

## Street Gangs

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To the adult world the casual violence of gang life was horrifying

But in the distorted world of gangs risking death by getting shot was one sure way of winning a gang's respect

I was shot when I was 15 or 16

(shots fired in the area gang fight in the parking lot)

When my lungs collapsed uhm.. the 22 is still lodged in my chest to this day

See getting shot and living was more for my ego it was more for my image

I could now I could walk around like Superman. I'd been shot I'm you know I'm I'm the great I am now in my chest at that?

They show off their scars the way war veterans display purple hearts.

I got shot in the heart and um...

These are other scars that I've had from other neighborhood fights and doesn't stop

Do you get used to death? Do you get used to the fact that you could die anyday? (Do you get used to it?)

See I don't worry about that till you get hit by that bullet, see like that's just like when people steal cars they don't worry about getting caught till they get caught right? Same when we shooting at a person I don't think about getting caught till I get caught

The explosion of gangs in the last two decades of the 20th century grew under a much larger problem. The rise of a social underclass and America's failure to provide hope. The children bored into a world of disintegrating family life and grinding poverty. All though there small successes with programs designed to create a future for some of those children, no one came up with a large scale program that dealt effectively, with the forces of despair and alienation that prompted some many young Americans to look for their identity and their self esteem in the world of street gangs. (street gangs street gangs street gangs street gangs)