

**UNDUE INFLUENCE:
MANIPULATION AND EXPLOITATION
IN SEX TRAFFICKING, CULTS
AND GANGS™**

HOSTED BY

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OF**

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**Freedom's Hope
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Defining Undue Influence

Mary Joy Quinn

“Undue influence” means excessive persuasion that causes another person to act or refrain from acting by overcoming that person’s free will and results in inequity. In determining whether a result was produced by undue influence, all of the following shall be considered:

1. Vulnerability of the victim. Evidence of vulnerability may include, but is not limited to, incapacity, illness disability, injury, age, education, impaired cognitive function, emotional distress, isolation, or dependency where the influencer knew of, or should have known of, the alleged victim’s vulnerability.
2. The influencer’s apparent authority. Evidence of apparently authority may include but is not limited to, status as a fiduciary, family member, care provider, health care professional, legal professional, spiritual adviser, expert, or other qualification
3. The actions or tactics used by the influencer. Evidence of actions or tactics used may include, but is not limited to, all of the following:
 - Controlling necessities of life, medication, the victim’s interactions with others, access to information or sleep.
 - Use of affection, intimidation, or coercion.
 - Initiation of changes in person or property rights, use of haste or secrecy in effecting those changes, effecting changes at inappropriate time and places, and claims of expertise in effecting change.
4. The equity of the result. Evidence of the equity of the result may include, but is not limited to, the economic consequences to the victim, any divergence from the victim’s prior intent or course of conduct or dealing, the relationship of the value conveyed to the value of any services or consideration received, or the appropriateness of the change in light of the length and nature of the relationship. Evidence of an inequitable result, without more, is not sufficient to prove undue influence.

www.americanbar.org/groups/law_aging/publications/bifocal/vol_35/issue_3_feb2014/defining_undue_influence

Types of Abuse

What is Abuse? Abuse is a pattern of control that one person exercises which physically harms, induces fear, prevents a victim from doing what they wish, or forces them to perform in ways they do not want.

Abuse in Relationships: Following/Stalking; Controlling Movements; Controlling with whom one speaks; Isolation; Verbal Degradation; and Gaslighting. www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ending-addiction-good/201607/5-crucial-subtle-signs-abuse-in-relationships

- Verbal Abuse
 - Emotional Abuse
 - Authoritative Abuse
 - Sibling Abuse
 - Psychological Abuse (Gaslighting)
 - Financial Abuse
 - Physical Abuse
 - Spiritual Abuse
 - Religious Abuse
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Ritual Abuse
 - Organizational Abuse – Mobbing
- Definitions can be found at: www.FreedomsHopeCounseling.com/Blog/Abuses-Defined

Human Trafficking & Sex Trafficking

The United Nations defines **human trafficking** as:

- “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”
- The **3 most common types** of human trafficking are **sex trafficking, forced labor, and debt bondage**. Forced labor, also known as involuntary servitude, is the biggest sector of trafficking in the world, according to the U.S. Department of State. Debt bondage is another form of human trafficking in which an individual is forced to work in order to pay a debt.
- **Sex trafficking** disproportionately affects women and children and involves forced participation in commercial sex acts. In the United States, any child under the age of 18 who has been involved in a commercial sex act is considered a trafficking victim. Women and girls make up 80% of the people trafficked transnationally. Yearly, traffickers exploit 1 million children in the commercial sex trade.

www.sf-hrc.org/what-human-trafficking#What%20is

Definition of a Cult/High-Demand Group

An **ideological organization** which blends a **powerful social structure** with a **self-appointed charismatic leader**. This leader exploits unsuspecting vulnerable others using extreme levels of manipulation which induces dependency upon the member, requires a seemingly voluntary surrender of individuality, identity, personality, critical thinking skills and total commitment. Victims experience devastating social shunning, should they ever depart the group. Many religious cults require isolating commitment with promises of spiritual and eternal salvation; they are taught that their spiritual and eternal salvation are at risk should they leave.

