Club And Gang Essay, Research Paper

Club and Gang The differences between a club and a gang, are quite distinct, but it is the connotational differences between these two words which distinguishes one from the other. The New Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary of the English Language defines a club as; “…an association of people with some common interest who meet periodically…” It defines a gang as “…a number of men or boys banding together, esp. lawlessly…” This definition is traditionally slanted toward applying to male youth, and stereotypical gangsters, from the Mafia to street criminals. Persons who often have a negative attitude toward youth see gangs. Often individuals form gangs out of fear and for the protection of their members whether they are the Bloods and Crips of Los Angeles or the Sharks and the Jets of “West Side Story.” Gangs may not possess a set of formal written rules, but all of them have their own sets of customs or conditions. Gangs may or may not be facilitated in a branch of higher and lower members, mimicking a military model. Gangs often have a loosely defined set of goals, and are often involved in delinquent activities.

A socially approved form of a gang is a club. Americans generally view clubs as character building leadership opportunities; whereas, individuals typecast into gangs are persecuted as criminals. Clubs are formed with constructive goals in mind, such as making it easier for its members to find parts for a particular brand of automobile. Socioeconomic class, academic achievement, or perceived roles in society for its members all play a part in the preferential treatment given to a group which a society deems a club rather than a gang. For instance, parts of the public anticipated that motorcycle riders would cause a massive rise in crime within the Hollister area during the motorcycle rally. This led to a reactionary response from local law authorities. The event, unlike previous occasions, ended without major incident. Perhaps now people are more apt to view motorcyclists as a club instead of a gang. Additionally, it is a fact that working class people are more likely to be arrested, and therefore, in groups and when typecast into gangs may be expected to commit more crimes or be criminal; the self-fulfilling cycle continues.