



How Gangs Work: An Ethnography of Youth Violence (St Antony's Series)

James Densley

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In the wake of the 2011 UK riots and the British government's new American-style 'war on gangs', this book is the definitive account of 'how gangs work'. Based on two years of ethnographic fieldwork with gangs and drawing on a variety of sources, *How Gangs Work* provides a vivid portrayal of gang life, but not as the British traditionally know it.

The book deconstructs the mythology of gangs to make sense of the profiles and motivations of gang members in straightforward, rational terms. *How Gangs Work* examines the vital processes of evolution, organization, and recruitment within gangs and gang members' instrumental and expressive uses of violence, media, and technology. Special attention is paid to the role of gangs in the drugs trade and the relationship between gangs and organized crime. The book concludes with a critical appraisal of gang desistance and the precarious future of gang prevention and intervention, with practical advice for practitioners, police and policy-makers.

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