she mentions her legal status as an immigrant from Nicaragua who is going through the legalization process and has been employed as a bartender, housekeeper and other low skill jobs of her educational attainment and socioeconomic background.

Learning the Trade and its Justifications While Interacting with Intimate Groups

The data gathered suggests these drug traffickers justified their involvement in the drug trade because they had reasons that seemed to be rather rational. Among the primary reasons most of these higher level drug traffickers cited for joining the trade was their families going through financial difficulties where they had no other option but to engage in this unlawful activity in order to overcome the economic crisis through which they were passing. Those who started in the drug trade were usually introduced by a close friend or associate who knew members of a drug trafficking organization who were seeking recruits to drive vehicles loaded with drugs, usually from a southern border city to North and Midwest cities. The recruits were commonly young adults, and in many instances some started before they were eighteen years of age. These drug trafficking organizations took advantage of the economic deprivation, young age, naiveté, and lack of self-esteem of their recruits. The following is an excerpt of how a higher level drug dealer started in the drug trade:

Well, um I was going to school at that time and I was working so many hours, too many hours, minimum, I would say fifty hours weekly its supposed to be a part time job, and I was going to school full time and um just up there working for so long and I was tired of not getting enough money for the things you needed, it was just basic things you needed, enough clothing, just any car, a decent car, any car just to go to school, take a girlfriend out to maybe have a hamburger or anything and I wouldn't have that. Plus there is people sometimes, parents, younger brothers that you may have, or that you have and sometimes you just feel like, like they really need certain things and you can't provide them with the job you have and if you don't have an older person who can support you, then that's when you decide...[sic].

When you were small you always think I want to do this, I want to do that, this is what I like to be especially in Mexico where all the trafficking thing... is very natural, everybody sees it as normal. That's not like a crime let's say that..., so that's very natural because you grow up and see all those things around, and so you kind of grow up with that kind of mentality or just admire certain type of people that got money or nice cars or trucks.

So, when I was in high school is when I decided. I always wanted that (referring to nice

cars etc.) and through a friend of mine... is the one that offered me “hey...we can drive some cars that are loaded up with marijuana or any other drugs, let’s say from Los Angeles, from Texas to other states...” Even though, right now it wasn’t a lot of money, but at that time it seemed like a lot of money, like a couple of thousand dollars every two weeks or so. I figure I would have enough for me to cover my needs, clothing, shoes, and probably help my mom with some food or stuff like that. That was my high school years probably 93, 94.

According to this study participant, the economic deprivation he had experience while growing up and the fact that drug trafficking was an activity that in his mind was almost not illegal, normalized this activity making it easier for him to join the drug trade and experience little remorse for doing it. It is interesting to note that this subject admired those who had joined the drug trade and were now displaying the material wealth he wanted to acquire, but couldn’t until he joined the trade. Other justifications for joining the trade included some that were altruistic almost divine including their inability to provide for the basic necessities for their families needed to survive.

While the involvement in the drug trade for some of these subjects might have been exploratory at first, as these young adults began to notice how little effort was required to earn money and the profitability of the drug trade, their involvement escalated until these participants became dependent on their new occupation to maintain their newly acquired standard of living. Engagement with other deviant groups introduced these individuals to the higher-tiered schema of the drug trade where they started to cultivate relationships with drug suppliers until they reached the higher level status. Table 4.3 shows the amount of drugs the above drug trafficker was managing four years after he started in the drug trade. Also displayed is information regarding the crew he was leading, the age of the individuals involved at the time of their arrest and the prison term handed down for their involvement in the drug trade.

Table 4.3

Chicago Case State Case: 13 Kilos of Cocaine, 370 Pounds of Marijuana and Weapons Confiscated			
Sex	Age at the Time of Sentence	Release Date	Prison Term
M	25	2001	3
M	22	2001	3
M	37	1998	0
M	47	2001	3

The prison term handed down to these participants in an Illinois court is considered low when compared to federal cases. The above quantities of drugs would have resulted in fifteen to forty-five year sentences at the federal level. For example, Table 4.4 in the Seattle case indicates an average of sixteen years in the federal penitentiary for those found guilty of drug trafficking in a federal conspiracy case.

Table 4.4

Seattle Case Federal Case: 27 Kilos of Cocaine and Weapons Confiscated			
Sex	Age at the Time of Sentence	Release Date	Prison Term
M	24	2030	39
M	27	2005	14
M	59	2007	16
F	50	2007	16
M	19	2016	25
F	42	1991	0
M	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
M	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
M	38	2007	16
M	39	1996	5
M	33	1999	8

Average of prison term in Federal cases:16

Although the quantity of drugs is greater, some of the individuals only played a small role in the drug conspiracy yet received the same amount if not longer prison terms as those who were the actual leaders of the organization. This occurred because some of the lower level members of the organization refused to cooperate with the government; they lack the ability to pay for their own legal defense and had to rely on court-appointed counsel to defend them of the conspiracy charges. Although most court-appointed attorneys at the federal level are highly competent to tackle these conspiracy cases, there are some attorneys who take advantage of the fact that some of these defendants do not speak English and they will not be held accountable if they fail to provide a competent legal defense. Court transcripts and personal letters from one of the female defendants involved indicated that the performance of one of the court-appointed counsel was less than exemplary. This resulted in the female defendant being sentenced to 44.5 years whereas her common law spouse was sentenced to twenty years, even though he had played a larger role in the drug conspiracy. After endless appeals, she was able to reduce her sentence to a twenty-year sentence. In this conspiracy there was at least one other couple which was married or considered common law partner, and three of the conspirators had the same last name indicating that at least three individuals were related by blood and the other four were in a spousal relationship. This evidence suggests that their involvement in the drug trade was in part influenced by these relationships.

Additionally, a female higher level drug trafficker who spent seven and a half years in a federal penitentiary for selling two ounces of cocaine and was linked to a conspiracy to sell eight kilos of cocaine in which her husband played the primary role

shares her experience on how she was first introduced to the drug trade:

We got involved because somebody was living at our house and he was doing that and he decided to go to Mexico...he probably knew he was getting followed or he knew something was wrong and all of the sudden he decided to go to Mexico...and he talked to my husband. He said "I am going to leave this here [referring to drugs]... can you please take care of it"...he had it there...people started calling..., coming to the house and asking for him, for my husband and I used to tell them, "he is working, he is working" and one time I told him "you know, they keep coming to the house and somebody wants to talk to you" and it was somebody that he knew, a friend of ours,...and he told me to tell him [that] "I want to talk to him". "Next time he calls, ask him what he wants" and he stopped by the house and said "this is what I want" [referring to drugs] and I knew where everything was, so when he told me, "I want an ounce of this, an ounce of that"...so I took him to the room and I told him "there is this bag and there is this bag, which kind do you want?"...so he told me "I want one of each," so I gave it to him, I sold it to him...

Additionally, another drug trafficker who spent seven and a half years in a Mexican prison for transporting thirty-five kilos of marijuana en route to the United States explains how he got introduced to the drug trade:

A lo mejor es por familia...que vez que tus primos o tus hermanos estan...vez que haciendo villetes y dices "pues yo tambien quiero," de esa manera es como empieza... Tambien...porque vez que los demas traen buenos carros y...empeze a ver parte de familia que pues se handaban moviendose...

Perhaps it is because of the family...that you see your cousins or your brothers...seeing that they are making dough (money) and you say "well I too want some," that is the way one starts. Also because you see that the others have good cars and...I started to see part of the family that they were moving (pushing drugs) (Author's translation, 2007).

Although this participant made it clear that it was not his family who introduced him to the trade, it is clear that he was greatly influenced by the actions and display of material wealth of his relatives that played a major role in his decision to engage in this unlawful drug trade activity.

Even though, schools and other social settings were cited by young recruits as the primary recruitment bases for these drug trafficking organizations, the testimony of the CI in the Seattle case also illustrates the type of environment in which older recruits will get started in the drug business. The relationship with her drug contacts began in the

nightclub where she worked for about six months. She started purchasing small amounts of cocaine and selling it for profit, gradually increasing until she reached the Kilo quantity. The criminal investigation began when the co-conspirator sold an ounce of cocaine to a Confidential Informant (CI) who several days later arranged for a purchase of three kilos of cocaine with money provided by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Although the data gathered in this study suggest the drug trade is dominated by males, this drug conspiracy involved a total of three females out of a total of twelve defendants. The conspiracy did not take into account the role each individual had played in the conspiracy; all those involved were charged with the same counts, whether or not they were the leaders of the organization or only had played a minor role.

Additionally, when it comes to the reasoning for joining the drug trade, this law enforcement officer also provided the following response when asked why individuals would feel attracted to joining drug trafficking organizations:

Their self-esteem is really low and they want something better and they have their goals set on a certain item...and they don't have the education...to let's say become lawyers and doctors...We're talking about really poor individuals...these are your lower class families who would strive to get what they want and I mean they obviously want a better lifestyle and given the fact that they don't have the proper education to really get them there or the fact that the hourly wage is only seven dollars and what do they do? They have to pick apples, work the fields, I mean really break your back to earn the bare minimum and some of these individuals I think look at that and say you know this is enough, I want something better, but I don't have the means to do it legally and the only means to do it is illegally... and so I think they try it out and the money is really great...

They start doing trips here and there and now they've got the truck that they've always wanted, now they're dressing the way they've always wanted and they start moving up these ranks and finally they start achieving like the status among their peers... Its always related to one example..., there is this one individual who was really, really poor and now he is rich and you know he drives everything he wants to drive and he's got unlimited spending money and all the women and it's just like this power... that everybody looks up to and they say well I want to be like him one of these days... They know people...[who] have actually been successful...so the more positive stories you hear about them the more people want to do it because...they think if he can do it I can do it. But it normally stems from your lower class families who just want to scrap for a better living so that's what they have to do.

It is evident from this statement that law enforcement and media portrayals of the drug trafficking business in the U.S. oftentimes exaggerate the profitability of their trade. However, evidence presented in the jury trial from DEA wiretaps portray some members of the drug trafficking organization struggling to make ends meet because their merchandise had been stolen, some of its members were captured, and other shipments were intercepted by law enforcement.

Even though the Seattle indictment charges these higher level drug traffickers with weapon offenses in the process of conducting their illegal activities, virtually none of these defendants had a violent criminal record. The court transcripts discussed weapons being found in homes, tucked away in drawers and inside plastic bags usually in close proximity to drugs. However, despite efforts on behalf of the prosecutors to portray these drug traffickers as violent, there was no evidence presented at the trial of the weapons being used to perpetrate violence against other competitors, law enforcement or being used during their drug transactions. Most of the telephone conversations the prosecution presented throughout the criminal investigation deal mainly with drug prices, competitors, evading law enforcement, and new drug markets. The lack of violence exhibited in this drug trafficking networks may be attributed to several factors, including the background of its members and their associates. These tend to be people with humble beginnings who have come to the U.S. as farmworkers from rural areas and who have joined drug trafficking for the sole purpose of acquiring material wealth. On the other hand, if these individuals were being associated with gang members, murderers, child molesters and other drug gangs with violent histories, the likelihood of violent behavior

on behalf of these higher level drug traffickers would be apparent in the court transcripts, court observations and interviews conducted.

The only evidence presented by the prosecution that hints at some violent activity by members of the drug trafficking organization in the Seattle case include wiretap conversations of one higher level drug trafficker who complained about a hit man who was promised by some of his contacts and had not materialized despite his insistence that one be provided for him. He is also contemplating being able to use a .9 millimeter pistol that he owns on the person who has stolen merchandise. Moreover, he conveys to the other drug trafficker his ire for having been fooled. The following quote is from DEA court transcripts derived from a wiretap conversation between drug trafficker #1 and #2 where one drug trafficker describes his frustration for having drugs stolen and what he intends to do to get paid.

[1], I feel, I feel that I am choking, crazy man. And I feel that - - I feel - - It's that he is - - it's that nobody has played me for a fool like this crazy guy, crazy man. Nobody ever in life, do you understand? Until now there has not been a guy who had dared to do that and - - who is - - living in this damn world, crazy man. [2] I know - - [1] He is worth shit, man. And then I have these people to kill, I already have about four in the list, what do you think? And then this bastard here with his things too, that friend told me that he was going to find me someone and then he did not find me anything either.

This is an example of the bravado that some of these higher level drug traffickers have to convey (toughness & smartness) to others in order to portray a violent image and gain respect among their peers. The fact that this drug trafficker has been robbed several times, his shipments had been intercepted by law enforcement, and apparently has pinpointed four people to kill, but does not have access to a hit man is evidence of his lack of success in the drug business and how he must make up stories of killing people and having contacts elsewhere in order to fit the image that he intends to portray in order

to be respected and achieve the desire status in the drug trade. This pep talk is common among drug traffickers who do not have the will or the resources to carry out their threats but would like to have a reputation of being violent to deter aggression, betrayal, theft and convince potential suppliers that they have what it takes to be in the drug business.

Definitions Attached to Legal Codes

The socioeconomic background in which these subjects were raised is a major determinant of the type of societal norms these individuals will follow. In their world view, economic survival and acquiring the material wealth they believe they deserved take precedent over adhering to ethical and societal norms. For example, this drug trafficker stated the following when asked what he thought about people who must steal to survive even, if this meant using violence like mugging people, taking their wallets and running away:

Well like I said, stealing from someone...I would not accept that, I would except yea, if maybe somebody would steal from a bank, from the government...I would respect somebody who does something like that, but not hurt people. In my opinion...the government..., they take a lot of money from people paying taxes and all of that if somebody does that, it's like to me, I wouldn't care but I wouldn't want somebody to take money from an individual person.

Or if let's say some big company has a lot of money or whatever, some people would do a scam on them..., I wouldn't care really cause sometimes they have a lot of money so it's like why not share...some money, but when you are taking money from someone who is working, I mean, making it day by day or whose living very decent, I wouldn't think is nice for someone to go and just take your money. I do agree it's wrong for you or someone who sells drugs, to offer it to a kid, especially someone under-age.

Judging from the statement above, these higher level drug traffickers seem to have certain ethical norms, which they will not break; this includes stealing from people who make an honest living. This statement also seems to suggest that as long as these drug traffickers are not physically hurting others, anything that will get them closer to acquiring the

material wealth they aspired to is considered legitimate. In fact, some of these rules may even be encouraged to be violated in order to be admitted into their social network. Some of these participants will grow up admiring those who have been successful at acquiring material wealth by engaging in unlawful behavior and deceiving the government without being caught. It is interesting to note that the drug trafficker quoted above believes it is fair game to steal from the government and large corporations, but not from those who are struggling to survive economically. This particular study participant is essentially challenging the authority of the state to collect taxes and police the behavior of its citizens, and expresses the view that selling drugs should not be outlawed as long as individuals are not offering it to minors and forcing others to purchase their product. Moreover, because large corporations have plenty of economic resources they ought to share their wealth with others, and if they don't do so it is acceptable for others to succeed at “stealing” from these entities.

One can argue that the socialization of these higher level drug traffickers in school, social settings and places of employment introduced them to deviant elements. This socialization, as Sutherland (1978; 1983) claims, allowed them to learn deviant behavior and strategies on how to sell drugs, and acquire reasonable justifications for engaging in these unlawful activities. In an environment where low educational attainment, poverty and unemployment are prevalent, questionable strategies to achieve material wealth are often overlooked and individuals who grew up in this environment will easily deviate from their own ethical values and fall prey to criminal elements. The following was a response by a drug trafficker who was asked what he thought about those

who take shortcuts in order to achieve material wealth:

Well, some people say that the rules are made by people who control or want to control everybody else, that's just the way they say, but um, I think I guess if there was no law or there was um, nobody who would enforce the law there would be a disaster. I would say that um it is your own risk I guess if they caught you doing the wrong thing you're gonna have to pay for the consequences, whatever they are... [sic].

Although these drug traffickers have a different interpretation of the legal codes than most members of society, the statement from the above drug trafficker clearly suggest that he accepts the logic for creating and implementing rules to maintain order and seems to be aware and accepts the consequences that will result if he is caught breaking those rules. However, evidence from the Seattle case and the statements of higher level drug traffickers noted above suggest some of these participants were not well acquainted with the consequences they were facing if caught selling drugs, and had only seen or experienced the rewards (classical & operant conditioning) that some of their associates had enjoyed for engaging in the drug trade. Not until these drug conspirators saw themselves engulfed in the indictment did they realize the gravity of the charges brought up by the prosecution and the penalties they were facing if they were duly convicted. The changing tactics employed by the government seem to be effective at convincing many defendants in drug cases to turn against their own associates in order to avoid the hefty penalties brought about against those who are found guilty of drug conspiracies.

Unfortunately, only scenarios where drug traffickers display their riches play out on the psyche of poor, uneducated and economically marginalized persons involved, making the recruitment of members into these organizations easier than one would expect. This situation conveys an image of profitability and rewards for those who engage in drug trafficking, but fails to convey the drawbacks and harsh realities that

many of these individuals have faced throughout their criminal careers until it is too late. Table 4.5 summarizes the findings of this chapter by describing the characteristics which higher level drug traffickers exhibited, the process these study participants underwent in joining a drug trafficking organization, the justification they offered for engaging in the drug trade, and the way in which they redefine the ethical and legal norms attending to their decisions.

Table 4.5

Summary of Findings			
Characteristics of the Narco	Process of Learning the Trade	Justification for Violating the Legal Codes	Redefinitions of Ethical & Legal Norms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Low</i>: Socio-economic background; Self-esteem & Educational attainment • Lack of access to credit institutions & Technical skills • Disabled & unemployed • Alienated members of immigrant groups from rural communities • Mostly young males (although females also played a role) from troubled backgrounds • Able to portray a smart & tough attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction into the trade by family, close friends & associates • Socialization of potential recruits in school, work, bars and other social settings • Display of material wealth by those already engaged in the trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcome economic hardships • Satisfaction of basic necessities • Low risk & more acceptable than other criminal activity • Immediate gratification of material needs • No market barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normalization of the drug trade • As long as violence is not being perpetrated to achieve goals, then it must not be unlawful • Stealing is acceptable only against government and big corporations, not against those who make an honest living

Suitability of Social Learning Theory

The data gathered about these higher level drug traffickers suggests that in most cases everyone who was caught selling drugs was introduced by individuals who were

related by blood, marriage and/or from the same hometown and/or home state in Mexico. These findings are consistent with social learning theory and its claims that individuals will learn deviant behavior and favorable or unfavorable definitions of law violations during their interactions and association with their “primary group”. The subjects who decided to join the drug trade did so with the belief that selling drugs was not a serious violation of their social and ethical norms, either because they had been influenced by adult family members or socialized into the trade since an early age.

These higher level drug traffickers believed that as long as they were not physically hurting and or taking money away from individuals who were earning an honest living they were not violating their core ethical values, and as a consequence they could rightfully violate the legal codes imposed upon them by society. Additionally, these higher level drug traffickers reported one of the primary reasons for joining the drug trade included the economic rewards they expected to gain from joining a drug trafficking organization. Consistent with SLT, the data gathered suggested that those who joined the drug trade did so only after observing others display the material wealth they had acquired as a result of being involved in the drug trade. Once they started dealing, the material wealth and other benefits they enjoyed made it extremely difficult for these higher level narcotraffickers to stop dealing drugs, often even after they had served time in jail or prison. In fact, as SLT predicted, drug dealers who served time in prison were able to form networks and learn techniques that allowed them to continue their drug trafficking operations in a more profitable manner after they had been released from incarceration.

Although not all of the SLT variables were present in the data gathered, even if they were cannot fully explain higher level drug trafficking. SLT does not account for the behavior of individuals who did not take on higher level drug trafficking, despite being raised in the same environment. That said, the variables associated with this theory were clearly present in the behavior of these subjects. For these reasons, SLT is well suited for the analysis of higher level drug trafficking as well as for examining the behavior of members of other groups who engage in unlawful activities. The suitability of social learning theory stems largely from the ability of this theory to dig deep into the background of the individual being studied, including the physical and psychological environment in which they were raised.

CHAPTER FIVE

TESTING VARIABLES OF SOCIAL IDENTITY & GROUP THEORIES

In western societies, the consumption and immediate gratification of material goods are viewed as a symbol of success, and individuals who join drug smuggling organizations do so in part because legitimate opportunities to achieve these immediate goals have been blocked (Colvin, 2000). As scholars, before we can design and implement strategies to prevent the recruitment of new members into drug trafficking organizations it is important that we understand the psychological reasoning of persons who have decided to engage in drug trafficking. Using social identity and Group Theory (SIT and GT) as a foundation, I make a preliminary attempt to describe the psychological factors that contribute to the recruitment process of individuals into drug smuggling organizations. In this chapter I describe how higher level drug traffickers started in the drug trade by abandoning their primary group and joining a drug trafficking organization in major part because they perceived the organization's members to be higher in status, respected by members of their communities, as well as having the ability to influence the outcome of events in their own lives.

This discussion of psychological factors is followed by a content analysis of the narcocorrido—ballads describing the success and celebrating the customary activities of the narco. The narcocorrido is shown to be very powerful and effective at enticing individuals to join drug trafficking because its lyrics about glory and riches appeal to the emotions and psyche of the disadvantaged but ambitious individual. While these ballads may not be strictly based on facts, the stories related in song are based on real events and

give us an important insight into the minds of drug traffickers. Finally, in this chapter I describe the behaviour of drug traffickers as a group, and assess whether or not SIT and GT are well suited for the analysis of higher level drug traffickers.

The Abandonment of Their Primary Group Through Social Mobility

Individuals who have joined drug trafficking organizations have effectively disassociated themselves from their previous group, where they experience economic deprivation to join a new group of higher status where material wealth is perceived to be relatively abundant. Currently, many young adults in society view low paying jobs as shameful, and in order to improve their self image, they will take the risk of getting caught selling drugs, rather than continue to work in jobs viewed by their friends and society as demeaning and humiliating. Individuals who join drug trafficking organizations are not satisfied with their present group status, and in order to achieve this sense of positive self, they have made a conscious decision to join a different group despite the ethical and legal implications that this new membership may bring.

Those who join drug trafficking organizations have fallen into the trap of measuring success on how much material wealth an individual can acquire, and in order to see themselves in a more positively distinct group they must acquire these goods even at the cost of getting apprehended and prosecuted. However, wealth through legitimate means is difficult to acquire and individuals who join drug trafficking organizations have succumbed to this pressure in order to improve their social identity. In the case of higher level drug traffickers, individuals who are willing to join these organizations do so because they were under some sort of economic pressure either to maintain a wealthy

lifestyle after a business failure or because they want the economic rewards including a flamboyant lifestyle, greed and high status that these illegal activities can often provide (Desroches, 2005; Jensen, 1996). However, others who engaged in the trade did it for other reasons, including their inability to provide basic necessities for themselves and their families. Some others taking up the drug trade were disabled and/or could not perform the labor-intensive jobs at which they were skilled, while others joined drug trafficking organizations because they lack role models that could mentor them and channel their energies, dreams and ambitions of acquiring material wealth through legitimate means.

Once the rewards of this illicit activity begin to materialize, these individuals have effectively left their previous group to become part of a more positively viewed distinct group that fits their perceived notion of an improved self-identity. Once this has occurred, higher level drug traffickers will begin to identify themselves with their newly adopted group and begin to see their previous group as the out-group. In the mind of the higher level drug trafficker, this comparison is relevant because if they were able to make the transition of gaining membership in their newly adopted group, others (those suffering poverty and economic hardships) can also do the same if they made a decision to take risks in order to achieve material wealth. Additionally, with their newly acquired membership comes a new set of out-groups that previously were considered part of their in-group. For example, their neighbours, law enforcement officers and even family members (who oppose their activities) all of the sudden become an out-group because their membership in a drug smuggling organization requires secrecy and deception in

order to succeed in their business and avoid apprehension and prosecution by law enforcement.

