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U.S. COURT OF APPEALS

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

WILLIAM LOPEZ-ROMERO,

Petitioner,

v.

ERIC H. HOLDER Jr., Attorney General,

Respondent.

No. 08-71802

Agency No. A098-854-646

MEMORANDUM\*

On Petition for Review of an Order of the  
Board of Immigration Appeals

Submitted February 16, 2010\*\*  
San Francisco, California

Before: FERNANDEZ, GOULD, and M. SMITH, Circuit Judges.

William Lopez-Romero, a native and citizen of El Salvador, petitions pro se for review of a decision of the Board of Immigration Appeals dismissing his appeal

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\* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by 9th Cir. R. 36-3.

\*\* The panel unanimously concludes this case is suitable for decision without oral argument. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2).

from the immigration judge's denial of his applications for asylum and withholding of removal.

We reject Lopez-Romero's claim that he is eligible for asylum and withholding of removal which is based on his contention that he will be recruited by gangs if he returns to El Salvador, and this will result in persecution. Lopez-Romero does not establish a protected ground based on his alleged membership in a particular social group, namely El Salvador males who refuse to join gangs, or based on his anti-gang political opinion. *See Barrios v. Holder*, 581 F.3d 849, 854-56 (9th Cir. 2009) (refusal to join a gang does not amount to political opinion); *Santos-Lemus v. Mukasey*, 542 F.3d 738, 745-46 (9th Cir. 2008) (rejecting as a particular social group "young men in El Salvador resisting gang violence.")

Accordingly, because Lopez-Romero failed to demonstrate that he was persecuted on account of a protected ground, we deny the petition for review.

**PETITION FOR REVIEW DENIED.**