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**THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF INTERACTION
WITH AUTHORITY BY MEMBERS OF A FRINGE
GROUP (GANG) IN
NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY**

AN INTERPRETIVE DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

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Susan Ellen Manley

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive interpretive study examines the lived experience of interaction with authority by a fringe group (gangs) in New Zealand society. Using the qualitative methodology of Heideggerian Hermeneutic Analysis, the texts from five interviews are analyzed, interpreted and presented. The participants are asked to tell us what has been significant for them as they experience living in the world.

Analysis reveals interpretive phenomenological meanings of motivations, actions, strategies and understandings of their responses to interaction with authority. Extensive findings emerge from their stories in the form of five common themes, two relational themes and a constitutive pattern. The five themes include various forms of dominance, violence, betrayal, submission and manifestation of authority. The two relational themes are epitomized by the way in which members of this group are both 'standing in the shadow' and 'standing in the light' of our New Zealand society when they interact with authority. The constitutive pattern found in their stories reveals the need for 'Creating Places' that keep open a future of possibilities for gangs in our society.

The experience of gang interaction with authority is embedded in networks of relationships based in the Gang, the family, the community and the culture of our society and uncovers not only how gangs interact with authority, but how authority interacts with gangs. Their stories reveal everyday events that are recognizable, intelligible and tell us not only how gangs organize their everyday world but what it means for them to profoundly *be* in the world. Understanding this has the effect of creating a place for gangs that is open to possibilities not only for themselves but for society in general.

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GLOSSARY

This glossary provides explication of words, illustrations and materials not explained in the text.

Apriori knowledge

Knowledge absolutely independent of all experience.

Dasein

This is a Heideggerian term which refers to that entity or aspect of our humanness which is capable of wondering about its own existence and enquiring into its own Being (Van Manen, 1990, p176).

Lived Experience (*Erlebnis*)

Refers to the totality and infinitude of human existence.

Whanau

The extended family group (Orsman,^{+Orsman.} 1994, p312).

The Gang

Is the pseudonym that has been designated for the group from which the participants were drawn.

Throughout this thesis original poems, illustrations and emblems of a fringe group are presented. Their inclusion is intended to broaden the boundaries of language, making this fringe group more visible and knowable to the reader. They express the reality of 'being' for members of the group and reveal how they view not only themselves but also others within that reality. They are drawn from a private, undated, unpublished source that was made available to me for the purpose of this study and are presented here unaltered except for the poem on the following page which has an original illustration superimposed behind it. It is my intention that they be seen as their 'voice' uncensored and without explanation.

On Da 13th Day God Created

When God created da human race

**He sat back down
With a screwed-up face
So off out of his pocket
He pulled US dogs
Then gave US a name
The mongrel mob**

**He gave US patches
And leather so clean
Said 'here boys,
go make these mean'**

**He gave US weapons
The chain, gun and bat
Da humans all scarper
When they see US attack**

**He gave US wheels
The mighty V-eights
We run over arseholes
From morn till late**

**He gave US bents
and boots that click
Things we do what
Just make you sick**

**He gave US shacks
Pad's we call home
Then gave US some fox
The dreaded dog**

**He gave US booze
And herb to smok
Then some twot
For US to poke**