Once individuals have joined drug trafficking organizations, some of these drug traffickers will experience a type of negative social identity due to the illegality of their new profession. However, according to social identity theory, individuals will cope with this new threat through *social creativity*. For example, the statement below by a drug trafficker compares persons in the drug trade to legitimate business organizations by claiming that they are participating in a process where individuals freely exchange goods and services without the use of violence:

Let's say you are buying drugs, if you get in drugs it's you because...you can make a decision whether to give your money or not give it away. Because I think anyway...to me if...you want to buy drugs it's like you giving your money away it's like you're making a decision...you are not being pushed [sic].

In other words, they are simply supplying a product that consumers want and they are not forcing anyone to consume or to take drugs (Desroches, 2005). Second, individuals who are attempting to enhance their image through social creativity will re-evaluate the comparison dimension such that previously negative dimensions are perceived as positive. For example, individuals who have joined drug trafficking organizations will cope with the negative stigma of being considered a criminal by comparing themselves to bank robbers, gang members or other criminal groups considered lower in status. It is common for drug traffickers to use comments such as “well, at least I do not steal from people, I make my own money from goods that me and my customers freely exchange, except that these goods happen to be outlawed by the government.”

The third strategy that individuals who use social creativity to enhance their social image will do is to compare their own in-group to a different or lower status group. For

example, members of a drug smuggling organization will compare themselves to individuals who are conformists and who have allowed themselves and their families to suffer the hardships of poverty and deprivation. Their new profession may be illegitimate, but at least their families will no longer suffer the hardships of poverty and their children will have a brighter future as a result of their decisions.

Finally, social competition is another strategy which groups or individuals will employ to cope with a threatened or negative social identity. Individuals who use this strategy will compete with the out-group to attain positive distinctiveness or positive social identity. However, joining a new group to enhance social identity will depend on the permeability of the group's boundaries, which in turn will influence the type of strategies individuals will use to gain acceptance or membership into this new group (Ellemers, Van, & Knippenberg, 1990). The boundary permeability of drug trafficking organizations will depend on the type of background or environment from in which the persons seeking membership come. The type of ethnic or racial background of individuals can be an advantage or disadvantage and will determine the likelihood of being admitted into this new group. For those seeking membership in drug trafficking organizations who are of the 'right' ethnic or racial background, the permeability, profitability and low market barriers are difficult to resist, even after assessing the risks of potential apprehension and likelihood of prosecution. The following statement from this higher level drug trafficker puts into perspective how easy it is for those in the Latino community who want to join the drug trade:

It was very easy, because there is a lot of organizations that they don't care about violence or they're not into that because they probably haven't had a need, so they just want drivers.... It's real easy because there is so many of them who are in need of drivers who can be trusted...especially the young, they don't know nothing they are just told how to

do, what to say in case you get arrested, and that they will help you out, but it is not hard at all.... It's probably easier than getting [a] job in...the fields.

For those who get apprehended and sent to prison, they will use this opportunity to sharpen up their drug smuggling operation skills and gather intelligence on potential suppliers and distributors while serving their prison terms. This allows them to form networks that permit them to continue their drug smuggling operations in a more profitable manner than before they were sent to prison (Desroches, 2005). Being sent to prison would be the equivalent of entering a training program where they will learn the skills of the trade and will graduate at the time their prison term ends.

It is obvious that the obstacles for joining a drug trafficking organization composed mainly of Latino members will be greater for those with an Anglo Saxon background with little knowledge of the language, culture, customs and values than those seeking membership with a Latino background. This is one of the main factors that prevent law enforcement and intelligence agencies from gathering information and dismantling drug cartels and terrorists networks. For these reasons, prosecutors and the DEA rely heavily on Confidential Informants (CI) (otherwise known as “snitches”) to infiltrate these organizations. For example, in the Seattle case the court transcript analysis indicates that the co-conspirator in the indictment mentioned in the previous chapter was of Latin American decent and spoke the same language as the rest of the defendants, making it rather easy for her to gain the trust of the group and acceptance into the drug trafficking organization.

When applying the in-group versus the out-group principle of SIT at the individual level, this characteristic becomes even more salient. For example, upon close analysis of the court transcripts it becomes clear why the co-conspirator decided to betray

the others and become a witness for the government. After being arrested for selling three kilos of cocaine to a Confidential Informant (CI), the co-conspirator was charged with two conspiracy counts to distribute cocaine and heroine, a charge that carries up to thirty years and a minimum of five years sentence for each offence. She had been caught selling an ounce of cocaine several months before, but apparently this was not a deterrent until she was caught with the larger quantity and realized how much prison time she was facing; it was the long prison sentence that caused her to betray her primary drug trafficking group. The lavish lifestyle and the availability of cash were no longer present after her arrest, prompting her to leave her primary group of drug associates to join a different group (the government) that would offer some sort of benefits in exchange for her testimony. It is apparent that at the time of her testimony, being part of the drug trafficking group was no longer favorable so the informant had to look for a more “positively distinct” group that would offer more benefits if she joined. These benefits included a significant reduction of her prison term in exchange for her cooperation and testimony against her drug associates.

Although the indictment included a total of three women, including the CI, her drug contacts were all men. This may be an important factor to point out which might have caused her to break one of the most important group norms, which was not to betray her drug associates. Moreover, although she was a Latina she happened to be of a different nationality than that of the rest of the defendants, hence making it easier to break the code of silence rule that many of these tight-knit groups adhere. Furthermore, according to the court transcripts, the co-conspirator had not been in the drug trafficking business for very long; this might have prevented her from fully internalizing the group

norms, which included not betraying the in-group because of the consequences that would result for all involved. Being of a different nationality than that of her drug trafficking group also made it easier for the co-conspirator to testify in favor of the government; this meant that even if the drug traffickers wanted to retaliate (a consequence for breaking the group norms) it would be more difficult to track her down in a country which was different than that of her drug associates.

Being of the same race and of the same country does not necessarily guarantee that drug trade associates will not turn against each other if they are to benefit substantially from betraying their primary group. For example, court observation of sentencing hearings of higher level drug traffickers indicates that it is more common than was anticipated for individuals to break these important norms in exchange for protection of themselves and their families and a significant reduction of their sentences. This is particularly true when those who are caught feel that a wrong has been perpetrated against them by their drug associates and they want to retaliate by testifying on behalf of the government. This dynamic is reflected in the Yakima case where a higher level drug trafficker turned against its associates after he was beaten in prison for not giving back a kilo of cocaine to drug suppliers when it became known that the cocaine had not been confiscated by law enforcement at the time of his arrest as he claimed. The testimony of the CI forced eleven members of the organization to plead guilty to drug conspiracies, with ten-to fifteen-year terms awarded to each of the defendants for their role in drug trafficking operations. In exchange for his cooperation, the CI was sentenced to 24 months (including time served) rather than the ten-to fifteen-year term common in such federal cases. In exchange for his cooperation the government agreed to place him under

the witness protection program, which entailed the relocation of his immediate family members and the option of choosing the location where he was to serve his prison term.

Content Analysis of Narcocorridos; Affect & Emotion and the Role it Plays in the Recruitment Process of the Narco

According to the tenets of Social Identity theory, individuals within groups are influenced by affect and emotions—a generic term for a whole range of preferences, evaluations and moods with these emotions being both positive or negative in education (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). In the nationalism and holocaust literatures there are striking similarities in the propaganda tools that appeal to the emotions used by Hitler to unite the populace with those that are used by the ‘narcotraffickers’ to attract members into their criminal organizations (Cottam & Cottam, 2001). For example, Hitler used music to entice nationalistic sentiments among the German people and was able to unite them under a super-ordinate identity of nationalism. The ability to utilize tools such as music that appealed to the emotions of individuals were extremely powerful and allowed Hitler to exert effective psychological control over the German people. The nationalistic sentiments and emotions brought out by the music they listened to made it easier to persuade them to commit acts that they would not normally be willing to commit if music had not been a contributing factor. Appealing to the emotions of individuals is one of the most common strategies used in the recruitment of members into the drug trade. Among various the propaganda tools used to attract members into drug trafficking organizations is the medium of narcocorridos. In this case, narcocorridos serve as a tool to manipulate and lure in young, socially marginal and economically dislocated members of Latino communities. The following statements were provided by higher level drug traffickers

who were asked what type of music they listen to and what effects that music had on them and other members of the listening audience:

[1] Music...that talks about certain famous traffickers or...famous people,...[narcocorridos] got stories about...people that...you kind of identify yourself with...because a lot of times, a lot of them...went...through a lot of [the] things that you've been through or...they just went through the same things you did when you were little. They suffered in a similar way so, now when they talk about them that they are so big you kind of wow! You know you kind of admire these people...Am a lot of them are fact, sometimes they are a little bit or they take a little bit off the story, am sometimes am, a lot of it, am most of it true.

Sometimes when they say they blow up so much stuff or whatever, is just am, there are some that are real fake, but a lot of them are real. Especially, right now that for everything that's going on right now in Mexico there is a lot of killings and they do throw grenades and all these stuff...Am lets say five years back there wasn't like that, it was violence, but it wasn't about like am grenade launcher, like am...what do you call those?... They didn't exist at that time, they just started like three or four years...

[2] Es música pero habla de pura droga, puro contrabando...como si tuvieran competencias... Yo creo que [narcocorridos] si afecta porque habla de unos corridos que le pueden despertar la imaginación de muchas cosas a uno...puede... agarrarle por ahí y decir "no pues el fulano le hizo así y no lo agarraron en tanto tiempo y pues yo le voy a calar." Los corridos se componen por algo... Hay un sesenta o setenta por ciento que es verdadero lo que se compone. Despierta imaginaciones y se junta uno con ese tipo de personas que les gusta esa música,...personas dicen, "no pues yo le voy a ser como el fulano este" (refiriéndose al personaje del corrido).

It is music, but it only talks about drugs, contraband...as if they were competing...I believe that [narcoballads] do have an effect because it talks about corridos that can spark one's imagination about several things...that one can take from them and say "well that guy did it in this way and he didn't get caught in such a long time and so I am going to try it." The corridos are composed for a reason... There is a sixty or seventy percent that is factual about what it's composed. It sparks the imagination and when one associates with that type of people that likes this music..., people say, "well I am going to do it like this guy" (referring to the character in the narcoballad) (Author's translation, 2007).

Getting drunk in the company of woman and friends, attending horse races, cockfights and spending lavishly are common themes in these narcocorridos that appeal to the emotions of members who not only come from economically deprived settings, but also appeal to those who are from more economically stable groups. Some of these higher level drug traffickers believe narcocorridos can have such an influence in its listening audience that they have stopped listening to this music themselves in order for their children not to get exposed to its content.

Additionally, cruising the streets in cities, towns and villages in brand-new expensive vehicles and displaying lavish jewellery while playing narcoballads that glorify incarceration, death, vengeance and other forms of violence are also common themes in these songs. Taking the front seats in social functions and other engagements as if they were heads of state are also common occurrences that act to legitimize these individuals as respected members of our society. These practices make the recruitment process much easier, especially among economically deprived members who highly desire the ability to experience this quality of life. Gifts from narcotraffickers to the poor and non-profit organizations also make drug traffickers appear like some sort of heroes, particularly in poor communities where the government has failed miserably in providing the basic necessities to their citizens.

Accounts of attempted apprehension recorded in narcoballads regarding from law enforcement agencies, especially if they relate to the DEA or FBI, also tend to legitimize and boost the popularity of narcotraffickers, particularly when their efforts to apprehend traffickers fail. The following narcocorrido, which begins with the sound of a pager, cellular phone and the voice (in a conversational format) of a drug trafficker's brother, illustrates this point:

[1] Bueno. [2] Oyes, van como tres veces que te marco al beeper y no contestas, tu casa esta rodeada, pélate carnal (Conversational). "Hermano callo la ley, está rodeada tu casa. Son puros nervios los tuyos porque yo no he visto nada", así le dije a mi hermano para que hicieran confianza. Sabía que estaba rodeado e interceptaban llamadas. No entraron pronto por mí, para a ver quien más llegaba, pero se les durmió el gallo me pele en la madrugada. Eran quince hombres del DEA su misión era agarrarme, soy más astuto que un gato, eso pude comprobarles, cuando ellos van yo ya vengo, también yo fui Comandante. Al ver que nadie lleo, dieron la orden para entrar. Cuando tumbaron las puertas, caen Federales para atrás, les coloque unas granadas en una forma especial. Todo fue una confusión por aquellas explosiones. La casa encendida en llamas parecía de día la noche, para ese entonces yo andaba en Ciudad Juárez Señores. No crean que es la primer vez que me les pelo en su cara, me escape de San Quintín, de Corpora y otras jaulas, los espero por la sierra, soy el Gato de Chihuahua (Los Huracanes del Norte, 1997, track 1).

[1] Hello. [2] Hey it's been like three times that I've dial your pager and you're not answering, your home has been surrounded you must escape (conversational). "Brother, the law enforcement has come; your home has been surrounded. It is your paranoia because I have seen nothing" this is what I told my brother so that they would not be suspicious. I knew I was surrounded and phone calls were being intercepted. They did not come in to get me to see who else would come, but they fell asleep because I escaped early in the morning. It was fifteen men from the DEA and their mission was to apprehend me. I am smarter than a cat and that I was able to prove, when they are going I am already returning, I too was a Commander. When they realized that no one arrived, the order was given to enter. I strategically set up some grenades, so when the doors were busted, Feds fell back. Everything was chaotic as a result of the explosions. The house was engulfed in flames and the night seemed as if it was the day. Gentleman by that time, I was already in Ciudad Juárez (a U.S.-Mexico border city known for drug trafficking activity). Do not think this is the first time I have escaped in their presence. I have escaped from San Quentin, from Corpora and other cages; I will be waiting for them in the mountains. I am the Cat of Chihuahua (Author' Translation, 2005).

These apprehension failures recorded in these songs, along with special effects sounds of helicopters, ambulances, gun shots and explosions, portray narcos as being highly intelligent with a sense of superiority and confidence that naturally appeals to the psyche of individuals who are socially and economically marginalized. The use of technology by drug traffickers (such as cell-phones, computers, airplanes, GPS, armoured vehicles, encrypted codes for drug smuggling operations) and the use of sophisticated weaponry such as rocket propelled grenades and machineguns to take down helicopters while attempting to eradicate their drug plantations and other means of evading capture are also recorded in narcocorridos. The following is an excerpt from a narcocorrido that illustrates these themes:

Hemos derribado aviones que nos han caído al campo a quemarnos los plantíos donde sale el polvo blanco con bazucas y metralas los hemos mandado al Diablo. Les hemos pasado enfrente con los tanques de ellos mismos donde llevamos la droga para enyerbar al los gringos para que se vuelvan locos y no sepan de ellos mismos. Mi gente anda bien armada la que traigo por los cerros, las armas yo se las mando en cortinas de becerros, el gobierno ni las huele, piensa que yo vendo cuero (Los Centenarios).

We have taken down airplanes that have come down upon the field to burn our plantation where the white powder comes from, with rocket-propelled grenades and machineguns we have sent them to the devil. We have passed through in front of them with their own tanks where we ship the drugs to poison the 'gringos' so that they become crazy and loose a sense of who they are (Author's translation, 2005).

This propaganda is very effective at creating misperceptions among rural Mexican farmers that narcos are invincible and possess economic and political clout. Disenfranchised members of society naturally find it difficult to resist the attraction to these glorified figures. The names of several states such as Michoacán, Jalisco, Sinaloa, Durango, Tijuana, and Chihuahua are also mentioned in narcoballads in an attempt to place their states higher in status regarding the amount and quality of drugs they can smuggle into the United States. As a result of this propaganda, many individuals who want to enhance their social image and gain legitimacy within the drug trafficking circles will claim to be from certain states that have the reputation of producing and shipping large quantities of drugs to the United States.

Dramatic escapes from prison and the successful corruption of government officials to be allowed through with drug shipments are also common themes in narcocorridos. This type of content is illustrated in the following corrido:

Con el permiso de todos, voy a empezar a cantar, para contarles los hechos de un Agente Federal que fue Cuauhtémoc Miranda, lo mato un Cabo Aduanal. En la garita de Ochoa, municipio de Camargo, estaban los veladores su cardo desempeñando cuando llego un Federal por el Jefe preguntando. El Cabo Polo De Arrean, voz de mando en el servicio, le pregunto muy seguro “que se le ofrece mi amigo? Soy el oficial en un turno para servirle le dijo. Soy Agente Federal” Contesto muy altanero “y quiero notificarle del contrabando que llevo, van a pasar dos camiones, diles a tus compañeros”. Como los hombres derechos el Cabo le respondió, “así no puedes pasarte. ¿En que papel quedo yo? Acuérdate que a los hombres nos justifica el honor”. El Agente muy liviano desenfundo en un momento, pero el Cabo de la Aduana dicen que fue mas violento, siete veces disparo y el Agente cayó muerto (Banda Limón, 1999)

With everyone’s permission, I will begin singing, to tell you the deeds of a Federal Agent whose name it was Cuauhtémoc Miranda, killed by a Customs Corporal. In the check point of Ochoa, County of Camargo, the night guards were conducting their duties when a Federal Agent arrived asking for the boss. The Corporal, Polo De Arrean, distinguished member of the service asked him very confidently, “what can I do for you my friend; I am the official in charge for this shift at your service. I am a Federal Agent” answered arrogantly “and I would like to notify you of the contraband that I am carrying, tell your subordinates that two trucks will be coming through.” Like a man of honour the Corporal answered; “you cannot pass through with this load, if you do, this will mean that I am not performing my duties. You must remember that honour justified a man.” The agent rapidly drew, but the Customs’ Corporal is said to have been more violent, firing seven shots and the Agent dropped dead (Author’s translation, 2005).

The messages in these songs seem to suggest that it is not uncommon for law enforcement agents to be involved in the drug trade, which leads people to believe (with some accuracy) that corruption is rampant and they should be vigilant when dealing with government agencies. When the corporal arrives at the checkpoint demanding to be let through with his shipment this gives the listening audience a glimpse of the overt corruption in existence and what may happen to those officers who may not be willing to be corrupted. In this particular narcocorrido the uncorrupted Mexican officer got the upper hand, but this sends a message to other law enforcement officers that if they intend to resist corruption by drug traffickers they must be willing to kill or be killed.

Members of powerful cartels are idealized in some narcocorridos to the point of making them immortal. For example, conspiracy theories abounded in narcocorridos as well as by word of mouth among drug smuggling circles that Amado Carrillo Fuentes, the head of the Juarez Cartel who died in July of 1997 from an overdose of anaesthesia while undergoing plastic surgery, was still alive. Carrillo was known as “El Señor de los Cielos” or Lord of the Skies due to his practice of chartering Boeing 727s to ship Colombian cocaine to his bases in northern Mexico (Kettle, 1999). These types of rumours and conspiracy theories help create a world of fantasy for current and future members of drug cartels that keeps them motivated, clinging to a false sense of hope and security. This exaggerated sense of invulnerability that narcocorridos depict cause narcotraffickers to remain highly optimistic in general outlook. These songs create a belief that if they hang on a little longer, a much brighter future awaits them. This thought process and attitude towards life is a continuous cycle that remains with them throughout their lives, regardless of the inevitable setbacks they may experience. Apart

from greed, the illusion of a hero-like figure the narcocorrido creates in the minds of its listening audience is among the reasons individuals who have joined drug cartels find it difficult to abandon their trade.

Narcocorridos are to narcotraffickers what published memoirs are to politicians. This propaganda has been so influential in recruiting individuals into the drug trade, inciting instability through the use of violence, intimidation and corruption that several radio stations in Sinaloa, Baja California and other northern Mexican states have agreed to ban narcocorridos that glorify violence. This radio ban came days after an apparently drug-related massacre left 12 people dead in the Sinaloan village of El Limoncito in which males of all ages were lined up by masked visitors and gunned down with automatic weapons (LaFranchi, 2001). Musical groups that played this type of music have a large following in central and northern Mexican states, as well as in several large cities in the U.S.—including Chicago, Los Angeles, Huston, El Paso and other places where high concentrations of Mexican and Latin American immigrants reside (LaFranchi, 2001).

There exist striking similarities in the message of the narcocorrido and Rock musicians recruited by racist groups to play at concerts and rallies that promotes the use of violence against nonwhites. By the same token, the Nazis were an organized political group with one charismatic leader as the head of its movement declaring the intent of taking over the government. Most narcotraffickers do not have a particular leader, nor do they intend to take over the government and rule the country—although they do intend to acquire wealth and exert some form of influence in government. Unlike racist groups whose leaders attempt to recruit members for their organizations in concerts or rallies, no

such group dynamic develops with narcotraffickers. For example, there are no Pablo Escobares or Amado Carrillo Fuentes figures out recruiting members to work for their cartels. Individuals who want to join drug trafficking organizations do so through other channel, not in concerts or public settings, and most act independently of other higher level drug traffickers for their drug trafficking operations. Musical groups who play narcocorrido do not play this music only for those who seek to join drug cartels; to the contrary, the majority of their business comes from law abiding citizens. The popularity of the narcoballad is due to the simplicity of its musical arrangement, the easy dancing rhythm style featured and their ability to tell stories of characters who have risen from rags to riches. These are among the reasons why such a high demand exists for these lyrics and why millions of copies are sold and bought independently for the enjoyment of both law abiding citizens and drug traffickers alike.

Drug smuggling organizations do not operate in a hierarchical manner with a centralized command system like the Mafia stereotype where everyone involved had to answer to 'the Boss' (Desroches, 2005). Even though drug trafficking organizations are connected loosely to their suppliers in source countries and have to pay for their merchandise, most of them work independently at the local level and act as a type of independent contractor who is responsible for the goods once they have been delivered to them. This type of organizational style insulates its members from the threat of violence, apprehension and prosecution.

As the autobiography of an L.A. gang member who changed his identity from the civilian Kody Scott to the gang banger Monster Kody (Shakur, 1993), narcotraffickers not only change their identity by adopting nicknames such as the Scorpion, The Cat, The

Panther as the narcoballads suggests, but they purchase birth certificates and illegally change their names several times throughout their lives in order to avoid detection and apprehension. The adoption of animal nicknames common in narcocorridos seems to suggest the type of agility, ferocity and speed with which drug traffickers can act when they are threatened and/or conducting their drug smuggling operations. Narcotraffickers are also known to submit themselves to surgery to erase their fingerprints and undergo plastic surgery to change their physical appearance to avoid being identified by their rivals or capture by law enforcement. As Monster Kody had to live up to his name by using violence that reflected that of his adopted character, narcotraffickers and drug cartels also used violence that reflects their reputation acquired throughout the existence of their criminal organizations.

These adopted identities allow drug traffickers to detach themselves from the acts of violence they have committed against others; making it easier for them to cope with the psychological drawbacks resulting from these unlawful activities. Whether a person or a group acts on the basis of his or her anger will depend on several factors including the situation, norms, values and the characteristics of out-groups toward which these acts of violence may be directed. The likelihood of the use of violence on behalf of drug traffickers will also depend on the reputation (violent or non-violent), availability of resources and/or the type of aggression that has been perpetrated against their organizations. Additionally, the type of environment in which these drug trafficking groups operate, including the strength of law enforcement and governmental institutions where these groups operate, will also factor in on whether or not, these criminal organizations become engaged in violent acts.