1. It is an all-encompassing movement to which members devote a majority of time and energy.
2. It is a group headed and created by a self-appointed (also by God) leader who proclaims to be in contact with a supernatural being or has supernatural powers
3. It is a group organized around members' devotion to the leader and to the organization itself.
4. The leader of the group tells members (either explicitly or implicitly) to lose relationships with the outside world including those with friends and family.
5. The outside world is seen as inferior – cult teaches members they are part of an elite group (us vs. them mentality).
6. The group, its leaders, and its members causes many of its members harm (can be physical, social, or emotional).
7. It is an organization where members spend time together on a daily basis.

Singer, M. T. (2003). *Cults in Our Midst: The Continuing Fight Against Their Hidden Menace*. New York, NY: Jossey-Bass.

Cult Characteristics

- The group displays excessively zealous and unquestioning commitment to its leader and (whether he is alive or dead) regards his belief system, ideology, and practices as the Truth, as law.
- Questioning, doubt, and dissent are discouraged or even punished.
- Mind-altering or mind-numbing practices (such as meditation, chanting, speaking in tongues, denunciation sessions, and debilitating work routines) are used in excess and serve to suppress doubts about the group and its leader(s).
- The leadership dictates, sometimes in great detail, how members should think, act, and feel (for example, members must get permission to date, change jobs, marry—or leaders prescribe what types of clothes to wear, where to live, whether or not to have children, how to discipline children, and so forth).
- The group is elitist, claiming a special, exalted status for itself, its leader(s), and its members (for example, the leader is considered the Messiah, a special being, an avatar—or the group and/or the leader is on a special mission to save humanity).
- The group has a polarized us-versus-them mentality, which may cause conflict with the wider society.
- The leader is not accountable to any authorities (unlike, for example, teachers, military commanders or ministers, priests, monks, and rabbis of mainstream religious denominations).
- The group teaches or implies that its supposedly exalted ends justify whatever means it deems necessary. This may result in members' participating in behaviors or activities they would have considered reprehensible or unethical before they joined the group (for example, lying to family or friends, or collecting money for bogus charities).
- The leadership induces feelings of shame and/or guilt in order to influence and/or control members. Often, this is done through peer pressure and subtle forms of persuasion.
- Subservience to the leader or group requires members to cut ties with family and friends, and to radically alter the personal goals and activities they had before they joined the group.
- The group is preoccupied with bringing in new members.
- The group is preoccupied with making money.
- Members are expected to devote inordinate amounts of time to the group and group-related activities.
- Members are encouraged or required to live and/or socialize only with other group members.
- The most loyal members (the “true believers”) feel there can be no life outside the context of the group. They believe there is no other way to be and often fear reprisals to themselves or others if they leave (or even consider leaving) the group.

American Family Focus News, 2(4), 1996; ICSA Today, 6(3), 2015.

Human Trafficking Resources

Free Our Girls – www.freeourgirls.org; www.theaverycenter.org

Larimer County Anti-Trafficking website – www.larimerantitrafficking.com

Hope Academy – The Denver Street School: Designed to meet the specific educational needs of adolescent girls who have survived sex trafficking and exploitation – www.denverstreetschool.org/hope

Love Made Claim, Inc. helps individuals who are currently involved in sex trafficking or who have recently transitioned out – www.lovemadeclaim.com

VOCA Emergency Funds for Victims of Crime – www.coloradocrimevictims.org which is sponsored by COVA (Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance).

COVA 303-996-8087 Colorado Organization for Victim’s Assistance
(resources of housing, protection, food, counseling, transportation, advocacy, public education)

Colorado Network to End Human Trafficking: 1-866-455-5575

For Children and adolescents: Department of Human Services: 970-498-6300

SAFE HOUSING

- Alternatives to Violence, Loveland, CO (970) 669-5150
- Crossroads Safe House, Fort Collins, CO (970) 530-2353
- Catholic Charities, Fort Collins, CO (970) 484-5010
- Extended Hands of Hope, Denver, CO – www.extendedhandsofhope.org

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Rebecca Bender Initiative – www.rebeccabender.org

www.prostitutionresearch.org

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: 1-800-843-5678

National Human Trafficking Survivor Coalition – www.NHTSC.org

www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/indicators-human-trafficking

