Gang Affiliation and Structure in the Northern Triangle
Problem 1: Gang dichotomy - They have a hierarchy, but... it is a disperse and horizontal organizational style that often affords an amount of autonomy.
Problem 2: How many go from that level to the next?
(Who is a gang member?)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Estimated number of gang members</th>
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| The National Program for Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Social Reinsertion (Programa Nacional de Prevencion, Rehabilitacion y Reinsercion Social) | 4,728 active gang members
                                               | 447 active gang members in prison                                      |
| Jovenes Honduras Adelante - Juntos Avancemos (JHA-KA)        | 5,000 to 6,000 active members of the MS13 and Barrio 18               |
| United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)            | 12,000 gang members in the country (7,000 in the Barrio 18 and 5,000 in the MS13) |
| Honduran police                                             | 25,000 active members of the MS13 and Barrio 18                       |
| US Agency for International Development (USAID)             | 36,000 active gang members                                           |
Numbers and Perception
• Social organization v. State

Legal Implications
• Imprisonment
• Conviction

Social Implications
• Social Isolation
• Labor
• Education
• International Assistance
InSight Crime defines a gang as a group of people -- usually young and from a low socio-economic background -- that is made up of relatively autonomous cells, each with a clearly identifiable leader. These cells define themselves, in part, around constant, reciprocal violence against other groups of youths; and it is this conflict that makes them a cohesive organization, and that is the means for establishing internal hierarchies and awarding status and power.
Problem 3: Violence

- At the heart of the recruitment
- At the heart of the induction
  - Assassination or multiple assassinations
  - Ritual for entry
- Major part of the career path
Conclusions

• It is very hard to determine who is an actual member, and there are less full-fledged members than are commonly reported.

• A member is often in the eye of the beholder, and this has widespread implications.

• Violence is at the heart of all of these processes, which exposes mass numbers of youth to the violence of the gangs.