Although the availability of weapons, threats and intimidation was common in drug busts, the data gathered for this study did not produce much evidence of these higher level drug traffickers being involved in violent activities. Drug traffickers will not engage in violence unless the existence of their organizations is threatened, the availability of resources to carry out their threats is present and the criminal organization has a reputation for being violent. Even though their organizations were being dismantled, higher level drug traffickers in this study showed little willingness to engage in violent acts in hopes of preventing the CI or police officers from testifying. This lack of violence may be attributed to several factors including the booming economy in the region, the type of population attracted to the Northwest, strong judiciary in the U.S. and other governmental institutions currently in place to counter this type of criminal activity.

In countries where the latter factors are lacking, opportunities for these criminal organizations to thrive are readily available and the potential for violence is increased exponentially. In this type of environment where in-groups and out-groups express disgust towards each other as SIT suggests, it will evoke repulsiveness by the actions or characteristics of one another (Smith, 1993) leading to despicable violence, including torture and mutilation against government informants, law enforcement and competitors (out-groups) when their criminal organizations are threaten. A clear example of this violence include the notorious “guisos” or “stews” that members of the Zetas submitted their captives after they tortured and extracted drugs, information and any other material possession the victims had at the time of their abduction. This practice consisted of dumping their bodies in a barrel and burning the corpses with gasoline, diesel and other chemicals after they were executed (Freeman, 2006). Additionally, the beheadings of

individuals whose severed heads are delivered at the door steps of their rivals are also common practices used by violent drug gangs to send a statement to their enemies of how repulsive they feel towards their group and their commitment on using whatever means necessary to achieve their goal of exterminating or making them submit to their will.

For example, in Uruapan, Michoacán, the heads of five methamphetamine dealers believed to be “loosely” connected to the Valencia family and the Sinaloa cartel were sawed off “with a bowie knife while they were still alive...[by]...a gang called The Family who is believed to be allied with the Gulf Cartel” (McKinley, Betancourt & Lacey, 2006). Moreover, in Acapulco, a tourist town in the State of Guerrero, the commander of the special strike force was decapitated along with one of his agents and their heads were “jammed...in a fence in front of the municipal police station [with a note stating] 'so you will learn to respect,’” (McKinley et al., 2006).

In countries where government corruption is rampant and the institutions put in place to curtail violence are weak, violent drug trafficking syndicates will act with impunity by using violence even against those who are viewed by the public as a symbol of protection and security for members of their own communities. For example, the brutality perpetrated against Mexican prosecutors, Judges and law enforcement officials who challenge the existence of these criminal organizations are evidence of this impunity. The deaths of 123 law enforcement officials, which included two judges, three prosecutors and sixteen federal and state police commanders in 2006 alone, is clear evidence of Mexico's inability to control these violent gangs without endangering their own existence (McKinley, Betancourt & Lacey, 2006). Moreover, the torture and murder of Enrique Camarena—a DEA undercover agent who penetrated a Mexican drug cartel—

is a clear example of the violence that these criminal organizations are willing to inflict on those who have threatened the existence of their organization (Cottam & Cottom, 2001). The purpose of this violence is to send a clear message on how derisively they feel towards the out-group and to discourage outsiders from diminishing their influence and threatening the survival of their organizations.

Narcos are not the only group who feel antipathy towards CIs. Law enforcement officers are not particularly fond (happy) of working with these subjects, but they do it because it yields important intelligence about their own drug associates and other drug trafficking groups. This attitude towards CIs who play a crucial role in dismantling these criminal organizations is evident in interviews of law enforcement officers and court observations of sentencing hearings of higher level drug traffickers. The following statement made by a patrol officer and members of the regional SWAT team reveals the animosity felt against a CI by law enforcement officers:

Obviously we [law enforcement] don't have much respect for these individuals... We know who they are and what they've [CI] been doing for their entire lives. These individuals...are the worst to blame for whatever problems we've been running across. I seriously don't take a life into these individuals.... For somebody who has been through school and gone through all the hard work to achieve a certain goal in life, you appreciate what you have and for these individuals [CI] to just come up and you know, they don't know what they're doing obviously because they're poisoning their communities with drugs... They don't know the effect they're having and all they think about [is] an easy way out, make a lot of money really quick...so, no I don't really like these individuals [CI] because of what they do, but once you start talking to the[m]... some of their stories are amazing of what they've had to do... As far as these individuals [CI], I don't think highly of them especially the ones that are willing to work with us...that just proves the calibre of individuals and why they are doing what they are doing...but nonetheless I can't put myself in his shoes and I can't do the things that he does. So we feel compelled to...work with them because they will get us to certain areas where we can't go on our own terms.

Despite the assistance CIs provide, which ultimately results in high prosecution rates and the infiltration of large drug trafficking organizations, often the government does not carry out the promises they have made endangering not only the lives of these informants

but those of their families. For example, during the sentencing hearing of a higher level drug trafficker turned CI in the Yakima case, his attorney asked the court for a closed hearing in order to protect him and his family members from potential retaliation by his drug associates. The judge agreed to these terms and asked the family members of the informant to stand up while the court was in session. Once the family members were standing, he asked everyone who had remained standing to abandon the courtroom until the sentencing hearing had adjourned. The courtroom featured the was in attendance of defence attorneys, defendants awaiting their turn for their own hearings, as well as a member of the organization which he had helped bring down awaiting his own hearing for the role he had played in drug trafficking activities. The family was stunned when they realized that by following the judge's orders they had essentially revealed their identities to everyone present in the courtroom, including the member of the drug trafficking organization whose presence underlie the reasoning behind the extra security precaution. Although the CI was put into a witness protection program, interviews with family members revealed deep flaws with that system. For example, the protection provided by the government was only applicable to his common law spouse and his two young children; it failed to include a fourteen year old daughter he had with another female. The day of the trial, the fourteen year old reported being followed and watched closely by unknown individuals who drove around the premises of the high school she attended. After the sentencing hearing, the family left the courtroom without law enforcement escort and fearful of being victimized by associates of the drug trafficking organization which the CI had helped to prosecute.

This incident offers a glimpse at the lack of proper attention and the inadequacy of resources devoted to the protection of government witnesses, and reveals deep flaws within the witness protection system. In the Yakima case, despite the ten-to fifteen-year sentences, it appeared that those who were prosecuted for drug conspiracy charges were not motivated enough to retaliate against the CI's family for the role he played in their prosecution. Given the lax rules and inadequate protective measures regarding the witness protection program, his associates had plenty of opportunities to retaliate against his family. Other government witnesses in many murder cases did not have the same luck; according to a recent study many of them have been intimidated, beaten have turned up dead when their names were forwarded to defence attorneys in preparation for the trials against the accused (Glaberson, 2003). The lack of resources devoted to the witness protection program has lead prosecutors in New York to file formal complains about the lack of resources to protect the in witnesses from intimidation even after they were made aware that death threats had been made against their witnesses. When asked about their failure to protect the government's witness in a murder trial that resulted in the witness being killed, an executive district attorney in the Bronx stated the following: "You can't afford to put people up in hotels and have armed guards for them in every case...because there just are not enough resources" (Glaberson, 2003). These wore was certainly the circumstances in the Yakima case because there was no police escort or any sort of security precautions as the family of the CI was exiting the court building after his sentencing hearing had been concluded.

In addition to worrying about devising strategies to deceive law enforcement, drug traffickers also have to contend with competitors as well as enemies they have

created in their ascent to power and their willingness to use violence against their organizations. Moreover, clients and associates may rob them, others get apprehended and their drug shipments intercepted by law enforcement. For example, the following excerpt is from a DEA wiretap in the Seattle Case where a drug trafficker is complaining to one of his colleagues about the bad luck he's had and the stress he has been under because of recent losses he has experienced:

To tell you the truth, yes, things went bad for me since that friend...had a collision in a Camaro of mine...and then they went to Las Vegas and...to Hollywood, and I don't know what the hell...Over there a car stopped on them too...And then...they come here and they rob me, and then comes a son of a bitch who comes and puts some bullets into my hide...And then...after that...there...I don't know what the hell else happened to me, but then the damn police fucked us up in Grant's Pass...And then Juan robs me of thirty nine thousand expenses, and expenses,...crazy man, so that I get no benefit...little expenses of two, three thousand, four thousand, five thousand dollars...I don't even know what to do, crazy man. I don't know what the hell to do...what I see is that in this damn world everybody is trying to fuck you up, everybody...They just want money, and money, and money, son of a bitch, as if one was a machine...(13, 49-51).

It is important to note the effort made by of this higher level drug trafficker to avoid openly talking about specific drug-related events by using coded language such as “collision in a Camaro” to inform his colleague that his friend was caught with a load of drugs in a vehicle that belonged to him and he has not been able to recover financially. He is also complaining about the expectations help by those who work for them that higher level drug traffickers possess unlimited spending money. For higher level drug traffickers, just like any legitimate business owner, there are numerous risks they must contend with, and if their business strategies do not turn a profit they must take a loss and deal with their drug suppliers. These are people who will not have creditors making telephone calls to his home or work in an effort to collect their money, but rather will dispatch armed enforcers who will threaten them and their families with death if they do not pay for the drugs that have been either confiscated or stolen. The following

conversation captured by DEA wiretaps between two drug traffickers in the Seattle Case demonstrates the dangers associated with not paying one's suppliers:

[1] Things are critical here 'vale.' [2] Eh? [1] Yes things are getting...[2] They are critical? [1] Yes. [2] In which way? [1] No...they are putting the pressure on me too here. [2] Yes? [1] And that's the damn mess...[2] If you don't do as you say you will, they lose confidence in you. [1] Yea, yea, I know... Look! Listen...now tell the guys that they will have to wait, no? [2] No...if it had been like that...because of an...accident, the guys would wait...[1] Yes? [2] But here...[1] Well, now..they will have to wait, if not, bring them over here, do you understand? [2] To bring them...? [1] Bring them over here and we will tell the[m]...not to get upset, to wait. [2] They are getting on my case...[1] No? [2] I feel very pressured...[1] Eh? They are pressuring you...how much...do you owe them? [2] No a fucking lot...[1] Sometimes it is worth it for you to send them to hell, do you understand?...[2] If I refuse like you're telling me...[1] Yes. [2] They...will break us...(shoot us) (12, 47-51).

This statement not only reflects the typical pressures higher level drug traffickers go through frequently in order to collect drug proceeds, but in this particular case lower level dealers have not paid for the drugs they were fronted and are telling the middle man that his suppliers will have to wait for their money—and if they refused to wait, to bring suppliers before them and they will take care of the problem for him. However, the middle man “[2]” is taken aback by this proposition since it is common knowledge among drug traffickers that lower level dealers do not get to meet higher level drug suppliers. When losses occur these drug traffickers have to request more merchandise on credit and be more aggressive in marketing and selling their product. In the process of doing this they are exposing themselves to greater risks of getting caught, losing more drugs, and increasing the debt they are already owed. This higher level drug trafficker also shares some of the obstacles he has had to overcome in the drug business:

Well, I could say...that it's not easy, it's I would say...the hardest job if you realize it...because generally a lot of [it], is not just yourself, family members, people who really care for you that are not into it or don't agree with it and am its really hard. I can tell you a small story of a...drug operation that we were doing at one point.

We were out in Mexico, we were just buying, [and] we went to the heart of...the forest [to] get it...and am, I mean at that time, we had so much trouble because...it was...long, I mean the roads were real bad and where we had to take it, it was like four, five days

because we had a lot of problems... One of the trucks was bad and...the other one run out of gasoline and...another one the clutch went bad...,so at that time we had [it] real bad...

We spent actually a couple of days without eating and just, you know, just trying to avoid or being away from let's say police or am from the major cities... We had to go through the back roads, so to get into where we wanted to go and am at that time we did really have a rough time and it's not easy I mean. Sometimes you feel, you perceive what fear is and sometimes you finish doing what you're doing, you just feel happy about it...

It's not easy so am, this is not the way I recommend for anyone, especially if its someone that you know, a good friend of mine or close family member because along the run bad things happen. You either go to jail, die for whatever reason and...just probably end up getting shot...that is something I don't recommend for anybody. I think it's better that am if you don't like school, you get to school and in the long run it's going to pay off, get educated I would say, that's the best thing you can do, because its not easy.

This drug trafficker is not only expressing the difficulties he had to experience in order to avoid being detected by Mexican law enforcement, but he is also alluding to the emotional drawbacks he has had to endure throughout his criminal career because his family members opposed his unlawful activities. These are among the reasons why drug traffickers suffer from stress, anxiety, and paranoia, similar to members of terrorist groups, gangs and other group members of legitimate society with position of high stress such as CIA spies and military personnel (Raven & Rubin, 1983).

Even though this may seem a somewhat contradictory observation, higher level drug traffickers also tend to be law abiding citizens (with the exception of selling drugs) with rather conventional values, including being religious and family-oriented. For example, in the Seattle Case, a wiretap conversation between two drug traffickers captures a snapshot of the type of activities these individuals engage on a typical weekend:

[1] Find the papers so that I can take off... [2] With whom...do I find them? [1] Get me two dollars, for me to go and come back and, I leave everything there, and I came back later for it [sic]. [2] Let me...see then. It's just that I am going to church, the hour has changed, right now it is...? [1] They changed it now? Ah...no...listen...it is barely ten. [2] Yes. [1] Oh, so it is going to be eleven in an hour. [2] Aha. [1] Ah...well that's good, that's great! [2] Let me see about that...just let me go to mass (14, 43-44).

It is clear from this statement that the priority for this subject is not the merchandise brought by his colleague, but being able to attend mass and spend time with his family. Even though the drug trafficker pleads for understanding by claiming that he is in a hotel room without a car and money, has no place to go and is proposing to leave all the merchandise on credit and for him to pay him until he comes back, his associate goes forward with his plans to attend church first and deal with him after mass. Judging from these statements and the characters the narcocorridos create, drug traffickers tend to be rather superstitious. Despite several drawbacks associated with their activities or illicit operations, the drug traffickers manage to remain optimistic overall and hopeful that if they hang on a little longer God will grant them their wishes of being able to acquire plenty of material wealth before they get caught.

The Behavior of Narcotraffickers as a Group

According to group theories, individuals join groups for the social benefits they derive from this association. Those who join drug smuggling organizations do so in part because this association brings with it a sense of belonging, status, respect and pride, and walking away from these benefits can be challenging. For example, a higher level drug trafficker may be respected for his material wealth, his ability to intimidate, threaten and carry out violence if necessary, or even his ability to perform good deeds; the decision to abandon this group may not be practical, and he may decide instead to remain in the group despite the risks associated with this new group. This is evident in the analysis of court transcripts indicating that despite the government's apprehension and prosecution of some of its members, the drug trafficking group continues to make drug deliveries and

remains in active pursuit of new clientèle and markets. For example, a study of drug smugglers in Canada found that members of drug trafficking organizations did not quit despite having made enough money to retire from their illegal activities; the reasoning behind this decision was greed, an expanded ego, identity, power, status, lifestyle, a sense of responsibility, addiction, complacency, lack of deterrence and pushing their luck until they got apprehended and prosecuted for their illegal activities (Desroches, 2005).

Consistent with group theories, drug traffickers will rely on their own informal networks to gather information, including information on new techniques to succeed in the drug trade, the price of illegal goods, the group members who have been arrested, the potential threats of drug shipment interception, the names of informants and an overall assessment of intelligence; all of this helps drug traffickers make better sense of their own reality. In the secretive environment in which they operate, these information gathering techniques aid members in making decisions on how best to avoid law enforcement detection and infiltration into their organizations. The following is an excerpt of a conversation between drug trafficker # 1 and # 2 taken from DEA translated wiretap in the Seattle Case:

[1] How much is the brick over here now? [2] Guy, I have just arrived, so I don't know, but a "compa" has some here. [1] Yes? [2] But I don't know, I have not even asked him. The same guy to whom I sold the tires. [1] Does...have any? [2] Yes. [1] But...is too expensive, and then brings them pressed down. [2] Well I don't know. I haven't seen him. I think he called me a while ago...[1] I cannot believe that you don't know people who will put it - - guy. Over there - - over there - - they brought two tons to here - - to British Columbia...Here to Vancouver, no?...Here in Canada? - - here it is at one hour forty minutes from here...And where do you think that they are going to distribute that? Just here in the northern states. I am sure that if they make the connection with these guys, they will set the price that they give in Los Angeles (13, 43-45).

In this conversation, drug trafficker # 1 is attempting to gather intelligence about the price of a Kilo of cocaine in the Northern United States in close proximity to the border with Canada, but his contact is unable to provide him with an honest answer because he

has just arrived from Mexico with a shipment of heroine. He is informing his contact that the person he sold heroin to has some cocaine and he could ask him for prices. It is apparent that he is also familiar with this drug contact since he objects to dealing with him because his prices are too high and he has a practice of diluting the product before its delivery. In the underworld in which they operate, these techniques aids its members in making decisions on how best to market their product and to maximize their profits in their drug transactions. The fact that this drug trafficking group was made up of twelve individuals, three of which were females with one being of a different nationality than the rest made it difficult for the group to maintain cohesion and development a smooth relationship.

The size, diversity and gender composition of these groups are contributing factors that Widmeyer, Brawley & Carron (1990) and Zenger & Lawrence (1989) claim would lead to difficulties in maintaining cohesion and open channels of communications. For this reason, it is not surprising that of the three females, one became a government informant and the other two were left to fend for their own legal defense without the help of the organization. This forced at least one of the females to seek government appointed counsel to pay for her legal defense once her funds run out.

One can interpret these results in two ways; one interpretation is that the organization was too big and the drug traffickers were not sufficiently sophisticated to maintain control of their individual members not to get caught (adjourning), or that the government's claim of one big conspiracy where all the members had strong links to each other was inaccurate. If we buy the government's argument that the group members were indeed strongly connected to each other, the organization would have hesitated leaving

one of its members without a legal defense and the CI would not have cooperated with the government because of the cohesion that would have existed among its members. Additionally, when one considers the overall amount of drugs and money confiscated by the government in the Seattle Case (a total of at least 27 Kilos of cocaine, 3 kilos of heroin and at least a quarter of a million dollars), the organization could have paid for her defense, particularly since she did not betray them by breaking the group's norms and testifying against her associates as was the case with the other female CI. This defection did not occur either because they were not part of this big conspiracy or because their association was loose enough and disorganized enough as Adler (1985) and Reuter (1983) would claim where the organization did not feel obliged to help her with funds to pay for her legal defense. This meant that she did not have adequate access to information that could incriminate the leaders of the organization. This feat may explain why in Desroches' study, drug smugglers operated in small, tight-knit groups (three to nine members), composed mostly of relatives, friends with whom they had grown up, business associates, and members of the same racial or ethnic background (Desroches, 2005).

According to Desroches, "race and ethnicity factor into the structure and dynamics of drug crews since friendship and kinship networks within ethnic communities allow traffickers to assess a person's character...[additionally]...there is a tendency among groups to define members of one's own race and/or ethnicity as trustworthy and view others as outsiders" (Desroches, 2005, p. 46). The membership composition of these drug smuggling organizations assures a smooth working relationship with close adherence to the group norms.

Drug trafficking organizations will carry out threats of violence against members who break some of the core group norms, which include turning against the organization, knowingly and willingly stealing merchandise from its suppliers, failure to carry out strict orders, operating in a controlled geographic location even after having been told not to do so, and attempting to “jump” a supplier. Even though this practice is forbidden, higher level drug traffickers are constantly searching for bigger suppliers and contacts that can provide lower prices for merchandise in order to increase their profits. The following statement by a higher level drug trafficker provides some insight into some of these norms:

You should not...betray..., steal from somebody... If you steal something from them it does not matter how much it is, the matter is that you are betraying...the trust in and you are not an honorable person, you are not a person...who could be trusted. They look at you as like he is not a man, he is not someone who could be trusted so why...be alive. They kill you actually...or they take you out because they say, he is a worthless person. He is not trustable, so...they don't want you alive...

Even if the threats this subject is referring to are not carried out, the fact that group members are socialized into these norms effectively keeps its members from blatantly breaking these rules without considering the potential consequences. These norms keep these organizations operating freely without law enforcement infiltration for long periods of time before they can be apprehended and prosecuted. The cohesion the group is able to provide and its ability to communicate internal and external threats are some of the factors that have kept many of these drug cartels operating. Other more violent organizations such as the Arellano Felix operating out of Tijuana and Amado Carrillo Fuentes in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico have relied heavily on intimidation, violence and corruption to maintain a grip on power and make it difficult to penetrate their criminal syndicates. These tactics have allowed them to grow big enough to pose a

security threat to the local communities and even the countries in which they operate. Because these organizations have reached the adjourning stage that most groups and organizations will eventually reach, whether they are legitimate or illegitimate, are among the factors that has led to their demise. For these reasons, drug cartels with drug smuggling operations crossing international borders whose grip has extended over large geographic areas in Mexico and the U.S. have gotten too big to operate; their ineffectiveness at communicating core group norms and maintaining channels of communications among its members has inevitably resulted in their collapse. Table 4.6 summarizes the findings for this chapter, which include the reasons for which individuals join the drug trade, the qualities sought after in recruits, the affect and emotions, involved in the drug trade experience and the coping mechanisms individuals who have joined the trade use to function in their role. The group norms exhibited by those who have joined drug trafficking organizations are also highlighted in the table.

Table 4.6

Summary of Findings			
Benefits Sought After by Recruits	Qualities Sought After in Recruits	Affect & Emotions (Coping Mechanism)	Group Norms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging, power, status, respect & pride • Social mobility & ability to influence events • Flamboyant lifestyles that include abundant material wealth, excitement, woman, friends & gambling, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same race, ethnicity, nationality & character • Knowledge of: culture, norms & language... • Trustworthy, poor, young, naïve & ambitious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of lyrics glorifying incarceration, violence & death • Adoption of new identities via plastic surgery, nicknames such as the cat, panther & scorpion • Differentiating from other criminal groups (i.e., gangsters, rapists & murderers) • Exhibiting signs of anxiety, stress & paranoia • Superstitious, faith & fate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loyalty, honesty, secrecy, in-group & out-group dynamics • Never “jump” the supplier & always pay for merchandize • Violence, threats, coercion & intimidation

Suitability of Social Identity and Group Theory

The data presented in this chapter shows evidence of SIT variables being present in the decision making calculations of higher level drug traffickers, particularly those who were from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds who believed that joining a drug trafficking organization and acquiring material wealth would enhance their social identity and become part of a more positively regarded distinct group. These higher level drug traffickers did experience an improved sense of self after they joined the drug trade, as SIT advocates would predict. This occurred because as a result of their illicit activities these drug traffickers achieved material wealth, status, respect and a sense of belonging. Joining a group that had to rely on illicit activities in order to achieve their improved

sense of self did cause negative psychological effects, but these higher level drug traffickers adopted several strategies to cope with these draw-backs as SIT predicted. These strategies included adopting nicknames, comparing their illicit activities to other criminal behaviour they perceived as worst than their own, relying on their faith and justifying their behaviour as having no other alternatives that would enable them to provide for their loved ones. This approach allowed them to continue their drug trafficking operation despite the fact that these behaviours went against their own values and upbringing because they were able to disassociate or detach themselves from the type of unlawful activities involved as predicted by SIT advocates. Other variables associated with SIT included the premise that the degree of permeability of groups would dictate whether or not these individuals would gain membership in these organizations. Statements provided by higher level drug traffickers indicated that there existed virtually no barriers to joining drug trafficking organizations. In fact, as one of the subjects stated it was easier to find a drug trafficking organization who wanted a driver to transport a vehicle loaded with drugs than to find legitimate employment working in the fields picking coops.