Steven Hassan website – www.freedomofmind.com/trafficking

Ending The Game – endingthegame.com/etg

High-Demand Group Counselors & Resources

Connie Mitchell, MA, LPC, TMHC, NCC
Freedom’s Hope Counseling, LLC
1006 Robertson St, #110, Fort Collins, CO
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Rosanne Henry, LPC
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GANGS

Connie Mitchell, MA, LPC, TMHC, NCC

Gangs represent the spontaneous collaboration of boys trying to fulfill their needs — filling voids that society does not provide; therefore, gangs fill the gap, afford an escape, and provide some protection and relief from suppression. The gang is a conflict group seeking excitement and an adrenaline rush to fill their leisure time. They require significant face-to-face contact (through core-member meetings, internal physical skirmishes as training and parties) to continue its corporate existence. Members move around as a group; experience conflict with other groups over territory of sales or neighborhood; and, make plans for the future as a group. The gang's collective behavior develops traditions, solidarity, group awareness, morale, adventure and excitement. Gangs also bring acceptance, family, a sense of belonging, unreflective internal structure, attachment to a territory and fear-based respect; however, there is internal struggle and jostling for recognition and internal placement (Thrasher, F., M., 2000).

Frederic M. Thrasher, researcher and author of the seminal work *The Gang (1927)*, describes the gang as controlling the individual members—particularly when they are physically together. Members take on a “bad” persona when around other members; yet, traditionally treat their partners and family well. Gangs can only thrive when there is a rival gang with which to fight. Once the individual member has tasted the thrill of street life, conventional or normal activities become unsatisfying. Fighting: avenges injury; helps to maintain the code; and, perpetuates the status, respect and attention amongst the neighborhood. Fighting also offers privileges and helps to maintain physical safety to its members (Thrasher, 2000).

Types of Gangs

Diffuse — A diffuse gang grows only to rudimentary levels of organization; loyalty and solidarity are short-lived. Diffuse gangs utilize an informal organizational structure with lateral relationships, as opposed to hierarchical leadership, and may remain in the group for only 2-3 years (Brown, B., Hippensteele, I., & Lawrence, S., 2014). The psychology of the group is simple and does not fall in the abnormal range of psychopathology. Members in this group are held together by: (Thrasher).

- Imitation
- Gregariousness
- Rivalry
- Curiosity
- Desire to appear well to one's fellows
- The love of novelty and the desire for possessions

Solidified — Solidified groups are well organized; development takes a longer period than the diffused type; it has more intense or more extended conflict (Thrasher).

Conventionalized — Conventionalized gangs “attempt to achieve social standing and make its activities legitimate in the eyes of the community.” This type utilizes a **corporate structure** with a **well-defined hierarchy** (Thrasher, p 21).

- adopts constitution and by-laws
- elect officers
- pay dues
- requires strict observance of rules
- often incorporates by purchasing a charter from the “state” (some defunct organization).

Criminal — A gang that does not incorporate or become conventionalized, commits habitual crimes and becomes completely delinquent (Thrasher).

3 Types of Criminal Gangs

1. Temporary groups which form and re-form among the criminal community.
2. Ordinary groups which spend time together and commit many types of crimes.
3. Permanent and powerful group which has many resources and financial holdings, intelligence and political influence (Thrasher).

The Secret Society – This gang is created as a result of the thrill of prestige and mystery. Rituals, initiations, passwords, codes and secrecy provide solidarity and protection against interference (Thrasher).

Membership

- Candidates/Prospects
- Peripheral – people who are not permitted to officially join (women, hang-ons, associates)
- Initiation – beat in
- Core – Peewees (Newbies)
- Core – Soldiers, Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, Vets – Semi-retired or aged out
- Leaders – OG (Original) which requires a second initiation; OT
- Moniker – Nick name given which highlights personality or characteristics

Vulnerability Factors of Recruitment

- 1) Living with a gang member
- 2) Neighborhood has high rates of anti-social behavior
- 3) Peer group has high levels of anti-social behavior
- 4) Loss of self-esteem
- 5) Grandiose-manipulative and impulsive, irresponsible dimensions of psychopathology
- 6) Higher levels of risk-taking
- 7) Higher levels of delinquent attitudes and behaviors (Brown, et. al., 2014)
- 8) Poverty
- 9) Lack of parental involvement; positive male role models; mentors
- 10) Incarcerated parent

Recruitment

1. Push Factors – school, family, peers, neighborhood and factors within the individual
2. Pull Factors – characteristics of gang enticement factors: adrenaline rush & excitement (Brown, et. al., 2014)

Retention Factors

- Respect
- Family
- Loyalty
- Sense of Belonging
- Unity
- Adventure
- Access to Drugs
- Protection
- Acceptance
- Income Source

Cycle of Conflict

There are cycles of peace and war with rival gangs.

