

A Gang Is a Gang

- Whether in college or on the corner - gang violence is gang violence.

Gangs are growing, grooming, and grandstanding as they pose an increasing threat in U.S. colleges and communities. That's right - I said colleges. By definition, a gang is a group of youths who band together for social and often criminal purposes. Some call what happened to Robert Champion Jr. hazing, but I call it homicide.

Fraternities and Sororities haze. Gangsters and gangbangers do the same.

So what exactly is hazing? According to The American Heritage Dictionary, hazing is: "to persecute or harass with meaningless, difficult, or humiliating tasks." Homicide is the killing of one person by another.

Robert Champion Jr was killed by gang violence. He was beat to death trying to "earn a license to ride Bus C," according to Devon Redmond, a former FAMU band member.

Allegedly, in February of 1990, the presidents of the African American Greek Fraternities and Sororities met and agreed to fade out pledging in hopes of eliminating the massive hazing problem. Greek organizations' hazing problem died down, band hazing came to life.

Devon Redmond told USA TODAY, "Ninety-five percent of the people who try to get into the Marching 100 know what it's about before they get there."

Redmond didn't say it, but I will: "It's a gang."

Redmond did say, "You get pushed. You might get slapped. Things happen. It's not anything to call the police about - at least in my opinion."

In my opinion, the police should be called any time that there is gang activity - especially when it is criminal behavior.

And that's coming from a convicted criminal.

Support the Robert Champion Jr. Act that will do away with hazing altogether. To read the entire bill, visit www.AboutSave.org.

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