Additionally, variables associated with SIT also suggested that individuals were influenced by effect and emotions, and the statements of higher level narcos indicated that the narcocorridos they listened to did indeed provoke different types of emotions on these subjects. For these reasons, the characters features in the narcocorridos were very influential and appealing to these subjects, making it easier for them to join the drug trade when the opportunity arose. Higher level drug traffickers were able to identify easily with the characters being portrayed in these narcocorridos because they had endured

similar injustices and overcome obstacles that were similar to those experienced by these subjects. In short, listening to this type of music prepared them psychologically for the hardships they would endure once they had joined the drug trade as SIT advocates would predict.

Additionally, consistent with variables associated with GT, including the interpersonal attraction perspective (Newcomb, 1956), the findings presented in this study indicated that individuals who had joined drug trafficking organizations tended to be childhood friends, family members, business associates and individuals of the same race, nationality or ethnicity. Other variables associated with GT included the process of these drug trafficking organizations being formed (group formation) and after these groups had grown large enough in size (maturity stage) they began to experience conflict, less cooperation, and more limited conformity to the group. These dynamics naturally lead to the coordination of their activities being made more difficult, causing harmful effects on the performance of the group which lead inevitably to their adjourning stage as group theorists would predict (Brewer & Kramer, 1985). This phenomenon occurred as the drug trafficking groups grew large enough to where its leaders did not have very much control over its members, hence leading to the collapse of their organization as drug associates turned against each other in order to escape the harsh penalties for those caught and prosecuted for drug trafficking offenses.

Although the suitability of GT is appropriate for explaining higher level drug trafficking, there were certain variables that were not present among members of these drug trafficking organizations. For example, in most drug trafficking cases, it was not uncommon to have drug traffickers turn against their associates in order to get a reduction

of their prison terms. This occurred even after group members had fully internalized the group norms and knew quite well the consequences for breaking these rules. Additionally, of the drug trafficking organizations examined in this study, there was little evidence of violent retaliation against CIs as group theory advocates would predict. However, this retaliation was indeed overt and was carried out by drug cartels that operated outside the territorial boundaries of the United States. However, the fact that no immediate retaliation occur before trials of higher level drug traffickers does not necessarily mean that this retaliation will not occurred in the future. In order to get an accurate assessment of the predictability of some of these Group Theory tenets, further longitudinal explorations of these issues are needed.

CHAPTER SIX

TESTING VARIABLES OF IMAGE THEORY

The leaders of the United States has been successful at persuading the American public and the international community that drugs should be considered dangerous enough to declare a “war” against this dreaded enemy which threatens the national security of nation states. In line with this policy, the United States has been actively engaged in providing aid to source countries in the form of training, military equipment and funds to eradicate this enemy. It has been almost forty years since President Nixon declared illegal drugs to be “public enemy number one” (Smith M., Runnette B. & Zill O. (Retrieved on 1/19/07) <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/cron/>). Because of this action take by a U.S. President it was originally hypothesized that the image law enforcement and the government held of drug traffickers would be of the enemy type and the same perception would be held by drug traffickers of the government. However, in the analysis of court transcripts and the conducting of interviews of higher level drug traffickers, law enforcement and other government officials, two additional elements of image theory emerged—*the imperial and rogue* elements.

Despite this fact, it is entirely possible at the time the war on drugs was declared, the U.S. government might have had an enemy image of drug traffickers; however, this image might have shifted over time as new security threats such as the terrorist attacks of September 11 came to pass. Despite the law enforcement and military superiority of the U.S. these attacks were not prevented, hence a new enemy that was truly capable of

inflicting real physical and psychological damage to an entire society allowed the image of the drug trafficker to change from a potential enemy to a rogue stereotype. After the attacks, the U.S. engaged in two wars (Afghanistan and Iraq) almost simultaneously, taking on two new enemies along with countries that composed the axis of “evil” (Iran, North Korea and Libya) which were also publically declared enemies of the U.S. Therefore, categorizing a group or an actor such as drug traffickers who usually engage in the drug trade for economic gain as an “enemy” might have been difficult to process when other formidable enemies with extreme ideological goals capable of inflicting tangible harm were already in the psyche of the American people. These enemies were cognitively easier for a nation to process, hence making the potential enemy image originally held of drug trafficker to shift or .be downgraded from an enemy to a rogue. On the other hand, if drug traffickers originally held an enemy image of the U.S. government, the recent violent upsurge in Mexico among drug trafficking gangs might have caused this image to change to the imperialist. This change might have occurred because drug trafficking organizations were facing a more immediate threat to their physical survival, hence forcing them to shift their focus and resources to maintain the survival of their organizations. In this chapter I explore images higher level drug traffickers and government have of each other, assess whether or not these images will lead to violence, explore the connections between drug traffickers and terrorism, and evaluate the overall the suitability of image theory for the analysis of higher level drug trafficking.

Narco's Image of the U.S.-Mexican Government

Image theory predicts that those who hold an imperialist image of an individual or actor will perceive that actor as a threat with superior in capabilities and culture and a small elite making decisions that will result in their exploitation (Cottam and Cottam, 2001). In the view of drug traffickers this exploitation can take many forms, including the acquisition and confiscation of material assets, the freezing of funds, the sharing of intelligence about other groups or other goods or benefits the image holder believes they may possess that the imperialist may desire. For example, interviews of higher level drug traffickers suggest an imperialist image of law enforcement whenever corrupt officers keep large quantities of drugs and/or cash for themselves instead of turning them over to the proper authorities. In the minds of drug traffickers, they have worked hard and exposed themselves to a great deal of risk to collect the cash, hence the confiscation of the fruits of their labor by corrupt law enforcement or competitors is perceived as a form of exploitation. The following statement by a higher level drug trafficker illustrates this point:

My right hand had been conducting the deals the day prior to my arrest. So, um I didn't know exactly what he had done and um, so actually one of the clients or the people who was buying drugs from him had a friend in the narcotics division, he is an undercover police officer from Chicago. Well, he told my friend that he had um friends that...were undercovers in Chicago, so um, he told him that in any drug deal that he would make, they could pull him over with money and...just make fake paper like, they're real, like police papers or like court papers and stuff like that, um where it shows that you got arrested and they took your money away and basically try to trick the mob or whatever. So I was never...told...by my right hand..., what his client had told him, I found out until I was arrested. So..., when this deal happened..., it was this specific client who had told him about his friends that were undercovers, so when they made the deal um, they took the money to um, to a secret house and so they were followed by at least seven or eight...undercover cops... So am, they basically came from um, one county to another... and um, they um called the local police until half hour...or more after they did conduct their searches and then they put the money in their trunk. All the money they found, they took it. It was over three hundred thousand dollars; they didn't turn it in... They didn't report not even one dime...

The theft of drugs and money creates conflict for these higher level drug traffickers, whether these actions are done by corrupt law enforcement or competitors, since they must prove the alleged theft of money or merchandise actually occurred. Failure to do so will lead suppliers to distrust those who have been arrested, forcing them to pay for the merchandise fronted. Failure to pay up can lead to lack of access to merchandise, a less than honest reputation, potential violence, and even death.

Additionally, defense attorneys hired by members of these groups who take advantage of drug traffickers by collecting hefty fees are also seen as being engaged in exploitation. They will make charges go away only to find out later that they were lied to and have to endure long prison terms for their role in criminal activities. For example, the following statement by a higher level drug trafficker describes how an attorney attempted to take advantage of him after he found out large amounts of cash had been confiscated by corrupt officers of the Anti-narcotics Division:

[1] When I got a lawyer, he talked to the other undercover cops, told him that it was well over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which I believe that they didn't count it... I would say that they probably counted a stack of ten thousand dollars each, so they just counted one and kind of figured how much it was..., so basically the lawyer thought there was a lot of money and so um, he tried to charge me um, it was another two friends of mine, so it was three of us together. He charged, he tried to charge us fifty thousand for each guy to begin the case and at the end, he wanted two hundred and fifty thousand. Just because I would say um he thought there was a lot of money because he had been told by the cops and..., I fired him, the lawyer basically because..., I didn't like the idea that he talked to the undercover cops... He could do it in court or he [could] talk to the prosecutor, but the fact that he talked to cops before he did with me, it gave me a bad feeling about him that it was just a thief or he was just trying to take advantage of the situation.

Additionally, in the following statement and from her prison cell, a female drug trafficker is addressing her defense attorney through a personal letter:

[2] Tus promesas salieron falsas, me traicionaste fue lo que hiciste...cuando agarraste el caso tú te fuiste a ofrecer con tu trabajo, me distes un precio y al poco tiempo me pediste

mas y para acabarla de chingar después fuiste o mandaste a que te firmara un papel que para que el gobierno te pagara. Allí fue donde nos trono el cuajo a todos porque el gobierno con el odio que nos tenia, porque los policías no les dieron testimonios falsos. Allí fue donde el gobierno paro todo el pedo contra nosotros y empezaron a buscar testigos de los drogadictos para que nos echaran adelante y tú, igual que todos los demás cooperando pero a favor del gobierno porque en 3 años nunca pudiste darme razón de mis cosas personales que me quitaron, ni mi dinero, ni mis papeles del banco. En todo esto ay gato encerrado..., ustedes y el gobierno jugaron un juego muy sucio con nosotros porque... Aquí esta una persona que en su caso hubo muertes y murió uno de los de la DEA y aun así no le dieron la sentencia de nosotros, solo a nosotros nos vieron la cara de pendejos...

Your promises turn out to be false, you betrayed me, that's what you did...when you took the case, you offered your work at a certain price and after a while you asked me for more and to worsen matters, afterwards you went to or you sent a paper for me to sign so the government would pay you. This is where things took a wrong turn for everyone because all of the hatefulness the government had towards us was because the officers provided false testimony. That is where the government stopped all of that shit against us and started looking for witnesses that were drug addicts so they could put us in harm's way and you, just like everyone else, cooperating but on behalf of the government because in three years, you couldn't provide any information about my personal things that they [government] confiscated, not my money or the documents from the bank. There is something fishy in all of this..., you [attorneys] and the government played a very dirty game with us... Here is a person that in its case, there were deaths, and one of those from the DEA died and despite that, they didn't give them our sentence, only we were taken as fools.

This statement reflects the antagonism this female drug trafficker feels towards her defense attorney and the government since both has taken advantage of her; the government by confiscating money or property and the attorney by promising to charge her a certain amount and then raising his fee. If this was not enough, at the time her funds ran out, her own attorney asked the government to pay for her legal defense. Not understanding the rights the U.S. constitution offers to criminal defendants who cannot afford legal counsel, this made her feel that the attorney had sold out to the government and was now conspiring to exploit her; the attorney will get money if he continued playing the game of her legal advocate and the government would get credit for another drug conviction under their belt.

Drug traffickers perceived these attorneys as being part of the legal system that is punishing them for what they believe to be quasi-legitimate activities they must perform in order to feed their families. Attorneys are seen as corrupt because they understand there is little drug traffickers can do to hold them accountable for their incompetence or failure to perform the legal services they promised since most of these transactions are done in cash and they leave no paper trail behind. Drug traffickers and other members of criminal organizations who require a court-appointed attorney to defend themselves from criminal charges tend to also view their attorneys with distrust because in their imperial view they cannot conceptualize that the government will actually provide them with a weapon (defense attorneys) to defend themselves against their subjugators. This behavior on behalf of the government, law enforcement and other actors within the legal system is perceived by drug traffickers and other criminal groups as exploitative in nature, hence reinforcing the imperialist view of the system as a whole.

There are other factors that suggest drug traffickers have an imperialist view of the U.S. government. For example, when asked to provide an opinion as to why there was so much narco violence in Mexico and why he believed the Mexican government wasn't doing enough to fight drug trafficking even when they had taken down violent drug trafficking cartels, including the last brother of the Arellano Felix, this drug trafficker stated the following:

I believe it was the American government; it was um, it was Mexico who knew where this guy was, so they told the United States government where he was at, when he was in international waters. So basically the government (Mexican) was afraid to go get this guy so, that's why they... told the US...or DEA or whatever where to find this guy...

The fact that this drug trafficker believes that his own government did not dare to take down a member of a violent drug cartel on their own and had to rely on the U.S. government to arrest him makes it clear that he believes the American government has “superior capabilities” to those of the Mexican government. Additionally, when asked about the perceptions he had about the U.S. and Mexican governments he responded in the following way:

The Mexican government is very corrupt, the United States is corrupt, but they won't affiliate with just anybody, they have to know who you really are... The American people, the American government are afraid of their own system, so um they do favors like anybody else to anybody else, they favor who they like or when they want to, but it's very secretive...

Again, consistent with the indicators of the imperialist image, this drug trafficker believes that corruption does exist in the U.S., but is not as rampant as in his own country, that it is kept under control and only those who are closest to the corrupt law enforcement or government officials are the ones who benefit from this practice. This is done of course, in a sophisticated and “secretive” manner so as not to reveal the “hidden hand” that pulls the strings to make it all happen. The following statement also reflects the imperial image some of these drug traffickers have of U.S. law enforcement:

Me gusta la forma en que [el gobierno de los E.U.] trabajan, porque hacen muy buen trabajo. Hacen muy buen trabajo, la pura verdad. Yo cuando a mi me agarraron, una cosa inesperada como se hizo todo..., porque si no, no los agarraban yo creo a nadie. Y hacen muy buen trabajo... Cuando llegue al lugar, mire muy solo...un parqueadero de la tienda, era una [tienda]. Mire solo todo, se me hizo un poco raro, pero era un poco temprano [sic], dije no hay muchas personas ahí comprando. Pero cuál fue la sorpresa de que ya cuando los mire que venían [oficiales] ya los [había] subí [do] [clientes incluyendo informante] a la troca [sic] (camioneta) y les dije “pues ahí está lo que ustedes querían” y de ahí nos bajamos y caminamos poquito [y cuando] acordamos pues estábamos rodeados. No sé de donde salieron porque yo no mire a nadie, ya cuando acordamos estábamos rodeados y abajo.

I like the way they [U.S. law enforcement] work because they do a very good job. In all honesty, they do a very good job. When they apprehended me it was an unexpected thing how everything took place..., otherwise they wouldn't apprehend anybody. And they do a very good job... When I got to the place, it seemed very lonely..., a parking lot of the

store, it was a [store]. I saw everything lonely, it seemed a bit strange, but it was somewhat early, I thought to myself there aren't a lot of people buying. But, what a surprise that when I saw them [law enforcement] I had already let them [clients including CI] in my truck and I told them, "well, there is what you wanted" and from there, we got off and walked a little [and] we realized we were surrounded. I don't know where they came from because I didn't see anybody, all of the sudden we were surrounded and "down".

This statement certainly reflects the imperialist image some of these drug traffickers have of U.S. law enforcement, particularly those who have not achieved the wealth, power and status of other violent drug traffickers. At one point during his interview, this drug trafficker seemed shocked, yet mesmerized and impressed in the way U.S. law enforcement conducted his arrest because out of nowhere and in a matter of seconds they were surrounded and overwhelmed by powerful forces that seemed to descend upon them out of nowhere. Surprisingly, this subject did not appear to be bitter for being arrested by these officers and for having served four years for his role in drug trafficking activities; to the contrary, he kept referring to how much he liked the way U.S. law enforcement worked because they really knew how to do their job.

In contrast, when these narcos refer to the Mexican government it is usually in less grandiose terms. In fact, when referring to Mexican officers it is usually with a negative connotation that implies Mexican officers can be corrupted for less money than a U.S. officer can. It is assumed that officers who do their jobs well must be from the military (perceived as more professional and less likely to be corrupted) and they must do it because they have an ulterior motive such as getting to a top post, not necessarily because they feel it is their duty to serve and protect. For example, the following statement of this higher level drug trafficker alludes to this dynamic and the perceptions they have of both governments:

In Mexico [corruption] it's more,...to the public, you know what I mean, any... police officer can pull you over and just give him a twenty dollar bill [and] you...can hit the road and keep on speeding, they [Mexican officers] will even cover and tell their other friends that he already pulled you over that you're fine and just not to pull you over anymore. And right here [in the U.S.]..., you would have to be a friend of his, so he wouldn't give you a ticket and maybe he won't get paid, but..., he's doing a favor to you by not giving you a ticket if he knows you... I mean, even the Mexican government...there are certain military...employees who do the best [unwilling to be corrupted] so...they can climb to the top....

This statement suggests that the Mexican government is more egalitarian and democratic than the U.S. when it comes to corrupt practices in which common people have the ability to buy off officers and benefit from this behavior. On the other hand, when drug traffickers refer to U.S., officers, although they do believe corruption does exist, their comments seem to suggest that corruption is more elitist, secretive and sophisticated, and in order for an individual to benefit from this practice one must be politically connected or be a part of the in-group (imperialist) in order to get access to these benefits.

The imperial image of U.S. law enforcement and the government is not only held by drug traffickers, but members of the Latino communities in which a high level of drug activity takes place also perceive those in this line of work in similar terms. This occurs because drug traffickers in these communities are usually perceived as generous with those who are going through financial hardships, and despite government interference they have been able to achieve financial wealth. On the other hand, members of these communities have generally experienced held negative interactions with law enforcement and/or government; hence, they too perceived their actions as exploitative in nature since their job is to apprehend the members of their communities who are perceived as being successful for having achieved material wealth. This perception is generally held by younger, marginalized and more ambitious members of these communities who

perceived these higher level drug traffickers as role models whom they intend to emulate as they reach adulthood. Even though the imperial image these community members hold of the government may not be held with the same intensity as that of the drug traffickers, these stereotypes have the ability to change for the worst if law enforcement does not meet some of the expectations of these image holders. For example, if federal, state and local law enforcement agencies lack the ability and/or willingness to investigate and prevent violent crimes in these communities carried only by drug traffickers who flee the country, some of the benefits that might be associated with being perceived in imperial terms will negatively affect the reputation and ability of U.S. law enforcement to conduct their work in these communities, domestically and abroad.

Additionally, the data gathered for this study suggest that when minority groups seek assistance in locating victims and the perpetrators of these crimes, law enforcement, in the words of Senator Obama, too often express a “lack of empathy,” especially when the victims have been involved in illegal activities. The attitude of these agencies towards family members when reporting these crimes seems to suggest that if the victim was involved in illegal activities and harm was perpetrated against them, then it shouldn’t come as a surprise because they had it coming. Therefore, it seems as if these agencies do not feel as if it is their responsibility to seek the perpetrators of these crimes, especially if they have left the country. This attitude on behalf of these agencies towards the community confirms the imperial image they hold of the government. This dynamic is clearly illustrated in interviews conducted in March 2007 with family members of a drug trafficker who was kidnapped, tortured and then executed by a drug trafficking gang

operating out of Chicago with clear connections to a drug trafficking organization operating out of Mexico.

In this particular case, the victim had been missing for weeks, but due to his activities in the drug trade, it was not uncommon for the deceased to lose contact with family members for short periods of time. However, after the victim's wife received a phone call by an associate and close friend of the deceased stating that he believed something bad had happen to his friend, the family suspected that their relative might be in danger of serious physical harm. After searching on their own with family, friends, acquaintances and the victim's associates, as well as receiving telephone calls by individuals who were calling from Mexico also looking for the victim, hesitantly (in large part because they were afraid of retaliation) the family of the deceased felt forced to seek the aid of law enforcement in locating their loved one. Since they were dealing with individuals responsible for the victim's disappearance, they feared retaliation from those operating in Chicago and Mexico if they were to report them to law enforcement. Despite this fear, they filed the report and provided all of the information they had gathered about the victim's friends and associates. This was done until the perpetrators hinted to the family that they "had done what needed to be done." In other words, the perpetrators of the murder were telling the victim's family their relative had been executed.

The victim's family first sought the help of a local law enforcement agency, but was referred to the FBI and the DEA because they would be better equipped to handle the logistics of the case since they believed the victim had been kidnapped as a result of a

drug deal gone badly. The aid of the FBI was sought first and the family provided all the information known about the victim, including the fact that he was involved in the drug trade along with names and phone numbers of some of his friends and associates in Mexico and the United States. The FBI informed family members that they would need more evidence if their agency was to get involved in the case, so they instructed the family to collect all of the evidence they could. Several days went by and family members of the deceased acquired names, addresses and audio recordings of telephone conversations. After gathering this information, they pleaded with the FBI to trace the telephone calls being made to their residence by those suspected of the kidnapping and the victim's drug supplier. The victim's family provided advance notice of telephone calls that were going to be made to their residence. Despite these pleas, however, the FBI claimed that they could not perform wiretaps with the evidence being provided and informed the brother of the deceased that unless he became an informant for the agency they would not be able to provide any further assistance. The fact that they wanted to get him on board as an informant despite lacking real life experience in the criminal world and perceiving the dangers associated with this task, this proposal was perceived as a form of exploitation as the imperial image predicted. This resulted in the victim's brother rejecting their proposal and decided instead to seek the help of the DEA as the second option the local law enforcement agency had suggested.

With the evidence the victim's family had collected about drug transactions and large quantities of cash, they thought for sure the DEA would be more than willing to get involved. However, despite the audio recording they had made about drugs and money

totaling almost half a million dollars, not enough interest was expressed by the agencies from whom they sought assistance. The following statement reflects the exchange the family member reporting the incident had with the DEA, and how instead of expressing concern and sympathy for his potential loss the agency was reprimanding him for his failure to turn him in to the authorities while he was engaged in the drug trade:

Si tu sabias que tu hermano estaba involucrado en eso (narcotráfico) porque bienes y nos pides ayuda ahorita que está perdido, porque no nos dijiste antes cuando sabias que él estaba en esto (Personal Communication, March 4, 2007).

If you knew that your brother was involved in the drug trade, why are you coming to us for help now that he is missing, why didn't you tell us before when you knew that he was active in the drug trade (Author's translation, March, 2007).

If the imperial image this family member held of the agency was low in intensity, after this exchange this image intensified because instead of helping them locate the victim, they were scorning them for not informing law enforcement about the victim's involvement in drug trafficking activities so that they could have benefited from apprehending him while he was still engaged in the trade. This dynamic is consistent with the predictions of the imperial image that despite the suffering of the subjugated the imperial power (law enforcement) was still willing to squeeze them for information and exploit them as much as possible so they could maximize their returns. The following statement illustrates the image the victim's family had of law enforcement before they requested their assistance in locating their loved one:

No es que vea mucha televisión pero, yo sé cómo trabaja la DEA o la FBI cuando ellos se proponen algo y...rastrean una llamada y en dos por tres tienen todo listo y se pueden hacer las cosas (Personal communication, March 4, 2007).

It isn't that I watch too much television, but I know how the DEA or the FBI works whenever they set out to accomplish something...they trace the calls and have everything ready in no time and things can get done (Author's translation, March 2007).

This statement suggests the victim's family also held law enforcement in imperial terms because they perceived them as powerful and believed these agencies would be interested in assisting them, given they were going to benefit by confiscating large quantities of cash and apprehending individuals who were involved in acts of violence and drug trafficking activities. Once the family had an opportunity to assess their interaction with these agencies, they realized that instead of assisting them in locating their relative law enforcement was seeking to exploit their misfortune by getting his brother to become an informant and get another ally to fight the rogues. The murder of their relative was perceived as an unprecedented event of unimaginable magnitude in terms of emotional pain and suffering that allowed the imperial view the victim's family held of law enforcement to magnify in intensity because they perceived law enforcement's willingness to help only if they were to benefit from this relationship. The response on behalf of law enforcement only reinforced the imperial image members of these communities held of these agencies. This resulted in the victim's family searching for other avenues to help them locate their missing relative, including a local newspaper reporter. The guidance provided by the newspaper reporter on how to go about locating the victim turned out to be a lot more effective than all of the law enforcement agencies involved, and it took the family approximately two days to locate the victim's body in a Chicago morgue. His body had been at this location for approximately twenty-five days, and the medical examiner's office had already put out notices to detectives and other law enforcement agencies of several other bodies that were yet to be claimed by family members. The victim was found in a dumpster of a back alley in a Chicago

neighborhood, his eyes and mouth covered with duck tape, a gunshot wound to the head, and evidence of having been tortured before being executed. Unfortunately, none of the law enforcement agencies involved suggested the morgue as a potential location where family members should seek information about their missing relative.