(Thrasher, 2000, p 66, 69)

Equilibrium of Conflicting Interests

Disturbed by **New Conditions**

Result in **Unrest**

Tensions Increase

Crisis is Precipitated

Conflict in Response to Crisis, May Take Either of Two Forms: **Primary** and **Secondary** Conflicts

Conflict is followed by **Accommodation**

First there is a **Tentative Adjustment**

Process of **Accommodation Continues**

Ultimately there is a **Final Adjustment**

New Equilibrium

Codes of Conduct

Rules by which the group memorizes and abides. They vary per group.

Don't squeal on other gang members

When you go out, obey the order

Loyalty to officers

Defend ladies in trouble

Do not lie to each other

Breaking the code requires punishment: beating, ostracism or death.

Exit

1. Death
2. Imprisonment
3. Voluntarily desire to exit: Jump out or beaten out; required to commit a horrendous crime (not common in 2020)
4. Ostracism due to a code violation
5. Leave amicably
6. Push Factors – tired of “the life,” family, job, age
7. Pull Factors – Potential of a jail sentence, age

“Life inside a gang is merely existing or surviving. Real life begins after leaving,” Rosendo Santa Cruz, Jr., gang survivor.

Negative Effects of Exiting

Devastating and extreme social shunning

Loss of respect

Loss of group protection

Long-Term Repercussions of Gang Involvement

1. Maladaptive Developmental Transitions
 - Drop out of school – lack basic reading and math knowledge
 - Lack of social skills
 - Lack of vocational skills
 - Loss of religion (Prill, Michael, Personal Communication, Jan. 10, 2020)
2. Reputation in neighborhood
3. Pre-age normative roles and environments (i.e.: parental roles, etc.)
4. High statistics of abuse and/or neglect of children (Brown, et. al., 2014)
5. Gang habits and influences persist after leaving (Thrasher, 2000, p 16)

Resiliency & Avoidance Factors

“No programs have been developed specifically to prevent gangs from emerging. In the meantime, to prevent youth from joining gangs, communities must employ multiple strategies and services. To prevent youth from joining gangs, communities must:

- teach students interpersonal skills
- Addressing elevated risk factors for joining a gang.
- Strengthening families
- Reducing youth’s conflicts
- Improving community-level supervision of youth
- Providing training for teachers on how to manage disruptive students
- Providing training for parents of disruptive and delinquent youth
- Reviewing and softening school “zero tolerance” policies to reduce suspensions and expulsions
- Ensuring that punitive sanctions target delinquent gang behaviors, not gang apparel, signs, and symbols
- Providing tutoring for students who are performing poorly in school
- Increasing adult supervision of students after school
- Providing interpersonal skills training to students to help resolve conflicts
- Providing a center for youth recreation and referrals for services
- Providing gang awareness training for school personnel, parents, and students
- Teaching students that gangs can be dangerous
- Providing training for school resource officers in mediating conflict.”
<https://youth.gov/feature-article/gang-prevention-overview-research-and-programs>
- Boys & Girls Clubs
- Sports
- Mentors
- Healthy male role models
- Programs supporting children of incarcerated parents
- Scared Straight Programs

Helping Organizations

Hope 4_2morrow

Shannon Hawley

s.hawley.h42m@gmail.com

Healing the Streets

Rosendo, Jr. & Shauna Santa Cruz

rosendosantacruz@yahoo.com

Kids Hope: USA

<https://kidshopeusa.org>

Partners Mentoring Youth

<https://partnersmentoringyouth.org>

National Gang Center Websites: <https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Publications>

- Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action
- Taking Action to Prevent Youth Violence
- Changing Course: Preventing Youth from Joining Gangs
- Gang Prevention: An Overview of Research and Programs
- Gang Prevention: How to Make the “Front End” of Your Anti-Gang Effort Work
- Preventing Gang Violence and Building Communities Where Young People Thrive