U.S. Government's Rogue Image of the Narco

Image theory predicts that those actors who hold a rogue image of other groups perceived them as inferior in capability and culture, with harmful intentions and guided by a small elite who directs their activities in order to accomplish their harmful intentions (Cottam & Cottam, 2001). Considering the seriousness with which the United States has taken the drug issue and the tough policies that have been enacted and put into practice to control this threat, these actions reveal the stereotype this actor holds of those who, despite these measures, engage in the drug trade. For example, in the Seattle case the transcripts reveal the government's rogue image of the drug trafficking group when the prosecution does its best in its opening statement to paint a picture of the drug traffickers as constituting a large organization that is sophisticated, violent, harmful, threatening, and with the will and equipment necessary to carry out their illegal operations despite government efforts to counter them. At first glance, the transcripts seem to suggest that the individuals before the jury are members of an organization with clear ties to each other extending across state, national and international borders, making use of sophisticated equipment and weaponry to achieve their organizational goals. The strategy of the prosecution is to paint a picture of a large scale and sophisticated drug

trafficking organization, and in order to help convince the jurors of the prosecution's theory they utilized several large scale posters and diagrams of parking lots where drug transactions took place with lines connecting the defendants to each other. This allows the prosecution to legitimize their evidence and convince the jury to find the defendants guilty of the charge of drug conspiracy.

The following opening statement derived deducted from court transcripts clearly shows the rogue image the U.S. District Attorney has of the drug traffickers in the Seattle case:

Ladies and gentleman, the evidence in this case will show to you insights into the operation and management of a major marketplace for illegal narcotics, both heroin and cocaine...[I]t is a distribution effort, which operates by demand and supply...it is a stable and a continuing marketplace in which these defendants participated...[with the] unlawful use of a telephone...carrying of firearms...typically in the form of handguns, because they are portable and they are concealed...for protection...placed in strategic positions next to narcotics or next to money, so they would be accessible to protect narcotics and the money,...[and] for intimidation, if necessary...The evidence will show [that]...a series of search warrants executed result[ed] in...large seizures of cocaine, heroin, firearms and money... In one particular residence that was rented...it was virtually empty except that it contained four kilograms of cocaine, just under a thousand grams of black tar heroin, scales, packaging materials and several old empty kilogram wrappers of cocaine.

There is no furniture, there are no belongings, just drugs and drug distribution paraphernalia... In a separate residence..., a large quantity of packaged cocaine ready for sale, a large quantity of black tar heroin, packaging materials and two firearms, both...automatic pistols... [I]n the storage locker..., [it] revealed 38 bags of white powder. It was not cocaine, it was cut powder, several empty kilogram wrappers, a kilogram press, three handguns and ammunition... Also rented at... [the] same facility, was a second locker...there weren't very many items in this locker, but what there was was significant [sic]. 22 kilograms of cocaine, still in bricked package form, a nine millimeter pistol and packaging items, plastic bags and buckets...

This opening continues for several pages, and the way the prosecution portrays this drug trafficking organization there is little doubt in the jury's mind of the threatening intentions, the magnitude and sophistication of the drug trafficking organization being described by the prosecution. This rogue image is consistently being beamed to the jury

in the evidence the prosecution is presenting at trial. Other evidence which indicates the government perceives these narcos as rogues include several phone calls where some drug traffickers appear extremely threatening and violent in the actions they intend to undertake in order to achieve their objectives. For example, the following excerpt extracted from the wiretaps between two drug traffickers illustrates the rogue image the government constantly portrays about these higher level drug traffickers. In this call, intercepted by a DEA wire tap, a drug trafficker is complaining to his associate for having introduced him to an individual who stole merchandise from him and what he intends to do if he is not paid:

[1] Hello...yes what's happening? [2] How are you...? [1] Listen! [2] Aha. [1] Your friend...wants to rob me. [2] No - - no - - I told you, bastard. [1] Why are you going around introducing people like that to me? [2] No - - no - - no - - I - - I - - don't want to have problems with you or with any other bastard, I told you from the very beginning. [1] Now - - you pay me - - why did you introduce that guy to me? [2] Ah? No - - ... no, no, no. The day I rob you of one peso, you tell me... [1] Do you think they deserve a - - a - - cutting up? [2] Yes, that and more. [1] I can give him - - I can have him "broken," the guy, I can put a fifty in his head, the guy...I was not thinking that - - I should have rather gone there and put some damn bullets into the guy, crazy man, I would have come out ahead...well you know where he lives, no? [2] Yes...if not we can go to..., his father lives there... [1] So we can get his father and we kidnap - - kidnap him, no? [2] No the poor old man, what fault is it of his? [1] No, but I can kill him at any rate, what fault is it of the old man's to have such a worthless son as him?... So when are you going to show me [his] dad? [2] Well, when we go over there...I will tell him not to fuck up, guy. [1] Tell him I am going to make you pay for it, guy.

This rogue image of the drug traffickers by the prosecutor may explain why the government shows little hesitation in sentencing some of its members to as many as forty-five years in prison as the data indicates for conspiring to sell cocaine and heroin in the United States. From the court transcripts there is no doubt, considering the amount of cocaine heroin and money confiscated that some of the individuals involved are in fact successful drug traffickers and deserved a long prison term. However, when prosecutors file charges against the spouses of drug traffickers for passing on phone messages to their

husbands they face the same charges and amount of prison time as the others who were transporting, distributing and selling controlled substances. It is possible to clearly attribute this type of aggressive behavior on behalf of the government to factors associated with the rogue stereotype.

According to the court transcripts, it is evident that some of the individuals charged with conspiracy are not only vaguely associated with the major drug traffickers, but financially they are barely surviving. This evidence is presented by the government in the form of DEA wire tap of conversations between a suspected drug trafficker and his wife. The spouse of the drug trafficker is communicating to her husband who is about to take a flight to the U.S. from Mexico that she can no longer make long distance telephone calls, she can only receive collect calls because the service has been cut off as a result of not having enough money to pay the long distance telephone bill. The following excerpt illustrates this point after a Mexican telephone operator sets up the telephone call between the spouse [1] and drug trafficker [2]:

[1] Hello...yes. [2] Hello? [1] Hello? [2] What's happening, child? [1] Nothing "Padre"
[2] Were you asleep? [1] Yes, "Papacito"...[2] Oh - - hasn't anyone called me over there? [1] Here - - the famous... [2] Oh, yes?...[1]...and this one - - what is his name?...[2] Oh - - [1] They already cut the phone off - - (Laughing) [2] Ah? [1] I can no longer - - I can't call long distance any more, they have already cut it off [2] Oh - - you have not paid it? [1] Hmm - - the bill is up to - - the bill is up to - - almost... [2] Ah - - bastard! [1] (Laughing) The bastard is heavy... [2] But you can answer collect?...

These conversations continued with information being exchange about who had called and what had been said. Additionally, the court transcripts show this same female as having four children, the youngest being two years old. During the trial, the other female involved ran out of money to pay for her attorney, so she is forced to ask the court for assistance in paying for her legal defense. Despite the latter, the Federal Prosecutors

attacked them as aggressively as any of the other drug traffickers and sought the same sentence as everyone involved. This is consistent with the rogue image that predicts that the image holder would want to exterminate the threat and will engage in proactive and preemptive attacks against these actors in order to eliminate the threat despite how vaguely they may be associated with the actual small elite who coordinate the operations.

Additional factors that clearly indicate the disdain and the rogue stereotype the prosecutors have of the drug traffickers as a group and must punish them with the full extent of the law is the 72-count indictment with which these subjects were charged. According to image theory, the image holder will use all means possible to eliminate the threat. In this case, Federal agents from the DEA, U.S. Customs, U.S. Marshals, FBI, as well as state and local law enforcement, used hundreds of thousands of dollars of cash money to purchase drugs, collected hundreds of intercepted telephone calls and called a total of more than 150 witnesses on behalf of the government to make sure the threat this group posed was eliminated for good. This was done so that the drug traffickers will “reform their ways” and to teach them a lesson they will never forget. Although the rogue image expressed by the government results in high prison sentences for these subjects, when this image is expressed by law enforcement officers in the field it can lead to devastating consequences, including death. In the following statement, a female drug trafficker who was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison for her role in higher level drug trafficking activities describes what took place during her arrest and after narcotics officers had stormed her home in search of drugs and the target of their investigation:

Probably not even three to four minutes [after antinarcotics agents went in] I hear gun shots. So they said, supposedly that my husband and the other guy ran, they took off, ran in through one of the windows and...then I heard more gun shots and the[n]...probably about fifteen minutes later they brought him (husband) [back] and they had beaten him up...and I asked them who did you guys kill because I heard gunshots? And they didn't want to say nothing until later on they told me; they said that um, they had killed the other guy, the owner of the stuff, supposedly because he had pointed a gun at them. Um, my husband said that they were running together and that it was a lie, because the guy's family did an autopsy and they found out that the... shot went through his back and came out through his chest... Later on, we heard them saying they had done a good job that they didn't need this third person in the paperwork because "he was not in our paperwork"...He didn't come in the picture until the end, so they didn't want him, and it was easier for them to eliminate him, so that way they didn't have him to do all of the paper work on him too... After they killed him they went and searched his house and they found 500...fighting roosters at his property, they found large scales, large bags, but no drugs...

Consistent with the rogue image law enforcement has of these higher level drug traffickers, this statement suggest this extreme violence is easily justified as long as law enforcement claims that the actions of the subjects compelled them to use lethal force and that their intentions appeared hostile and threatening to the lives of the officers involved. This view is also held by law enforcement officials who clearly see drug traffickers as a threat with "harmful intensions;" in their mind it is necessary to go after them using all means possible to capture them and put them in their place. The following statement by an undercover DEA agent also reflects this view when it was asked if drug traffickers were considered a threat:

Definitely...it's a social issue you know..., it's just...if you look at the statistics and..., work in the streets, is just everything seems to revolve around drugs, everything. I mean it's the car thefts, burglaries, the you know shoplifts, it's...the..., murders, I mean every crime that you look at it seems to be because narcotics are behind it...Whatever we need to do [to catch drug traffickers], we use planes, we use helicopters, we use whatever means necessary in order for us to get the prosecutors enough so they can charge these people out...it takes a lot of money, a lot of manpower, but that's what our goal is to...get the people that need to be in jail...

This mindset from law enforcement, prosecutors and other government officials that all social ills emanate from drug trafficking activities leads to a black and white view of the

world, which prompts Federal prosecutors to cast as wide a net as possible and recommend maximum sentences even when it is clear that some of the defendants are only loosely connected to the drug trafficking organization. The lessons for family members left behind, unfortunately, is that the government will make no distinctions between those who actually smuggle, distribute and sell drugs and those who associate with them even if this association happens to be as a spousal relationship to those who are actually committing the crime. In the following statement, even the judge presiding over a drug trafficking case seems to be frustrated and complains (in the absence of the jury) about the exorbitant amount of charges, evidence and time taken for the prosecution to prove their case:

I really think that an additional five days is an awful lot considering all the proof that you've already put on. I don't imagine why you would need an additional five days. I don't know what - - I haven't kept track of what counts you've proven and which you haven't. But I urge you to take a closer look at what you can cut out of this case. I think it's to nobody's advantage to keep this jury waiting around until I come back the middle of the following week. They'd have forgotten all the proof or some of it. You'll have to do real extensive closing arguments. Or maybe we'll only have a little bit of closing argument left. I don't know but it's foolish. This case should wrap up before I leave and you're really cutting it very, very close at the rate you're going (vol. 15).

If the magistrate holds the same rogue image of these subjects as that of the government, his statement can be interpreted as the trial of the drug traffickers not being worthy of his time (with taxpayers tooting the bill) and not entitled to the same rights afforded to other defendants. However, his statement seems to suggest that the prosecution has proven their case and the jury has gotten enough evidence to convict on the charges brought up against these subjects, and there really is no need to continue "beating on a dead horse." Despite this fact, the government seems eager to continue pursuing the seventy-count indictment, introducing more witnesses and evidence that at times seems to add little to

the evidence already presented by other witnesses. In the government's rogue image, the intentions of drug traffickers are perceived as harmful, and even though they may not have the capability of fully achieving their hostile intentions in their minds they are perceived as posing a threat to the society in which they operate. Hence, if the opportunity to wipe them out and punish those who also play a supporting role in drug trafficking activities arises, then why not take it and sweep them away by casting as wide a net possible to teach them an enduring lesson.

The fact that the government perceives the culture of those involved in drug trafficking as inferior (as the rogue image suggests) this makes it easier for the prosecutors to justify these long sentences and law enforcement to use questionable tactics to arrest them, even when the females involved have small children to nurture. The negative consequences for these actions do not materialize immediately, but they brew over a long period of time and appear later in the form of extremism, hostilities against American institutions, mistrust of government and alienation of young adults, making them prime targets for recruitment into drug trafficking or terrorist organizations with operational goals inside the territorial boundaries of the United States.

In court observation of pre-trial and sentencing hearings, even for those drug traffickers who agree to submit to the will of the prosecution the rogue image the government has of these subjects seems to hold. For example, CIs who have cooperated with the government and requested to be allowed to hug their children or their love ones before being sent to prison is usually denied. In one instance, before issuing the verdict, the judge asked a CI if he wanted to address the court; he agreed, and after apologizing to

the court for his involvement in drug trafficking activities and citing God and the Holy Bible for his repentance, he requested of the magistrate to have his handcuffs removed and have a brief moment with his children and wife who were present in the courtroom. Even though the prosecution cited the CI's cooperation as the major factor for eleven drug associates "enter[ing] guilty pleas," whereas without his testimony they were refusing to accept responsibility, "unwilling to be cooperative and negotiate" with the government's suggested prison term, the judge still denied the CI's request by citing U.S. Marshal's court rules prohibiting him from ordering handcuff removed. These procedures are consistent with indicators of the rogue image presented in Cottam's (2005) work where the government has a "tendency to order rather than negotiate," hence expressing the "cultural inferiority, [and] disingenuousness" it feels towards higher level drug traffickers regardless of the assistance they may have provided (p. 50). Even though these defendants are considered non-violent, sentencing drug traffickers to as much as 40 years in prison, depriving them of their legal status, and deporting them to their native country even when they have children who were born and raised in the United States are clear evidence of the rogue image the government holds of these drug traffickers, including CIs. This excessive harsh treatment and the reasoning behind the Justice Department's attempt to link drug traffickers to terrorism, even if prosecutors and law enforcement agents have to stretch the truth in order to make their activities fall under terrorist legislation, is consistent with predictions of the rogue stereotype.

Narcos and Terrorism: Is the Connection Being Made?

The rogue image the government has of higher level drug traffickers has lead U.S. law enforcement and government officials to attempt to link narcotraffickers from Mexico and other parts in Latin America to terrorism, even though little evidence has been produced to establish this connection as has been done in the case of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other countries in the Middle East. This rogue image is what has lead the Bush administration to argue, soon after the September 11th attacks, that the war on drugs in Latin America should be expanded to protect the United States from drug traffickers (Sharp & Spencer, 2001). Consistent with rogue image attributes, the U.S. government citing national security concerns has made an attempt to link narcotraffickers to terrorism, thereby taking the war on drugs to a new level of intensity. Exploiting the terrorist scare in America, policymakers citing attacks of insurgent movements in Latin America such as the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) have pushed for antiterrorist legislation that will include drug cartels. This post-911 legislation has allowed the Bush administration to do away with the restrictions that were originally put in place to prevent past abuses by U.S. foreign policy in Latin America (Sharp & Spencer, 2001).

In April 2, 2002, Asa Hutchinson, DEA Director, gave a speech at the Heritage Foundation regarding the international connection between Drugs and terror. In his speech he explained how the Taliban and Osama bin Laden were linked to drug traffickers and how they used money from these proceeds to fund acts of terror. Hutchinson claimed that these were definitely not the only two groups engaged in

narcoterrorism, pointing to Latin America and the continuous acts of violence experienced by Columbians at the hands of paramilitary groups such as the FARC, the National Liberation Army (NLA), and the United Self Defense of Columbia (AUC). He also cited numerous acts of terror, including bombings at Columbian government buildings, the kidnappings and assassinations of legislators, judges, police officers and innocent civilians. Hutchinson claimed the U.S. State Department has estimated that the FARC receives approximately \$300 million a year from drug sales to finance its terrorist activities. Hutchinson then went on to argue that not just Colombians were impacted by terrorist acts committed by these groups; he claimed that since 1990 a total of 73 American citizens had been taken hostage in Columbia, and of these more than 50 were abducted by narco-terrorists. He noted further that since 1995 a total of 12 American citizens had been murdered. In these speeches the mentioning of American citizens being murdered by these groups is strategically done because it is easier to build support in creating a rogue stereotype of drug traffickers when those being murdered are part of the in-group (Americans). Taking this approach allows the government to make a persuasive argument that killing Americans should be considered acts of terror, and therefore the American government is justified in using all means possible to eliminate this threat, including antiterrorism legislation to prosecute drug traffickers.

Additionally, in making the narcoterrorist connection in Peru, Hutchinson cited the acts of violence committed by Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and how they have benefited from the taxation of coca cultivation from the geographic region they control. However, when Hutchinson moved on to discuss the connection of terrorism and drug

trafficking in Mexico he was not able to make a real connection to any acts of terror as dramatic as those that have been committed in Columbia and Peru. Hutchinson cited the violence committed against judicial officers, law enforcement officials, corruption and general instability caused by drug traffickers as acts of terrorism that ought not to be tolerated by any government (<http://www.dea.gov/speeches/s040202.html>).

If the definition offered by Hutchinson of what a terrorist should be was accepted, then a connection is entirely plausible because violent acts against law enforcement officials, members of the judiciary and civilians are committed repeatedly by narcos in Mexican and U.S. territories. This attempt by U.S. law enforcement to interpret these acts of violence by drug cartels as terrorist acts so they can override some of the legal protections the U.S. constitution guarantees is consistent with those holding a rogue image other actors who want to use not only all of the weapons available in their arsenal, but also take advantage of all of the laws that would allow them to achieve their objective of eradicating the rebellion of the rogues.

Efforts by drug traffickers to avoid hardships in crossing the U.S.-Mexico border have resulted in prompting them to move their operations closer to their clientele. For example, in the case of Pseudoephedrine, an essential precursor chemical used to make methamphetamine, it was traditionally processed mainly in the states of Michoacán and Jalisco. In recent years processing has moved drug production to California, Chicago, Phoenix, Nevada, Washington and other locations in the continental United States. The U.S. government and law enforcement must now contend with the manufacturing of illegal drugs no longer being limited to Latin America or other places in Asia and the

Middle East, making it even more difficult to detect and contain them. The wide availability of resources allows some Mexican cartels to find creative ways to smuggle their shipments, including the use of the most elaborate secret compartments, the employment of counter surveillance technology, and the new of a wide variety of transport vehicles. Government officials from the U.S. argue that the southern border is being attacked on all sides, with drug traffickers tunneling under it, flying over it, walking and driving across it and boating around it to get their shipments of contraband goods across the border (Anderson & Branigin, A.1). This fact, as the rogue image predicts, produces a high threat level in the minds of law enforcement officers who will use whatever means necessary to eliminate this threat, including preemptive coordinated attacks by local, state, federal and international law enforcement agencies against higher level drug traffickers. For example, on January 10, 2002 the DEA announced the arrest of 100 individuals in twelve cities in a major pseudoephedrine smuggling investigation named Mountain Express III. In this operation U.S. Customs, the Internal Revenue Service, members of the Royal Canadian Mountain Police, the Canadian Customs and Revenue Services employed joint efforts to bring down the Jafar and Yassoui Brothers organization, a Middle Eastern drug trafficking enterprise operating out of Detroit and Chicago (<http://www.dea.gov/major/me3.html>).

The Jafar and Yossoui organization allegedly was the supplier of large amounts of pseudoephedrine to Mexican meth traffickers in California, who then manufactured and distributed most of the meth sold in the United States. From April 2001 until December 2002, the U.S. Customs service seized 110 million pseudoephedrine tablets that were

being smuggled into the United States; this number translates into about 60,000 pounds and would produce an approximate amount of 40-50,000 pounds of methamphetamine (<http://www.dea.gov/major/me3.html>). The form which some of these drug busts by the government and law enforcement agencies take clearly portrays the rogue image these agencies have of higher level drug traffickers. For example, this press release could have been reported as 60,000 pounds of pseudoephedrine tablets and leave it at that; however, the agency strategically added the “110 million tablets”, observation, making the bust appear as a gigantic and unprecedented event with drug traffickers having the ability to coordinate the logistics for such an unprecedented amount of ingredients to produce drugs.

The DEA claims that this case indicates that Canada has become the major source of pseudoephedrine used for the illegal manufacture of methamphetamine in the United States. Despite the fact that the suppliers of the pseudoephedrine were from the Middle East and their contacts were Mexican nationals, in responding to questions from reporters Asa Hutchinson admitted that there was no evidence linking Middle Eastern and Mexican drug cartel organizations funding terrorist acts. Because the sale of this precursor is not outlawed in Canada, the U.S. is pressuring Canadian policymakers to introduce legislation outlawing the sale of large quantities of pseudoephedrine and place strict regulations for those who may be allowed to sell the drug for legitimate use. The strategy of getting other nations on board to create and implement policies that would prevent drug traffickers from acquiring materials that would allow them to continue their manufacturing operations is consistent with image theory in which nations or states will

utilize all the weapons in their arsenal against those groups or actors they perceive as rogue.

The U.S. has been successful at selling the rogue image of drug traffickers to other nations like Mexico and other Latin American countries. However, policies which have been influenced by the U.S. have had the greatest impact on lower level traffickers who do not have the ability to corrupt government officials and have done little to alleviate the violence and chaos other more violent drug cartels have perpetrated. For example, the following statement of a drug trafficker reflects the results of some of these policies in which those caught trafficking with drugs do not have the resources to pay corrupt Mexican government officials to avoid getting caught up in the rut of the law enforcement:

[Me dieron] siete años [y] seis meses por veinte cinco kilos [de marihuana]... Te acusan depende a los cargos que te pongan, te ponen transportación..., no sé si te dan el mínimo por posesión, transportación e intento de introducción. Ósea, según eso fue lo que me chingo verdad, que “intentaba introducir la droga de un país a otro”... según eso... Yo no les entiendo la neta allá, porque hay gente que trae más, que trae toneladas y les dan diez años, siete años, a unos les dan hasta cinco años con toneladas, entonces yo no sé qué leyes sean esas..., o qué tipo de gobierno es.

[I was sentenced to] seven years [and] six months for twenty five kilos [of marijuana]... They accuse you depending on the type of charges they file against you; they charge you with transportation..., I don't know if they give you the minimum for possession, transportation with the intent of introduction. It's like, supposedly, it was what fucked me up right, that “[I] attempted to introduce drugs from one country into another,” supposedly. I really don't understand them over there [Mexican government] because there are people who bring more, bring tons and they give them ten years, seven years, they give some of them five years with tons, so I don't know what kind of laws are those..., or what type of government is that.

This statement reflects the harsh realities for those who have been caught attempting to transport drugs across the Mexican territory in route to the United States. These policies have been largely influenced by U.S. efforts to crack down on Mexican drug cartels who

continue to smuggle their shipments across the U.S.-Mexico border despite all of the resources devoted to fighting drug trafficking activities by both countries. Finally, these policies, which have been enacted and implemented, reflect how successful the United States has been in disseminating the rouge image of drug trafficking organizations to Mexico and other Latin American countries. Table 4.7 summarizes the findings of this chapter by outlining the imperialist attributes higher level drug traffickers held of U.S. government/law enforcement, the rogue stereotypes the U.S. government held of drug traffickers and the perceptions these subjects held of the Mexican government/law enforcement.

Table 4.7

Summary of Findings Perceptions of Actors Studied		
Imperialist Stereotypes held by Higher Level Narcos of U.S. Government/Law Enforcement held	Rogue Stereotypes held by U.S. Government/Law Enforcement of Higher Level Narcos	Perceptions held by Higher Level Narcos of Mexican Government/Law Enforcement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived law enforcement as violent, superior in training, capabilities, secretive & sophisticated • Perceived legal system as exploitative in nature via the way it functions (i.e., policies targeting the confiscation of assets and corrupt practices by different elements within the system) • Spoils of the system benefiting a select few 	<p>Perceived small group as large organizations, violent, threatening, harmful, & sophisticated enough to pose a threat and must utilize all available resources to go after narcos to make sure they are put in their place (behind bars & deported for life)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portrayal of drug traffickers as synonymous with terrorists and justified using legislation intended for terrorists to prosecute narcos • All social ills emanating from the drug trade • Perceived inferiority & undeserving of rights under constitutions, hence unwillingness to grant concession or negotiate with narcos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived most elements of government institutions as easily corrupted • Perceived government entities as lacking in training, capabilities & lack of desire to apprehend criminals

Suitability of Image Theory

Variables associated with image theory were clearly present in the data presented in this chapter including the rogue and the imperialist stereotypes. Interviews, personal letters, court transcripts and other data indicated variables of the imperialist stereotype to be present in the views held by drug traffickers of the U.S. government/law enforcement. Conversely, these subjects perceived Mexico's government and law enforcement in more equal and less grandiose terms when compared to their counterparts in the United States. Several factors contributed to this perception, including drug trafficker's interactions with both of these entities. For example, these subjects perceived the U.S. government/law enforcement as highly trained and capable of apprehending criminals, regardless of their caliber and location in the world. Higher level drug traffickers perceive these entities as highly mobile, motivated, unlikely to be corrupted unless you were part of the inner circle, and on the lookout to always get an advantage or the upper hand if the opportunity arose to negotiate with the government. Additionally, variables of the imperialist stereotype were more salient (for obvious reasons) among those who had been sentenced to a high prison term. These subjects believed the prosecution and the government had ulterior motives to get them convicted, hence utilized questionable practices such as getting drug addicts to testify against them when police officers were unwilling to lend themselves to be used for this purpose. Additionally, the high prison terms to which these higher level drug traffickers get sentenced, particularly those who are consider non-violent, and the overall behavior of U.S. government/law enforcement towards these

criminals is consistent with variables of the imperialist stereotype and the predictions of image theory.

On the other hand, the data suggests variables of the rogue stereotype to be present in the perceptions the U.S. government/law enforcement have of drug traffickers. These variables were clearly present in the way the prosecution and law enforcement worked together to get a conviction against these actors. For example, in one instance the government indicted members of a drug trafficking organization with a total of seventy-two counts and approximately one hundred and fifty witnesses called to testify against the defendants. Additionally, the data also suggest the government will utilize all of its resources to go after drug traffickers and those who may be associated with these actors. The fact that law enforcement believed that all social ills emanated from those who engaged in drug trafficking activities indicated the strength of the rogue stereotype held by the government, and explains the reasoning behind their aggressiveness towards this group in the way they go about apprehending them, the policies designed to prosecute them, and the overall international approach adopted to tackle this illusive enemy. Overall, image theory was well suited for the analysis of higher level drug trafficking because it is not restricted to the state as the unit of analysis as already mentioned in chapter two. This allowed the analysis of state and non-state actors that operated within and across international borders, adding to the explanatory power of this theory and making it highly suitable for this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

Narrative of Applied Theories

The theories used and tested in this study included social learning theory (SLT), social identity theory (SIT), group theory (GT), and image theory (IT). Social learning theory predicts that several factors contribute to the criminal behavior of individuals, including the type of cultural background, family history, socialization process and other environmental factors. Social identity theory suggest that individuals will join groups because they want to feel a sense of belonging, respect and pride; it hypothesizes further that the accessibility into these groups will depend largely on market barriers and individual's ability to internalize the norms of the group into which they are seeking admittance. Group theory in contrast claims that individuals join groups primarily because of the benefit they derive from this association; the groups in question can be as small as three persons and as large as entire societies, and the theory hold that groups must undergo a predictable evolutionary process that allows them to reach full maturity (and eventual entropy). Finally, image theory holds that actors in the international arena perceive others in schemas and stereotypes that act as filters which permit them to process information efficiently. These actors used this information to determine which of the entities they are dealing with are to be considered a threat and which offer an opportunity for productive exploration.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is based on both cognitive and behavioral components and

suggests that all knowledge and patterned behavior is learned through reactions to environmental stimuli; trial and error, experimentation, and the systematic processing of abstract ideas, memories and expectations (Vold et al., 2002). Additionally, environmental factors such as association with peers and parental/adult supervision, and the length of time one is exposed to these elements will dictate the type of values and patterned behavior individuals will learn. For instance, SLT argues that criminal behavior is for the most part learned because individuals associate with peers who tend to have an unfavorable definition of the legal codes and reside in an environment in which this type of behavior has become normalized. As a consequence, the longer the contact and exposure to these elements the more likely this will result in criminal behavior. Social learning theory also suggest that group members from lower socioeconomic status have developed a subculture in which toughness, smartness, autonomy and getting in trouble is valued; in the dominant class these values are downplayed, if not made subject to ridicule. This naturally leads members of lower socioeconomic status to be at higher risk of deviancy than members of the dominant class.

Social Identity and Group Theory

Social identity theory is based on cognitive factors and claims that individuals compartmentalize information into categories in order to make sense of their own environments. These categories are schemas, heuristics and stereotypes that individuals utilize in order to facilitate information processing (Cottam et al., 2004). In this process, individuals will automatically categorize others into in-groups and out-groups with which they will either want to associate or exclude from their circle of peers. SIT suggests that

individuals who are not satisfied with their current social identity will seek membership in another group in order to achieve the sense of belonging, status and respect they did not find in their primary group. Membership in these groups will depend largely on the barriers (if any) individuals encounter as they seek out this association or affiliation. According to GT, individuals form groups because of the benefits they derive from this association, and in this regard the characteristics of the group's members is important to the functioning of the group. As noted above, groups can be as small as three individuals and as big as entire societies; the larger the group the more friction there will be and the more free riding will take place. These groups go through several stages before they mature into a fully functional entity; those stages include, forming, storming, performing and adjourning (Lickel et al., 2000).

Image Theory

Image theory proposes that both individual actors and aggregated groups assign cognitive characteristics to other entities, and perceived them either as a threat or an opportunity, based on these perceptions. There are a total of seven images, including the enemy, ally, barbarian, rogue, colonial, imperialist and degenerate which individuals and groups commonly utilize to organize information (Cottam & Cottam, 2001). These images or stereotypes are utilized to deduce intelligence about an actor's capabilities, cultural sophistication and the makeup of decision makers in these groups. There is good evidence indicating that individuals will behave in predictable ways in accord with these perceived stereotypes. These groups will judge whether the capability and culture of others are equal or superior to that of their own, and once these images have formed it

will be difficult for these stereotypes to change.

Theoretical Findings

The study of higher level drug trafficking was organized in accord with three theoretical facets, starting with chapter four on social learning theory (SLT), chapter five on social identity (SIT) and group theory (GT), and chapter six on image theory. Variables associated with SLT were clearly present in the evidence presented in chapter four, and the first hypothesis outlined in chapter three was supported by the data collected and analyzed in this dissertation. Among the factors contributing to individuals joining drug trafficking organizations were the lack of education, lack of legitimate opportunities, social alienation, and the failure of our public and private institutions at helping these individuals adapt and integrate more fully into their own communities. Most of these subjects came from families where parents and supervising adults had virtually no education and lacked parenting skills, resulting in poor parenting practices causing the incomplete formation of social bonds that inevitably lead to the expression of deviant behavior among their children—as SLT would have predicted. It was common for these subjects, as SLT would predict to gravitate towards other community members who were from the same socioeconomic background who had similar values, dreams, expectations and similarly limited problem solving skills with respect to overcoming the financial hurdles they faced throughout their lives. This led to a reinforcing cycle where individuals who had questionable definitions of the legal codes gravitated towards others with similar values, hence reinforcing these norms that lead to deviant behavior as SLT would predict.

The data collected in this study indicated that these subjects had a rather narrow view about what they considered violations of the legal norms, and as long as they were not stealing from law abiding citizens or physically hurting others they believed that the drug trade was a fair way of acquiring material wealth. Since drug trafficking involved risks like any legitimate business, they rationalized that they were involved in the “drug trade” in the same way car salesmen are involved in the auto sales business. Institutions also played a supporting role by failing to integrate these subjects into their communities, particularly immigrants who were recent arrivals. Most of these subjects had already experienced alienation and deprivation in their country of origin and had come to the U.S. where they experienced even more isolation, but with high expectations of achieving material wealth after migrating to the North. Their inability to meet these goals made them even more vulnerable to recruitment into drug trafficking organizations. As SLT would predict, most of the subjects studied in this project who became involved in drug trafficking formed tight-knit organizations that were composed mainly of family, friends and business associates who had similar values and backgrounds. Because of its perceived profitability, which stemmed largely from the display of material wealth by others who were already engaged in the drug trade, these rewards made it extremely attractive for other young and ambitious members of the community to join the trade as SLT would predict.

This observation is consistent with SLT presumptions which suggest that individuals will systematically observe the consequences of the actions of others, and if these actions resulted in economic reward (stimuli in classical conditioning) they will naturally be drawn into similar behaviors (such as joining in drug trafficking) because

they wanted to experience these same rewards. This set of circumstances resulted in a virtually endless supply of new recruits streaming into these drug trafficking organizations, mostly because they believed the likely rewards would outweigh the possible negative consequences (operant conditioning). This attitude was adopted by most recruits because they were not made fully aware of the potential consequences, and they had not experienced going through a criminal trial as a result of being charged with drug trafficking offenses.

Having grown up in the streets, these higher level drug traffickers learned about fate, how to be independent, act tough, be street smart, manifest honor, and demonstrate excitement during risky (even life threatening) behavior, much more than is typical of the dominant culture (Miller, 1958). Although none of the participants in this study admitted to engaging in violent activities in order to accomplish their goals, these SLT factors were clearly present in the way they portrayed themselves with associates and competitors. The fact that these individuals were willing to kill or be killed did not mean that they placed less value on human life than do members of the dominant culture, as Miller (1958) has suggested. To the contrary, the aggressive behavior expressed by some of these individuals was a protective mechanism that allowed them to succeed in the rough and tumble drug trade world. For example, a higher level drug trafficker depended largely on the ability to intimidate others into paying for merchandise they were fronted. The ability to carry out these threats was critical in order to deter competitors from encroaching into his drug markets and in order to prevent theft and extortion. In addition, portraying a tough and street smart attitude with bravado is also necessary in order to gain the confidence of drug suppliers providing the merchandise to be sold.

Similarly, variables of social identity and group theory were clearly present in the data analysis presented in chapter five. The hypothesis pertaining to SIT, which holds that individuals would join groups because they perceived them as higher in status, was also supported by the data analysis presented in chapter five. Once these subjects had joined drug trafficking organizations they indicated that they felt a sense of belonging, respect and pride, cognitive characteristics that were not exhibited when they belonged to their primary group. The data analysis supported variables relating to SIT, particularly those in which individuals decided to leave their primary law abiding group to join a drug trafficking organization. This was done because they perceived such groups as higher in status since they exhibited or displayed material wealth, which in their minds translated into being respected and achieving a sense of status; these traits that were also absent in their primary group. Higher level drug traffickers who joined the trade tended to utilize several coping mechanisms to deal with the drawbacks resulting from joining a new group whose activities were considered unlawful, as SIT would predict. For example, individuals justified joining the trade by claiming that they had no other way of feeding their families. Consistent with variables associated with SIT, other coping mechanism these subjects used included the adoption of nicknames that reflected the image higher level drug traffickers wanted to portray as well as defining the drug trade as a quasi-legitimate business which was less harmful and more dignified than other criminal activity such as rape, murder, and gang banging. Moreover, others cited their “fate” as a coping mechanism to deal with drawbacks experienced in the drug trade, as SIT would predict.

The data analysis indicated that there were virtually no serious barriers to joining

drug trafficking organizations, and the recruits to the drug trade tended to be young and ambitious with a clear ability to internalize the norms of the drug trafficking organizations they had decided to join. Additionally, other variables associated with SIT that were shown to be at play in the data analysis included the characterization of in-groups and out-groups by higher level drug traffickers. These distinctions allowed them to operate without being eliminated by competitors or being identified by law enforcement for long periods of time.

Variables of affect and emotions, as SIT would predict, were clearly present and were cited as contributing factors for joining the drug trade by higher level drug traffickers. For example, the content analysis of the narcocorridos was cited as a factor which elicited certain emotions on higher level drug traffickers that made them want to emulate the characters being portrayed in their lyrics. This “resonant cord” was struck with the participants in the study, largely because they identified with the struggles they had endured and because they perceived the lyrics as being factual. Although the subjects interviewed for this study did not exhibit violent actions as their organizations were being dismantled, other drug cartels operating in Mexico did exhibit extremely violent responses as their criminal networks were being threatened by law enforcement and competitors. Several factors might have contributed to the non-violent responses exhibited by those organizations being dismantled in the U.S. that were not present in Mexico. For example, the subjects attracted to the Pacific Northwest might have come to take low skill jobs before they engaged in the drug trade and were not originally exposed to the most violent elements of these organizations.

Additionally, the hypothesis regarding GT, which stated that the performance of

the groups depended largely on the characteristics of its members (including race, nationality, gender, language, cultural characteristics and the size of the groups) were also supported by the data analysis presented in chapter five. For example, the data analysis indicated that these organizations were composed mainly of family members, childhood friends, individuals of the same ethnic or racial group, and/or business associates that formed tight-knit groups that could maintain a high level of secrecy and allow their organizations to thrive, as GT would have predicted. Consistent with GT, these subjects joined or formed these groups principally for practical purposes, including the financial benefits they derived from this association. The benefits in question included the ability to acquire intelligence about potential law enforcement activities that could threaten their organizations, learn how to better market and sell their product to the highest bidder, and feel a sense of belonging, status and respect—again, as GT would have predicted. Most of these groups tended to be small, highly mobile and highly independent with few attachments to their suppliers; this made them less vulnerable to competitors and less subject to law enforcement infiltration. Finally, as GT had predicted, these groups went through the usual stages of forming, storming, norming and performing before their members were apprehended and their organizations dismantled, hence concluding their evolutionary process of the final adjourning stage.

With respect to IT, the data analysis presented in chapter six clearly indicated the importance of variables associated with this theory; however, it was originally hypothesized that both higher level drug traffickers and government/law enforcement officials would have an enemy image of each other. The hypothesis of the enemy image stemmed largely from the fact that the U.S. has waged a long standing war on drugs, both

domestically and abroad, and provided significant assistance to Mexico and other Latin American countries to fight drug cartels. This hypothesis turned out to be incorrect, and instead the imperialist and rogue image stereotypes emerged as the analysis of the data progressed. For this reason, two other hypotheses were developed to address the potential importance of the imperialist and the rogue stereotypes. The latter holds that the U.S.-Mexican government has a rogue image of those engaged in drug trafficking activities, and this image has resulted in long prison terms and aggressive tactics being used against those believed to be engaged in the drug trade. The data presented in chapter six supported the hypothesis that the rogue image is accurate in many respects. It was shown that the perception of higher level drug traffickers by law enforcement was that narcos were the cause of most social ills in the communities in which they operated; murders, vandalism, drug addiction, car thefts, among others, are the social ills attributable to the drug problem.

Consistent with IT, the rogue image the U.S. government had of higher level drug traffickers lead to the eagerness of the government to utilize whatever tactics and available resources existed at their disposal to eliminate its opponent (even if these tactics were of questionable propriety). Among the tactics and resources used to wipe out the opponent as the rogue image predicted ranged from policy implementation distortions that were created to prosecute drug traffickers using ant-terrorist legislation for deportations, stripping persons of their legal status, and barring them from ever entering the United States. Similarly, the government indicted higher level drug traffickers with as many as one hundred and seventy-two criminal charges, bringing forward one hundred and fifty witnesses to testify against members of drug trafficking organizations; included

among these witnesses were numerous expert witnesses, local, state and federal law enforcement, and CIs. In addition, using plenty of cash for undercover police to purchase drugs from narcos into selling their merchandise are actions consistent with behavior exhibited by those who hold a rogue stereotype of another actor, as IT would predict. Consistent with predictions of the rogue stereotype in IT, the data analysis also produced evidence of narcos being portrayed as violent, highly sophisticated and strongly motivated and capable of achieving their nefarious goals by law enforcement and prosecution officials; these attributions were made, even when defendants clearly did not warrant such portrayals.

As IT would predict, the actors studied here would engage in preemptive attacks against those they perceived in the rogue stereotype; the data analysis conducted here indicated that law enforcement could easily justify violence against narcos with little hesitation or ultimate concern for their human rights. This behavior was exhibited because the government felt that despite all of the resources devoted to fighting drug trafficking organizations, these criminal networks were not only still operating in Mexico and other Latin American countries, but they were encroaching into the territorial boundaries of the U.S., hence posing an even more immediate and eminent threat against the national security of the country. Finally, this behavior stemmed from the fact that drug traffickers were considered inferior in capability and culture, as the rogue stereotype feature in IT would predict and U.S. law enforcement had to eliminate the threat while it had the upper hand and before the rogue had meaningful capabilities of retaliating against this preemption.

The final hypothesis, which stated that higher level drug traffickers would have an

imperialist image of the U.S. government and variables associated with this stereotype had kept a lid on drug violence in the United States, was supported by the data analysis presented in chapter six. Among the variables supporting the imperialist hypothesis of IT included the perception of higher level drug traffickers that the U.S. government/law enforcement was superior in capability, possessing the ability to apprehend high profile criminals and achieve objectives that other state actors such as Mexico did not have the ability to accomplish. They perceived U.S. law enforcement as highly trained and less corruptible than their counterparts in Mexico, with almost superhuman powers and ample resources to reach targets that no other entity or actor could demonstrate. This perception was expressed in drug traffickers' descriptions of how they were arrested, comments regarding the apprehension of leaders of more violent drug cartels in Mexico, and the observed ability to maintain a cap on corrupt elements functioning within these institutions. The strength of these judicial and law enforcement institutions, stemming largely from a vibrant economy, allowed those running these organizations to be well paid, hence less susceptible to corruption. They were able to withstand challenges from violent elements of drug trafficking organizations if they did arise as well due to these factors, and these circumstances prevented violent reactions on behalf of drug trafficking organizations when they were being dismantled.

Consistent with variables of the imperialist stereotype in IT, the data analysis indicated that higher level drug traffickers perceived the criminal justice system, its principal entities and procedures as threatening and exploitative in nature. These perceptions applied to including defense attorneys who were paid by the court or the subjects to defend them against their criminal charges. The confiscations of assets, the

utilization of CIs and the occasional corruption among selected members of U.S. law enforcement are among the factors which suggest an imperialist stereotype of the government held by higher level drug traffickers as IT would predict. Additionally, evidence of the imperialist image were also found among community members who were victims of drug violence and resided where a high level of drug activity occurred. This reaction stemmed largely from the fact that law enforcement was unwilling to utilize their vast power and resources to go after violent drug traffickers who had perpetrated violence in their communities. They were seen as only being open to information that would lead them to the apprehension of narcos, not necessarily to murderers.

Even though the data analysis indicated the government actors held a rogue image of higher level drug traffickers and drug traffickers held the imperialist image of the government, this does not necessarily suggest that these images remained constant over time. It is entirely possible that at the time the war on drugs was declared law enforcement and government had an enemy image of drug traffickers; however, this image might have changed over time as new security threats from non-governmental entities such as the terrorist attacks of September 11 came to pass. Despite the U.S.'s military, intelligence and law enforcement superiority, these attacks were not prevented, hence a new enemy that was truly capable of inflicting real physical and psychological damage to an entire society allowed the image of the drug traffickers to change from a potential enemy to a rogue image. On the other hand, the image drug trafficker held of the U.S.-Mexican government might have been different several years ago when drug cartels were larger, more stable, and exercised monopoly power to operate largely unobstructed. However, factors such as the emergence of new threats from smaller and

more violent criminal networks that posed a real physical, psychological and security threat to themselves and their organizations might have caused this image of the government to change from an enemy to an imperialist.

Discussion

The intent of this study was to illustrate the societal transformation that has taken place in Mexico including the efforts that have been made to root out the institutionalized corruption engrained in its institutions, and how all these factors have affected Mexico's ability to fight its drug war and aid in the overall democratization of the country. This study was also an attempt to illustrate the factors that have prevented good U.S.-Mexico relations in the past; and shows how these relations have improved over the years regarding their efforts to fight drug traffickers and prevent the spread of violence across the Mexico-U.S. borders. This investigation has produced evidence that both the U.S. and Mexico have made several attempts to work together and share intelligence about drug trafficking organizations operating out of Mexico. Additionally, an attempt was made to indicate the connection that the U.S. has attempted to make regarding Mexican and other Latin American drug cartels to terrorist organizations, and the narcocorruption that has spread over to U.S. law enforcement organizations operating on the southern border.

More importantly, this work was intended to identify the factors which have made it easy for individuals to join drug trafficking organizations, particularly those who are of Mexican or Latin American decent. This was done utilizing theories in criminal justice, political psychology and international relations, including social learning theory (SLT),

social identity theory (SIT), group theory (GT) and image theory (IT). This study was exploratory in nature, and several conclusions were drawn from the data collected including the fact that with the new war on terror federal agencies seem to express little interest in investigating individual drug-related murders in the U.S., let alone pursuing criminals that cross international borders, unless these crimes turn into serial murders or the investigation would lead them to a larger drug trafficking or terrorist organization. The data analysis showed that in some instances family members or spouses of murder victims have taken the initiative in pursuing leads of the perpetrator of this violence who have fled the country into Mexico, providing it to law enforcement in efforts of bring to justice the perpetrators of these crimes. For example, a spouse of a murder victim collected newspaper articles which featured photos of the perpetrator and provided them to local Mexican law enforcement leading to his arrest and extradition to face trial in the United States (Kraemer, 2007). This state of affairs is extremely frustrating for families that must deal with the grief of having lost a family member to drug violence.

The victims of these crimes, who come from countries where law enforcement and government entities tend to be corrupt, generally hold a positive image of U.S. law enforcement; this image has the propensity to change if this trend continues and the system currently in place to share intelligence about these offenders is not overhauled to meet current needs. The standard operating procedure (SOP) currently in place to pursue this cross-border violence perpetrated by violent drug cartels does not seem to be well coordinated, and prosecutors find it difficult to continue drug investigations which have resulted in violence across international borders. Only on rare occasion will the government attempt to get cooperation from Mexican or other law enforcement agencies

in Latin American where most of these drug traffickers take refuge. This situation is most unfortunate when violent elements of these drug trafficking networks commit murders in the U.S. and simply cross the border and settle in their communities and continue shipping loads of drugs across the U.S.-Mexico border.