Scared Straight Programs: (These programs are not endorsed by Freedom’s Hope Counseling, LLC)

- <https://www.wingatewildernesstherapy.com/g/Programs-for-Troubled-Teens/Colorado-CO/>
- <http://www.bootcampsforteens.com/scared-straight-and-beyond-scared-straight.html>

Organizations Helping Children of Incarcerated Parents

- Angel Tree Program
 - The Sesame Workshop
 - SKIP, Inc
 - Assisting Families of Inmates
 - Children of Inmates
 - Hour Children
 - Forever Family
- <https://web.connectnetwork.com/programs-for-children-of-incarcerated-parents/>

Professional Counseling Resources

Getting Inside the Gang Mentality

Paterson, J, (2010). Getting Inside the Gang Mentality. *Counseling Today*.

<https://ct.counseling.org/2010/05/getting-inside-the-gang-mentality/>

Vulnerability to Street Gang Membership: Implications for practice

Maxson, C, L, Whitlock, M, L, & Klein, M, W., (1998). Vulnerability to Street Gang Membership: Implications for practice. *Social Service Review*, 72:1, 70-91. <https://doi.org/10.1086/515746>

What Works: The Search for Excellence in Gang Intervention Programs

Houston, J, G, (1996). The Search for Excellence in Gang Intervention Programs. *Journal of Gang Research*, 3:3, 1-16. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/abstract.aspx?ID=161736>

Incarcerated and Court-Involved Adolescents: Counseling an at-risk population

Granello, P, F, Hanna, F, J, (2003) Incarcerated and Court-Involved Adolescents: Counseling an at-risk population. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 81:1, 11-18. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2003.tb00220.x>

References

Brown, B, B, Hippensteele, I, M, & Lawrence, S, M, (2014). Commentary: Developmental perspectives on adolescents & gangs. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24:2, 284-292.

Prill, Mike. (2020, January 10). Personal Interview.

Santa Cruz, Jr., Rosendo. (2020, January 10). Personal Interview.

Thrasher, F, M, (2000). *The Gang: A study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago*. New Chicago School Press. Chicago, 16.

Undue Influence Conference Schedule

8:00 – 8:15 am	Announcements & Introduction – Connie Mitchell, MA, NCC, LPC	
8:15 – 9:30 am	Keynote: Dr. William Douglas Woody, Professor of Psychological Sciences, UNC	
	<u>Law Enforcement Track</u>	<u>Clinical Counselor Track/CEs</u>
	<u>Community Track</u>	
Location - Emcee	#1 – Glenn Mitchell, MS #3 – Desi Valdez	#2 – Connie Mitchell, MA, NCC, LPC
9:40 – 10:40 am Involment	Gangs – Greeley PD What is a High-Demand Group: Recruitment Detective Mike Prill & Retention Rosanne Henry, LPC	The Psychological Effects of HDG Connie Mitchell, MA, NCC, LPC
10:50 – 11:50 am Group	Human Trafficking Critical Thinking Skills & Boundaries Megan Lundstrom, BS Hal Mansfield, MA Free Our Girls/Avery Research	Identity Development after the H-D Dr. Cynthia Matthews, LPC-S, NCC, CCTP
11:50 – 12:30 pm	LUNCH - Provided LUNCH - Provided	LUNCH - Provided
12:30 – 1:30 pm	Smuggling & Trafficking Disenfranchised Grief of Extended Family Trooper Brian Abbrecht Rosanne Henry, LPC Colorado State Patrol	Counseling 1st/2nd Generation High-Demand Group Survivors Dr. Cynthia Matthews, LPC-S, NCC, CCTP
1:30 – 2:30 pm	Preventing Targeted Violence Challenges of Leaving a High-Demand Group Lindsey Shaw Lars Anderson CO Information Analysis Center	When Love Hurts: Trauma Bonds Dr. Sandra Varley, LPC
2:40 – 3:10 pm	Keynote: Diana Laws, BS	
3:10 – 5:00 pm	Panel: Gang, Cult & Sex Trafficking Survivors	

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