When the perpetrators of violent crimes do not get apprehended and are not punished by our system of justice, the cycle of violence will continue to spread into the countries where these perpetrators take refuge, leading to family members taking matters into their own hands by avenging the deaths of their love ones. This leads to even more violence over time. Unfortunately, some of these countries where the perpetrators of these crimes commonly take refuge have weak institutions in place and limited resources to apprehend and prosecute these crimes. This is particularly the case when the perpetrators belong to criminal organizations possessing ample access to resources with the ability to evade law enforcement by corrupting government officials, allowing them to remain free and operate unobstructed.

Because the focus of U.S. law enforcement has been mainly on terrorism since September 11, there has been a lack of interest in pursuing this type of cross-border violence, allowing perpetrators of these crimes all too often to escape justice. The failure to apprehend these perpetrators has left victims of family members and communities in which these crimes occur terrified and fearful. The lack of interest in pursuing these violent crimes by law enforcement may be one of the principal factors leading to higher homicides rates in larger cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles and other metropolitan areas in the United States. For example, a recent study by the Police Executive Research Forum that included an analysis of 56 municipal police departments and Sheriff's

departments over the period 2004-2006 cited an overall 10 percent increase in homicides. The report cited the following factors underlying this increase in the homicide rate; an increase in the number of prisoners being released, availability of drugs, gang activity, easy availability of guns, the willingness of young people to settle disputes with weapons rather than their fists as well as failing to fund programs that were credited with reducing the crime rate in the 1990s (Zernike, 2007).

As the government develops new tactics to take down drug cartels, these criminal organizations will likely find new ways to adapt to these new tactics. The narcojuniors for example, who are taking over their predecessor's crime syndicates, are much better educated than their predecessors and possess entrepreneurial abilities and display sophistication not present in the past. Combating this public safety threat will require strong Mexican institutions mirroring those of the United States. These new entrepreneurs are much more discrete, blend more easily into society, and will have better access to financial and political institutions that will facilitate their operations. Considering the insatiable U.S. drug demand and Mexico's unique geographical location and proximity to source countries in Latin America as well as to the U.S., drug cartels will never cease to exist entirely, but if we have strong, incorruptible institutions on both sides of the border we will be much more capable of withstanding their nefarious impact.

Foreign Policy Recommendations

Since the Fox and Calderon administrations took office, several battles against drug cartels have been won, the corruption has been partially eradicated from some institutions, and U.S.-Mexico relations have improved. These new developments, along

with the political defeat of the PRI, have boosted the morale and confidence of Mexican society and of its government. The U.S. and Mexico will need to continue working together, not only in fighting drug cartels and other criminal organizations but also in developing its economy and that of other Latin American countries. The U.S. and Mexico will also need to deal with border and immigration reforms that have been put on the back burner for too long by the current administration. This immigration reform will reduce human rights violations and arrest the continuous spread of corruption in government organizations. It will be in the best interest of both nations to continue to have good diplomatic relations.

Additionally, Mexico will have to continue to rely on the U.S. and allow the extradition of some of the leaders of the most violent and influential criminal elements of its society until its governmental institutions acquire the strength necessary to prosecute them without the threat of spreading more violence. In order for the latter to occur, Mexico would need to play down its nationalistic attitude displayed in the past, and the U.S. will need to be more sensitive on this issue and acknowledge its violations of the Vienna convention and resolve them without delay. Moreover, with the emergence of extremist threats and global terrorism the U.S., must deal with Mexico and other countries on more equal terms than it has in the past, otherwise it will be difficult for the leaders of these countries to defend and implement policies that may be favorable to the national security of the United States.

While the connection between Mexican drug cartels and terrorists is currently weak, it is difficult to determine whether the status quo will remain in the years to come. Even though Mexican drug cartels operate more like a business and are focused more on

making money rather than carrying out any ideological missions, globalization is having tremendous effects in every society, and it would not be difficult for some terrorists and some narcotraffickers to join forces in the future if they can both benefit from such a joint enterprise. The U.S. must wage an intense public relations war against extremist ideas that seek to undermine U.S. domestic and foreign policy. Additionally, diplomatic relations with Mexico and other Latin American countries are crucial in a world where physical borders are no longer strong barriers for peoples, technologies, ideas and other factors that may incite anti-government sentiment across international borders. Currently, Iran is meddling in Latin American affairs by working to build strong diplomatic, economic and ideological relationships that may spread into other Latin American countries, including Mexico. The lack of close cooperation between Mexico and the United States may develop into a national security concern for the U.S., particularly if these influences lead to an Al Qaeda or Hezbollah-type cells operating in these countries that may find their way into the U.S. through human smuggling routes. The U.S. must adopt policies that are friendly and welcoming to the countries (and their people), with which it shares its borders. This will act as a natural barrier and early warning systems that can thwart or possibly prevent another terrorist attack in the U.S. Not having these friendly relationships with its own neighbors let alone other countries in the world will greatly increase the threat of attack on U.S. soil.

Currently there are more than 12 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. who have been forced to work in the shadows because policymakers have failed to adopt policies that would grant them the legal right to remain in this country. This anti-immigrant sentiment does not help to create friendly attitudes among its citizens,

domestically and abroad. Many of the children of these “illegal” immigrants have been brought here at an early age, and because of their inability to gain legal status they have been unable to acquire the education and skills they need to provide for their loved ones. This has lead members of these groups to seek refuge in barrios and ghettos where they often develop anti-government sentiments that have made them prime targets for the recruitment into not only drug trafficking organizations, but also potential terrorist groups.

The U.S. is privileged to have people of many nationalities who speak a multitude of languages, who are well educated and who have the cultural capital to aid the U.S. government and law enforcement in its efforts at apprehending criminals who have perpetrated violent crimes in the states and who have fled to their countries of origins. In order to be prepared for future challenges that a globalized and borderless world will bring about, the U.S. government and law enforcement should utilize these resources more effectively to counter the activities of these criminal networks. Currently, local police, and state and federal law enforcement agencies have in their organizations far too few personnel with the training and expertise to handle the challenges that this cross-border violence often brings. These agencies should seek them out to investigate and solve murders and other violent crimes committed in the United States by criminal networks operating out of Mexico and other Latin American countries. Moreover, the U.S. government and law enforcement must actively recruit new personnel who are capable of infiltrating these criminal networks in order to gather intelligence that will lead U.S. law enforcement to their successful apprehension and ultimate convictions.

Despite the past troubled working relationships between the U.S. and Mexico, a

lot of work needs to be done with respect to getting law enforcement agencies working together and developing trusting relationships that will lead to successful joint operations in dismantling violent drug trafficking organizations which perpetrate a wide range of crimes in both of these countries. Agencies other than the DEA should also take the lead in building relationships with Mexican and other Latin American law enforcement entities in order to be prepared for the challenges that lay ahead.

With respect to fighting the drug war, domestic policies that are well suited to meet current trends need to be enacted and implemented if we are to make any progress on this illusive enemy that has eluded us for decades. For example, policies in which those who have committed minor drug violations and get deported, despite the fact that they have been in the U.S. and have virtually no connection to their home countries, are impractical. Because they have violated drug laws, these subjects are barred for life from ever entering the U.S. and adjusting their legal status. Because most of these defendants have developed roots in this country, these policies will make it difficult if not impossible for those deported on drug violations to comply with these orders, resulting in further criminalization of these non-violent drug offenders. These policies are illogical because it is known that these subjects have engaged in the trade because of financial difficulties, and as long as jobs and drug demand continues to be readily available in the U.S. they will continue to cross the U.S.-Mexico border to meet this demand. Despite this knowledge, these policies remain in place and have yet to be modified to reflect a more just and equitable treatment for these non-violent drug offenders.

The practice of deporting individuals for drug violations would be justified if the individuals being prosecuted were the actual higher levels drug traffickers responsible for

shipping and smuggling large quantities of drugs and committing violent crimes in the U.S.; the reality, however is that the individuals being prosecuted very often are not violent, nor do they pose a real threat to our communities. In fact, in some instances court observations indicated that prosecutors are actually legitimizing or even elevating the reputation of some of these non-violent offenders whose crime was to be born into poverty with little to no guidance on how to better themselves economically in a law abiding way.

Additionally, when we factor in the cost for the expert witnesses, law enforcement officers at the local, state and federal level, court staff, and prison time with sentences that ranged from ten to forty five-years prison terms for each individual prosecuted for drug trafficking, the cost of this approach to the problem is staggering. If the individuals being sent to prison were a real physical security threat for our society, then it would be worth the resources devoted to some of these cases. Unfortunately, the individuals that these highly qualified prosecutors and law enforcement officers should be investigating, apprehending and prosecuting end up getting away because more often than not, they are either operating from Mexico or other places in Latin America. If they are residing in the U.S., by the time the investigation is in full swing they often take the opportunity to flee the country. This has been the case where violent drug cartels or individual drug traffickers have perpetrated violent crimes and left the country to avoid prosecution.

Domestic Policy Recommendations

Currently, our prison population is composed mostly of non-violent drug offenders who are predominantly from ethnic minorities. Additionally, a large portion of

the federal and state budget is allocated to fight the war on drugs. Research has shown consistently however, that American society is concerned more about violent and predatory crimes than non-violent drug offenders. Despite this fact, we continue to incarcerate very large numbers of people who are committing non-violent offenses. Therefore, the most urgent policy changes needed relate to the cost effective implementation of our drug policies. Policymakers must be able to redirect and better utilize the resources currently being employed for the interdiction and eradication of drugs in source countries and in the imprisonment of non-violent drug offenders in the U.S. without compromising the safety of our society. In effect, the resources diverted can be more effectively utilized by educating the non-violent drug offenders who make up more than half of our prison population, resulting in a drop in the crime rate and a safer society for all. Most non-violent drug offenders have ended up in prison either because they had to sell drugs to provide for their families or because they had to commit burglaries to maintain their drug habits. Since poverty seems to be the actual cause of criminal behavior for drug offenders, the resources currently being consumed to house more than 1.7 million non-violent drug offenders can be utilized to fund programs that will rehabilitate this group.

Among the programs that can be created to help this targeted population should include GED programs for those who have not graduated from high school. Other technical programs can also be created where non-violent offenders can acquire skills in construction, welding, electrical, auto mechanic, auto body, operating equipment, ceramic works, bakery, and an endless number of practical skills that can be utilized once the offenders are released to the general population. If offenders are released with the

proper skills necessary to earn a decent living for themselves and their families rather than relying on their previous profession, a high percentage of drug offenders will not recidivate and will take a tremendous burden off of the already crippled criminal justice system.

Additionally, in the process of being trained non-violent drug offenders should not be socialized with the general prison population. To the contrary, our efforts should be directed at keeping the targeted population away from offenders who have committed more serious felonies. This may prevent drug offenders from graduating to full criminal status by socializing and forming networks that will ensure the success of their criminal enterprise once they are released from prison. In order to achieve the latter, we must set up a system that combines ideas from a halfway house, a work release program or a home monitoring mechanism where drug offenders can reside and attend their job training workshops. The rules accompanying this program should be more moderate and allow offenders to have conjugal visits where they can spend at least a weekend per month with their families. Administrators of the program should make it clear to the offenders that this program is not a substitute for prison, and indicate that if they commit a serious felony while attending their workshops they will gradually be taking their privileges away—with the ultimate punishment being sending them to prison.

The threat of going to prison and the possibility of new economic opportunities will do more to deter drug offenders from continuing their illegal activities than if they are sent to prison. Offenders who participate in this program can maintain a sense of self-respect and autonomy, allowing them to preserve a cohesive relationship with their children and spouses and prevent family disruptions. To facilitate the execution of these

types of programs, they should be strategically place close to their training sites and the location where the offender resided before they were placed under supervision. In order to implement this plan, the remodeling of old and abandoned buildings in dilapidated neighborhoods can get started, since most drug offenders reside in rundown neighborhoods with high residential mobility, the modernization of the neighborhoods will result in residential stability and a sense of trust will develop among its residents. The latter will attract real estate investors who might see a potential for profits where it did not exist before, sparking new economic growth in these neighborhoods.

Due to low property values in these neighborhoods, the cost involved with purchasing and remodeling these old buildings will be minimum compared to the millions of dollars being spent in building new penitentiaries. After purchasing, remodeling, equipping and staffing all of the necessary buildings to run these programs, there will be sufficient funds left to give out in scholarships and financial aid to those who want to continue their education after being released from prison. Funds can be dispersed according to need for all those who wish to acquire an education or attend a technical school where they could acquire the necessary skills to get a well paying job that will ensure the economic security of their families. An educated population with jobs available for everyone, including non-violent drug offenders, may greatly influence the reduction of the crime rate and will increase the safety of our communities. Importantly, employers need to be encouraged and rewarded for hiring non-violent drug offenders in order to prevent them from engaging in unlawful activities to provide for their families. Since the buildings where this program will be carryout will not be staffed with security guards, but with psychologists, criminologist, and other qualified personnel

to counsel and treat the targeted population, the possibility of escape may be high from participating offenders. However, since this type of offender does not pose a physical threat to our communities, adopting these programs is well worth the risk. Finally, by disseminating information and educating the public about the minimum physical threat these offenders pose to our communities, as taxpayers we will realize that working until retirement to support prison building and housing these defendants is not worth the risk.

Future Research

This study represents a bottom up-approach to higher level drug trafficking which allowed us to get an insight into the family history, socioeconomic background, psychological and political characteristics of individuals who engage in the drug trade. This was possible because of the interdisciplinary and theoretical approach that was taken in conducting this study. Most studies conducted on this issue have been from an elitist perspective and have taken a top-down approach that fails to discover important factors which have prompted individuals to engage in this unlawful activity. Although this study focused on individuals of Mexican or Latin American decent, this should not be interpreted in a way that suggests that individuals with this background are more likely to get involved in higher level drug trafficking.

Additionally, this study was exploratory in nature and in no way, shape, or form should the findings be interpreted in a way that suggests that all higher level drug traffickers of Mexican or Latin American decent have the same characteristics, or go through the same evolutionary process in joining drug trafficking organizations. Similarly, the findings regarding the perceptions by government officials held of higher

level drug traffickers should not be interpreted in a way that suggests that all government officials hold the same stereotypes of these subjects. Studies with random (if possible) and larger samples of both populations studied should be undertaken in order to further test out the theoretical conclusions of this study. Studies focusing on other racial and ethnic groups should also be undertaken in order to further test out these hypotheses and determine if the theories tested can be adapted to study similar criminal activity among other groups as well as other criminal behavior that could include topics such as racially motivated crimes, corporate fraud, government corruption and terrorism.

Moreover, further research needs to be undertaken on the reasoning behind the lower level of violence exhibited by drug trafficking organizations operating in the Northwestern part of the United States versus those operating in other parts of the country, as well as in Mexico and other countries in Latin America. For example, were factors associated with stronger law enforcement and judicial institutions, lower levels of corruption, higher pay and economic development prevented these criminal organizations from growing into entities that threaten the legitimacy and authority of the state? Is the fact that higher level drug traffickers perceived the U.S. government/law enforcement as highly trained, less corrupt and more capable of retaliating if violence is perpetrated against these actors what has prevented violent confrontations similar to those which have taken place between drug cartels and Mexican law enforcement? What will happen if corruption is not kept under control in U.S. institutions, will the images criminal networks have change and will it lead to extreme violence?

On the other hand, will the strengthening of Mexican institutions, training and professionalization of law enforcement organizations along with economic and education

policies prevent extreme violence from taking place and disrupting the fabric of these communities? Will placing restrictions on media outlets of what type of contents they can place in the worldwide web, airwaves, and other outlets of communication prevent the recruitment of new members into these organizations? Will disseminating information including lyrics that counter the characters the narcocorridos portray lead to lower levels of recruitment into drug trafficking organizations? These are some of the questions that researchers can undertake to further explore the causes and effects of higher level drug trafficking.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Note: The words in the parenthesis are key statements deduced from the theories that will be used to analyze and guide the principal researcher in the analysis of the data (see Spanish measurement instrument to get an idea the actual questions that will be used for the interviews).

Social Learning Theory (SLT)

1. Tell me about your childhood. Describe the place in which you grew up including the activities you participated in and where you spent most of your childhood, the types of friends you had, family, etc. (Sutherland's argument that *frequency of deviant contact* will depend on how many deviant definitions children will get).
2. Describe the type of supervision you had from your parents or other adults while growing up (According to Sutherland, adult supervision may result in *more definitions of behavior that is law abiding*).
3. Describe your relationship and how often you hang around this group of friends and how close of a relationship did you develop with them? (*This would refer to the frequency, duration, priority and intensity with which individuals are exposed to lawful or criminal behavior-Sutherland*).
4. Describe your relationship with your parents since your childhood. For example, did your parents or family members tell you "good boy" when you behaved well and "bad boy" when you did not? Were they loving and caring when well behaved and resentful with you when you weren't? Were they supportive about your decision making? If so, how often and for what reason? Give examples. (based on Aker's *differential reinforcement component* added to Sutherland's theory).
5. What do you think about people who are willing to take shortcuts in order to achieve their financial goals even if this means breaking the law once in a while as long as they are not physically harming others? For example, stealing food or clothing if one needs it, but cannot afford it. (*Akers-neutralizing mechanism in order to justify criminal acts*).
6. What is the highest level of education that you obtained? (*Miller-lower class and subculture*).
7. What type of work did you do before engaging in drug trafficking?

8. When you worked, how much money did you make per week, month or year? (Miller-*lower class and subculture*).
9. Describe how important is it for you what others think about yourself? For example, how important is it to you that to show your neighbors, friends and family that if you want to buy yourself or buy someone else something you can? (Miller's argument of *autonomy*).
10. What type of person do you consider yourself to be? A physically and/or strong minded person? Do you worry about what someone else thinks of you? For example, are you concerned that someone would think that you are weak (mentally or physically) and can be perceived as a person who could be manipulated into doing something for someone even if you don't want to? (Miller's argument of smartness and toughness).
11. What are your thoughts about fate (destiny, luck, etc.)? Do you think that when things happen they were all meant to be and there was nothing that you could have done to change the outcome? (Millers argument of *fate*).
12. If someone grossly humiliated you, your family or your best friend, how well would you handle it? Will you be willing to give your life to prevent this from occurring? (Miller's argument of lower class putting *less value in human life* and more emphasis on *honor* than the dominant class).

Social Identity and Group Theory (SIT and GT)

13. Is there anything that you think differentiates you or your group (as a man, woman, member of a religion, or more generally as a Latina/o) from others in American society? (Tjfel 1970, 1972, 1981 *we and them*, Tajfel and Turner 1979, need of affiliation or different from other groups as the foundation of SID).
14. Compared to others, how do you see yourself? For example, do you see yourself as any different then members of your family, neighbors, community members and/or society in general? (Corneille, Yzerbyt, Rogier and Buidin, 2001 reference to *ingroups and outgroups*).
15. There are some hidden rules that drug traffickers usually abide by, this may include the practice of always paying your suppliers for merchandize, never double crossing them, etc. Did you abide by those rules and know what happens if they are not followed? (*Intergroup differentiation*; Internalization of group membership as an aspect of self concept Tajfel and Turner, 1979).
16. How did you feel being part of this organization? For example, did you feel good, a sense of friendship, family, belonging, proudness, etc.? (*Intergroup*

differentiation; Internalization of group membership as an aspect of self concept Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

17. How did you start in the drug business? Did you inherit membership into this organization via-family, business contacts or did you join this organization because you believed it would enhance your chances of being successful in the drug business? In other words, were you always a member of the organization in which you got caught, or was this membership considered an improvement in your career as a drug trafficker? (*Social mobility* (joining a group of higher status) in Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1978; quoted in Cottam et al., 2004; p. 90).
18. How did you go about joining this organization? Was it difficult to get admitted into this group? Was it difficult to get out of the previous group that you belong to? What sort of things did you have to do before being accepted into this new group? Did you have to be of Mexican/Latina/o decent or did it not matter your racial or ethnic background? (Stages of group formation, Tuckman, 2001; Interpersonal Attractive Perspective, Newcomb, 1956; Social competition, Ellemers and Knippenberg, 1990 strategies used by the in-group to enhance social identity will depend on the permeability of the group).
19. How do you deal with the fact that you were doing something that was generally not seen as socially acceptable? (*Social creativity*, 1st comparing in-group with outgroup in a different dimension, i.e. seeing themselves as legitimate business] 2nd reevaluating the comparison dimension, i.e., comparing themselves to bank robbers, gangsters, etc., 3rd comparing their in-group to a different or lower status groups).
20. What went through your mind when you realized that your friends were being apprehended? (The idea that as the threat perception increases, the outgroup is consider more threatening, homogeneous and extreme; Corneille, Yzerbt, Rogier and Buiding, 2001).
21. Tell me what was going through your mind when your organization was falling apart? Did you express anger, despair or indifference to what was happening? Did you consider aggressive actions against anyone? If so, against whom and for what reasons? (Adjourning Stage, Brewer and Kramer, 1985; Attacking the source of injury discussed by Frijda 1986, 1989; Izard 1977; Izard 1977, 1980; Lazarus 1991).
22. In your view, how did your organization differ (if there is in fact a difference) from other groups or organizations that you know of who were in the same business (membership)? (Group differentiation, Tajfel 1970, Tajfel and Turner 1979).

23. Did you socialize with individuals who belonged to other drug trafficking groups or potential competitors? Why and what was that like? (Tajfel and Turner 1979's Relevant ingroup comparison).
24. Tell me about the loyalty you feel with the members of your organization. For example, would you give your life for them and will they give their life for you if it was necessary? (Affect and emotions that go beyond positive or negative, good or bad Fiske and Tylor 1991).
25. Lets talk about the type of music you listen to. Do you listen to narcoballads? Tell me what you think about the corrido or narcocorrido. What role does it play in the world of the narcotrafficker? What are the thoughts that go through your mind when you listen to this type of music? Is there any particular narcocorrido that you identify with the most or that when you listen to it, it makes you remember either happy or unhappy instances within your life? (*Cognition and effect* in Stephan and Stephan 1993 quoted in Cottam et al., 2004).

Image Theory (IT)

26. What's your opinion about individuals who work for the government (i.e. DEA, FBI, detectives, police officers, etc.), versus individuals who work for other organizations (factory workers, farm workers, etc.) that have no links to law enforcement or government entities?
27. Do you consider them to be a threat to you, your business or your organization, or not? If yes, how so? Do you feel you can do your business even with law enforcement interference?
28. Before being apprehended, what was going through your mind knowing you were doing something for which you could go to prison. Did you think that as long as you were cautious about the way you conducted your business, you would not be captured and put in prison for drug trafficking?
29. What do you think about the work law enforcement officials do? Did you think you were just as smart as law enforcement agents were and had the same if not more resources than they did to conduct your business?
30. What do you think were the intentions of law enforcement towards you, your business and your organization before you were apprehended? For example, do you think they are out to get you and the intentions they had were harmful?
31. Do you think law enforcement is simply doing their job, just like you are doing yours when attempting to apprehend people who are in the same business as you were? (Enemy image, Cottam and Cottam 2001; pg 97, the attempt here (from Q25-31 is to determine if the trafficker perceives law enforcement as "equal in

comparison to his own group” and whether the intentions of law enforcement officials are harmful).

APPENDIX B
TRANSLATED VERSION OF MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Spanish (Social Learning Theory)

1. Dime acerca de tu niñez. ¿Describe el lugar en el que tu creciste, incluyendo las actividades en las que tu participaste y el lugar donde creciste y pasaste la mayor parte de tu niñez. Cuéntame acerca de que tipo de amiga/os tenias y familiares con los cuales tu creciste.
2. ¿Describe el tipo de supervisión que tuviste de parte de tus padres u otros adultos mientras crecías?
3. ¿Describe tu relación y qué tanto tiempo pasabas con este grupo de amigos y que tan íntima relación desarrollaste con ella/os?
4. Describe tu relación con tus padres o familiares desde tu niñez. ¿Por ejemplo, te decían que eras un “buen chico” cuando te portabas bien y que eras un “chico malo” cuando te portabas mal? ¿Por ejemplo, que tan seguido te decían que habías hecho alguna cosa bien? ¿Te apoyaban en decisiones que tomabas? ¿Eran amorosos o indiferentes contigo? ¿Si este era el caso, que tan seguido y por que motivos? Da ejemplos de lo que sucedía.
5. ¿Que opinas tú de las personas que estan dispuestas a tomar ventaja de alguna oportunidad para poder alcanzar sus metas financieras aunque esto signifique violar la ley de vez en cuando con la condición de que no lastimes físicamente a otros? Por ejemplo, robar comida o ropa si uno lo necesita y no lo puede comprar.
6. ¿Cuál es el nivel de educación más alto que adquiriste?
7. ¿Cuál era tu trabajo antes de ingresar al tráfico de drogas?
8. ¿Cuándo trabajabas, cuanto dinero ganabas por semana, mes, o año?
9. ¿Describe que tan importante es para ti lo que otros piensan de ti? ¿Por ejemplo, qué tan importante es para tí que los vecinos, amiga/os y familia sepan que si tu quieres comprarte, o comprarle alguna cosa a alguien lo puedes hacer sin ninguna dificultad?
10. ¿Qué tipo de persona te consideras tú ser? ¿Una persona fuerte físicamente o mentalmente, o los dos? ¿Te preocupa lo que otras personas piensen de ti? ¿Por ejemplo, te importaría mucho si alguien piensa que eres una persona débil, física o mentalmente, y que te pueden manipular en cierta forma y hacerte que hagas algo que tus no arias si no fueras malaconsejado por alguien más?
11. ¿Que opinas acerca del destino? ¿Tú crees que cuando las cosas pasan, ya era cosa del destino y que no hay nada que tu ni nadie pudiera haber hecho para cambiar el resultado?

12. ¿Si alguien humillara a tu familia, a un amigo, o a ti en una forma grotesca, como lo tomarías? ¿serías capaz de dar tu vida para prevenir que esto ocurriera?

Social Identity and Group Theory (SID)

13. ¿Crees tu que hay algo que te hace a ti o a tu grupo (como hombre, mujer, miembro de religión o mas general como Latina/o) diferente a otras personas o grupos en esta sociedad (EU)?
14. ¿Comparado a otras/os, que tipo de persona te consideras tú? ¿Crees tu que eres diferente (tu personalidad, sentimientos, valor, forma de ser, etc.) a los demás miembros de tu familia, vecinos, comunidad, o miembros de la sociedad en general?
15. ¿Hay reglas que la mayoría de traficantes de drogas siempre siguen, esto incluye la práctica de siempre pagar a tus proveedores por mercancía, nunca traicionarlos, etc.? ¿Tú siempre seguiste estas reglas y sabes que pasaría o que ha pasado con esos que no siguen estas reglas?
16. ¿Que sentías al ser parte de esta organización? Por ejemplo, te sentías bien, que pertenecías, orgulloso, era un ambiente amigable o/y familiar, etc.?
17. ¿Cómo fue que empezaste a involucrarte en el negocio de las drogas? ¿Cómo fue que adquiriste membresía o te hiciste parte de esta organización? ¿A través de familiares, contactos de negocio o te hiciste parte de esta organización por que creíste que te ayudaría a superarte en el negocio de drogas? ¿En otras palabras, siempre fuiste miembro de la organización en la que estabas cuando te apresaron o el tomar parte en esta organización fue una decisión consiente para superarte en tu carrera en el negocio de las drogas?
18. ¿Cómo fue que ingresaste a esta organización? ¿Se te hizo difícil ingresar o que se te aceptara como miembro de esta organización? ¿Fue difícil salirte del grupo al que pertenecías anteriormente? ¿Qué fue lo que tuviste que hacer antes que fueras aceptado en este grupo? ¿Tenías que ser Mexicana/o Latina/o para poder entrar o no importa tu raza o grupo étnico?
19. ¿Cómo es que justificas tú el estar haciendo algo que generalmente no es considerado aceptable por la sociedad?
20. ¿Que es lo que te pasaba por la mente cuando te diste cuenta que tus amigos estaban siendo apresados?
21. ¿Dime que es lo que pasaba por tu mente cuando tu organización se estaba desintegrando? ¿Expresaste odio, angustia, desesperación o indiferencia a lo que estaba

- sucediendo? ¿Consideraste actos violentos en alguna ocasión contra alguien? ¿Si esto fue el caso, contra quien y porque motivo?
22. ¿En tu opinión, cuál es la diferencia entre tu organización (si es que la hay) y otros grupos los cuales tu conoces quienes están en el mismo negocio?
 23. ¿Te socializabas con individuos que pertenecían a otros grupos que se dedicaban al negocio de las drogas o que competían contigo por clientes? ¿Por qué y que es lo que pensabas?
 24. ¿Podrías compartir conmigo acerca de la lealtad que sientes o sentías hacia miembros de tu organización? ¿Por ejemplo, estarías dispuesto a dar tu vida por ellos o alguno de ella/os y ella/os darían la vida por ti si fuera necesario?
 25. Hay que hablar del tipo de música que te gusta. ¿Escuchas corridos o narcocorridos? ¿Dime que es lo que piensas acerca de este tipo de música? ¿Qué papel juega en el mundo del narco tráfico? ¿Que es lo que piensas, sientes o recuerdas cuando escuchas este tipo de música? ¿Hay algún corridos o narcocorridos con el cual te identifiques tu, o que cuando lo escuchas te hace recordar momentos felices, o tristes en tu vida?

Image Theory (IT)

26. ¿Cuál es tu opinión acerca de personas que trabajan para el gobierno (ejemplo, DEA, FBI, Detectives, Policía, etc.) en comparación con personas que trabajan para otras agencias (campesinos, trabajadores de bodega, fábricas, etc.) quienes no tienen vínculos con la ley o con el gobierno?
27. ¿Los consideras una amenaza hacia ti, tu negocio o tu organización, o no? Si este es el caso en que forma? ¿Crees tu que podías seguir tu negocio aun con la interferencia del gobierno?
28. ¿Antes que fueras apresado, que es lo que te pasaba por la mente sabiendo que estabas haciendo algo por lo cual podías ir a prisión? ¿Creías tu que con que tuvieras cuidado acercad de la forma en que conducías tus negocios no serias capturado y puesto en prisión por traficar drogas?
29. ¿Qué opinas del trabajo que hacen los oficiales del gobierno? ¿Crees que eres igual de inteligente que agentes del gobierno y que tenias los mismos, sino mas recursos para haber conducir tus negocios?
30. ¿En tu opinión, que intenciones crees que las autoridades tenían hacia ti, tu negocio y tu organización antes de que fueras apresado? ¿Por ejemplo, crees tu que las autoridades siempre están al pendiente de personas como tu y que sus intenciones son malignas?

31. ¿Crees tú que las autoridades simplemente están haciendo su trabajo al igual que tu estas haciendo el tuyo cuando intentan aprender a gente como tu quienes están en el mismo negocio?

APPENDIX C
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL'S MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Questionnaire for Government Officials

General questions to get the subject at ease and introduced into the topic of narco trafficking.

1. How long have you been employed in this line of work?
2. What do you know about the organizational structure of higher level drug traffickers, specifically those who are from Latin American decent?
3. How influential do you think drug traffickers are in the U.S.? In other words, do you think they have the ability to influence the judiciary and government in general as they have in other countries like Mexico and Latin America?
4. Has there been an instance in which your organization has made it a point to go after higher level drug traffickers or their organizations until they were apprehend and prosecuted. If so, what factors prompted your agency to investigate? In other words, what did they do to get the attention of the agency?
5. What made it possible for their successful apprehension and prosecution? (i.e. undercover investigations or confidential informants, citizen tips?)
6. In your experience, have you seen any changes in the gender composition of drug traffickers? For example, has there been an increase in arrest of higher level drug traffickers that are females? What about their age, have they gotten younger, older or more violent?
7. If changes have occurred, how has your agency adapted to these changes?
8. How do you deal with drug traffickers who commit crimes in the U.S., but then flea to Mexico or other parts of Latin America to escape justice?

Questions deducted from **Social Learning Theory (SLT)** in order to test how well this theory explains this behavior.

9. In your experience conducting drug trafficking investigations, what type of background or upbringing do these higher level drug traffickers had? For example did they grow up in mainly rural or urban areas?
10. Of those higher level drug traffickers of Latin America decent, what countries and states are they most commonly from?
11. What is the level of education of the drug traffickers that you have investigated or prosecuted? What type of work did they (claim) claim they had?

12. Of the drug traffickers that you have arrested, investigated or known about, are they mainly composed of individuals from the same country of origin, racial/ethnic background? If they are, can you give me an example of the composition of the interracial/transnationality of its members?
13. How common (willing) is it for higher level drug trafficker who are apprehended to participate as government informants against other drug traffickers? How loyal are they to their associates or organizations?
14. In your opinion, how willing are higher level drug traffickers to inflict violence.

Questions deducted from **Social Identity and Group Theory (SIT and GT)** to determine how well this theory holds in explaining this behavior.

15. Do you think drug traffickers as a group pose a threat? If so what type of threat?
16. From your experience in dealing with drug traffickers, are there any hidden rules, codes of silence, or other values that you know of that higher level drug trafficker always abide by in order to avoid violence against themselves or their families?
17. In your experience, do you know of any threats of violence against judges, prosecutors, journalist, criminal investigators, agency personnel and/or other government officials in the U.S., made by drug traffickers as a result of their apprehension or prosecution?
18. What is your assessment of the sophistication of drug traffickers when conducting their illegal operations? Can you give me examples of these techniques?
19. In your view, what is the difference between higher level drug traffickers and other members of our society?
20. Do you know how these individuals became higher level drug traffickers before they got apprehended? How were they recruited, generated connections and moved up in the drug business?
21. What happens to the organizations of higher level drug traffickers when they get apprehended and prosecuted?
22. In your opinion, how do members of higher level drug trafficking groups, which have been apprehended in these areas, differ (if any) from those of drug cartels in the U.S.-Mexico border including the Tijuana, Juarez and Gulf cartels?
23. What do you think motivates (other than monetary gain) higher level drug traffickers to continue their illegal operations even after they have earned enough money to retire?

24. As far as resources, do you feel your organization has the ability to fight drug traffickers and prevent them from causing chaos in our society as they have in places such as the U.S.-Mexico border including Nuevo Laredo and Tijuana?

Questions deducted from **Image Theory** to test the propensity of narco traffickers to use violence against law enforcement, competitors or others as a group.

25. What is your general perception of higher level drug traffickers?
26. In your experience, what will lead drug traffickers to use violence against others?
27. From a law enforcement point of view, what do you think are the intentions of drug traffickers towards you; indifference, friendly or harmful?
28. Do you think drug traffickers are actively pursuing information about government officials like you to use as leverage in the future?
29. Of the Latin American groups, which drug traffickers in your opinion are more willing to use violence, intimidation and extortion (and against who) in order to achieve their goals (Mexican, Cubans, Columbian, Salvadorian, Guatemalans, Hondurans, etc.)?
30. Is there anything that differentiates these higher level drug traffickers from each other?
31. Of these groups, which ones in your opinion have links to terrorists groups or may in the future seek partnerships with these groups to achieve their objectives?

APPENDIX D
SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY INDICATORS

Social Learning Theory Indicators (SLT)

1. Definitions of law abiding behavior or law violating behaviors were derived from the following statements:
 - a. Childhood and their upbringing, environment in which they grew up, types of friends they had and family background.
 - b. Type of supervision they got while growing up.
 - c. Relationships, frequency of contacts and the bonds they developed with their circle of friends.
 - d. Relationship with parents or supervising adults; supportive or unsupportive.
 - e. Willingness of people to take shortcuts in order to get what they wanted financially i.e. stealing food or clothing if one needs it, but cannot afford it.

2. Lower Class and Subculture
 - a. Level of education, type of employment and the amount of money they made prior to engaging in drug trafficking.
 - b. Importance of perception by other members of society including friends, family and neighbors (financially).
 - c. Type of person they considered themselves to be, physically and/or mentally i.e., strong and whether or not they could be manipulated.
 - d. Thoughts about fate, destiny, luck.
 - e. Humiliation of themselves or family members and what they were willing to do in order to prevent such act from occurring.

APPENDIX E
SOCIAL LEARNING AND GROUP THEORY INDICATORS

Social Identity Theory Indicators (SIT)

1. Definitions of *us* and *them*, *ingroup versus outgroups* and the need for affiliation or the need to be different from other groups were derived from the following statements:
 - a. Things that differentiated them from family, friends, neighbors, religion, competitors and other members of society.
 - b. Similarities or differences between their organizations and competitors.
 - c. Types of interactions if any with competitors.
2. Internalization of group norms
 - a. Whether or not subjects knew about hidden group norms in drug trafficking and what happened if they were violated i.e. becoming a snitch (CI).
 - b. The type of feelings they experience while being a part of their drug trafficking organizations, i.e. sense of friendship, belonging, etc..
3. Social mobility/Social competition and Permeability of group
 - a. How they started in the drug business, via family, friends or ethnic affiliation.
 - b. Barriers if any to joining the organization.
4. Social Creativity
 - a. Strategies to cope with negative stigma related to their illegal activities.
5. Affect and Emotions
 - a. Loyalty felt towards other members of the organization.
 - b. Willingness to sacrifice their lives for other members.
 - c. Music and its relationship to drug trafficking and violence (narcoballads).
 - d. Feelings resulted from listening to narcoballad lyrics.
 - e. Identification with characters of narcoballads.

Group Theory Indicators (GT)

1. Data regarding the reasoning for joining drug trafficking organizations were derived from the following statements:
 - a. Satisfaction experienced while being part of their drug trafficking group.
 - b. Benefits and drawbacks (financial, cognitive and psychological) deducted from joining a drug trafficking organizations.
 - c. Difficulties (if any) experienced in their quest to joining drug trafficking organizations.

- d. The characteristics, skills and other trades required to get admitted into these groups.
2. Stages of group formation were deducted from the following statements:
- a. How participants started in the drug trade.
 - b. Group size of organizations they lead.
 - c. Types of Tasks performed by members.
 - d. What lead to the apprehension and disintegration of their organizations?

APPENDIX F
IMAGE THEORY INDICATORS

Image Theory Indicators (IT)

The following statements were used to determine whether or not drug traffickers viewed U.S.-Mexican law enforcement as the *enemy* and whether or not these perceptions was the same on behalf of law enforcement towards drug traffickers:

1. Enemy Image
 - a. Perception of government officials (i.e. DEA) by drug traffickers as oppose to others who work in a non-government capacity.
 - b. Perceptions of drug traffickers by government officials as oppose to those who are law abiding members of society.
 - c. Threat or not a threat (by government and drug traffickers towards each other).
 - d. Intentions hostile or benevolent (by government and drug traffickers towards each other).
 - e. Feelings and emotions resulting from the disintegration of their organizations.
 - f. Who were these feelings directed towards.
2. Indicators of *rogue image* were derived from statements made by government officials regarding the activities of higher level drug traffickers:
 - a. Willingness of drug traffickers to engage in violence to achieve their goals.
 - b. Response by higher level drug traffickers when their members were being arrested and their organizations dismantled.
 - c. Threats, intimidation and corruption attempts by drug traffickers against law enforcement and government officials.
 - d. Harmful consequences of drug trafficking activities.
 - e. Opinions by government officials of the sophistication of drug trafficking organization and whether or not they had enough resources to counter drug trafficking activities (capabilities).
3. Indicators of the *imperialist image* held by higher level drug traffickers of U.S. law enforcement were derived from the following statements:
 - a. Perceptions by drug traffickers of the U.S. government relative to the Mexican government in terms of capabilities.
 - b. Perceptions by drug traffickers of whether or not they could operate despite knowledge of government organizations such as the DEA.
 - c. Perceptions of U.S. policies and overall judicial system.
 - d. Law enforcement's susceptibility to corruption and willingness to use violence against drug traffickers.

APPENDIX G
COVER LETTER TO THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS

August 28, 2006

Office of Research
Federal Bureau of Prison
320 First Street
400 Building
Washington, DC 20534

SUBJECT: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF HIGHER LEVEL
NARCO TRAFFICKERS OF LATIN AMERICAN DESCENT

Attention: Jody Klein Saffran

I am requesting the Bureau of Prisons Institutional Review Board (BOP IRB) for the approval of the above study and participation of human subjects. This project has been approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board. For your convenience, I have enclosed the following items:

- 1) Vitae.
- 2) Questionnaire to be employed in the study, both in English and Spanish.
- 3) Consent form, both in English and Spanish.
- 4) Research Proposal Summary and Detail Description of the Research Method.
- 5) Endorsement letter from Dr. Faith Lutze, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at Washington State University.
- 6) Endorsement letter from [REDACTED], U.S. Probation Officer, [REDACTED], Washington.
- 7) Washington State University's Approval Protocol.
- 8) Research Statement.

I would like to thank the BOP IRB for taking the time to review this proposal. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, I can be contacted via telephone at (509) 279-0358, (509) 432-3639, mmeraz@wsu.edu, or at the address below.

Respectfully yours,



Martín M. García
ABD, Political Science/Criminal Justice
Washington State University

1645 NE MERMAN DR. A-203
PULLMAN, WA 99163

APPENDIX H
FAX COVER SHEET TO FEDERAL
PROSECUTOR REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

FAX COVER SHEET

DATE: 11/17/06
NO. OF PAGES: 6
TO: U.S. Attorney, Russ Smoot
FAX: (509) 353-2766
FROM: Martín M. García
PHONE: (509) 432-3639
FAX: (509) 335-4814

MESSAGE: Hello Mr. Smoot, this is to follow up on our conversation regarding an interview for my study title *An Exploratory Analysis of Higher Level Narco Traffickers of Latin American Decent*. I have included a copy of the questionnaire as you requested and two memorandums of the Approved Human Subjects Protocol from Washington State University's Institutional Review Board. If you have any other questions with regards to my study, please get a hold of me at the number above and or via e-mail at mmeraz@wsu.edu. Once again, thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this study and for helping make our communities a better place to live.

Respectfully yours,



Martín M. García

APPENDIX I
FEDERAL PROSECUTOR'S RESPONSE TO PARTICIPATION REQUEST



300 United States Courthouse
Post Office Box 1494
Spokane, Washington 99210-1494

509/353-2767
FAX (509) 353-2766

December 14, 2006

Mr. Martin Garcia
Political Science, WSU Pullman (4880)
c/o P.O. Box 643140
Pullman, WA 99164

Sent via Facsimile Transmission
(509) 335-4814

Dear Mr. Garcia:

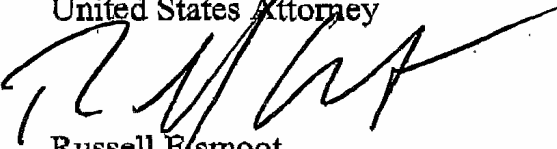
After reviewing the protocol for your paper entitled *An Exploratory Analysis of Higher Level Naro Traffickers of Latin American Decent*, I was impressed by your interest in such a contemporary and challenging subject. Upon previewing the questionnaire you included, however, it has become clear that I would not be able to participate in your project due to my position within the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

My ability to speak on behalf of the Department of Justice regarding DOJ-sensitive material is limited to contacts with the Court; opposing counsel; and in a very limited (and specifically authorized) manner, out-of-court public statements that are case related. Therefore, it would be most appropriate for you to contact the Department of Justice's Office of Public Affairs in Washington, D.C., as they are more familiar with the policies and protocols of the dissemination of DOJ information. Attached is a list of contacts who may be able to accommodate your request.

Again, thank you for your interest in obtaining my perspective on your project, and I apologize for the delay in getting back to you. I was preparing for and subsequently went to trial this past week and was not able to devote time to your request. I wish you luck and hope to some day have the opportunity to read your paper.

Very truly yours,

James A. McDevitt
United States Attorney


Russell E. Smoot
Assistant United States Attorney

RES:tr
enc

APPENDIX J
MEMORANDUM OF HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Martin Garcia
Political Science, WSU Pullman (4880)

FROM: Malathi Jandhyala (for) Kris Miller, Chair, WSU Institutional Review Board (3140) *MJ*

DATE: 13 July 2006

SUBJECT: Approved Human Subjects Protocol - New Protocol

Your Human Subjects Review Summary Form and additional information provided for the proposal titled "*An Exploratory Analysis of Higher Level Narco Traffickers from Latin American Decent,*" IRB File Number **9057-a** was reviewed for the protection of the subjects participating in the study. Based on the information received from you, the WSU-IRB **approved** your human subjects protocol on **13 July 2006**.

IRB approval indicates that the study protocol as presented in the Human Subjects Form by the investigator, is designed to adequately protect the subjects participating in the study. This approval does not relieve the investigator from the responsibility of providing continuing attention to ethical considerations involved in the utilization of human subjects participating in the study.

This approval expires on 12 July 2007. If any significant changes are made to the study protocol you must notify the IRB before implementation. Request for modification forms are available online at <http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/Forms.asp>.

In accordance with federal regulations, this approval letter and a copy of the approved protocol must be kept with any copies of signed consent forms by the principal investigator for THREE years after completion of the project.

Washington State University is covered under Human Subjects Assurance Number FWA00002946 which is on file with the Office for Human Research Protections.

If you have questions, please contact the Institutional Review Board at (509) 335-9661. Any revised materials can be mailed to the Research Compliance Office (Campus Zip 3140), faxed to (509) 335-1676, or in some cases by electronic mail, to irb@mail.wsu.edu.

Review Type: NEW

OGRD No.:

Review Category: FB

Agency: NA

Date Received: 20 March 2006

APPENDIX K
MEMORANDUM OF HUMAN SUBJECTS MODIFICATION APPROVAL
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Martin Garcia
Political Science, WSU Pullman (4880)

FROM: Malathi Jandhyala (for) Kris Miller, Chair, WSU Institutional Review Board

DATE: 18 August 2006

SUBJECT: Review of Protocol Modification Modification

Your proposal to modify the protocol titled "*An Exploratory Analysis of Higher Level Narco Traffickers from Latin American Decent*," IRB File Number **9057-b** was reviewed for the protection of the subjects participating in the study. Based on the information received from you, the IRB has **approved** your modification request on **18 August 2006**. This modification includes the addition of subjects to the protocol..

IRB approval indicates that the modifications described to the previously approved study protocol are designed to adequately protect the subjects participating in the study. This approval does not relieve the investigator from the responsibility of providing continuing attention to ethical considerations involved in the utilization of subjects participating in the study.

The approval for this protocol expires 12 July 2007. If any more changes are made to the study protocol you must notify the IRS and receive approval before implementation.

If you have questions, please contact the Institutional Review Board at OGRD (509) 335-9661. Any revised materials can be mailed to Research Compliance Office (Campus Zip 3140), faxed to (509) 335::1676:or in some cases by electronic mail, to *irb@wsu.edu*.

Review Type: **MOD** OGRD No.

Review Category: EXP Agency: **NA**

Date Received: 25 July 2006