Hate Crime Series

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Crime Victims' Institute

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The Consequences of Hate Crime Victimization

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The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI; 2016) has defined a hate crime as a, "criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity." According to the FBI's (2016) Uniform Crime Report, there were 7,615 victims of hate crime in 2016. Victims of hate crime can include individuals, institutions, government entities, religious organizations, or society. In 2016, the majority of hate crime that occurred in the United States were classified as crimes against persons (64.5%; e.g., intimidation, simple or aggravated assault) followed by crimes against property (34.4%; FBI, 2016). A minority (1.1%) of hate crime offenses were crimes against society, which included drug or narcotic offenses and prostitution (FBI, 2016).

During 2016, there were 186 hate crime incidents with 201 victims in the state of Texas (Texas Department of Public Safety [Texas DPS], 2016). Of those 186 hate crime incidents, 89.8% involved individual victims, 7.5% involved businesses as victims, and 2.7% involved religious organizations as victims (Texas DPS, 2016). Therefore, the majority of hate crime that occurred during 2016 in the United States and in the state of Texas involved an individual person who experienced a primary victimization event.

As part of the hate crime series, this report will provide an overview on the consequences that hate crime victims may experience. This topic is especially important, as scholars who have examined the consequences of hate crime have claimed, "hate crimes are more deleterious than non-hate crimes" (Williams & Tregidga, 2014, p. 951). As discussed below, this may be because the primary victim (i.e., the individual who was violently attacked and/or whose property was destroyed) has been adversely affected by the hate crime, as have individuals who are members of the community from which the victim was victimized [e.g., the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Queer (LGBTQ) community, other African Americans in the community] may also be affected. Therefore, resources available to hate crime victims must address this potential ripple effect across communities. To begin, consequences associated with the primary victims of hate crime are reviewed. Second, broader community consequences are discussed. Following this, a list of resources available to hate crime victims in the state of Texas and across the United States is provided.

Consequences for Primary Victims

According to the FBI (2016), 4,720 individuals were victims of crimes against persons that were classified as a hate crime in 2016. Of these individual victims, the majority were victims of intimidation (44.7%) or assault (simple assault = 35.7%; aggravated assault = 18.5%). In addition, there were a total of nine murders and 24 rapes that were also classified as a hate crime against a person in 2016 (FBI, 2016).

Findings from the 2016 National Crime Victimization Survey have revealed men were more likely than women to be victims of violent crime in general (Morgan & Kena, 2017). Similarly, men have also been more likely than women to be victims of hate crime (Perry, 2014). When examining hate crime by motivation, however, gender differences do emerge. Among hate crime with an anti-religious motive, Muslim women were more likely to experience anti-Muslim hate crime than Muslim men (Perry, 2015). One possible explanation is that Muslim women are more "visible," especially if she wears a hijab (i.e., traditional head covering) or niqab (traditional clothing that covers a woman's face; Awan & Zempi, 2016, p. 3). Therefore, hate crime and victims of hate crime are not necessarily a homogenous group. It is important to keep in mind how certain characteristics—or even the potential offender's perceptions of these characteristics—may increase the risk of hate crime for some groups more so than for others.

When compared to crimes that are not bias-motivated, hate crime has tended to be more violent (Harlow, 2005; Hein & Scharer, 2013). Because of this, hate crime victims have been more likely to report an injury than non-hate crime victims (Harlow, 2005). Due to

injuries from the criminal incident, victims of violent hate crime may seek medical care or physical therapy for injuries. For victims who do not have health insurance or who suffer a loss in wages due to recovery time, the associated medical costs of a victimization experience can be considerable.

Although physical injury is serious, victims of hate crime have also reported psychological consequences associated with their victimization, including depression, anxiety, anger, and posttraumatic stress disorder (Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997, 1999; Cogan, 2002; Craig-Henderson & Sloan, 2006; Hein & Scharer, 2013; Williams & Tregidga, 2014). Indeed, research has shown that victims of hate crime reported more severe psychological consequences and that these consequences lasted longer than victims of non-hate crimes (Herek et al., 1997; 1999; McDevitt, Balboni, Garcia, & Gu, 2001). This finding is not isolated to victims of violent hate crime. Victims of hate crime involving property have also reported emotional responses to the incident (Herek et al., 1997). This is important, as there were 2,813 victims of hate crime that were crimes against property in 2016 (FBI, 2016).

What is unique about hate crime, compared to other types of crime, is that the offender attacks an individual or place because of the individual or place's identity or the offender's perception of the victim's identity. Therefore, the criminal event may not be a random act (Perry & Alvi, 2012). That is, the perpetrator has perceived the victim to be different or viewed the victim as having a sense of "otherness" (Boeckmann & Turpin-Petrosino, 2002, p. 208). As a result, victims of hate crime have reported elevated levels of fear (Craig-Henderson & Sloan, 2006). Given the attack has been motivated, in part, because of the victim's identity, or the offender's perception of the victim's identity, victims of hate crime have felt a loss of control or have associated that part of their identity with fear or vulnerability (Cogan, 2002; Garnets, Herek, & Levy, 1990). Unlike victims of other crimes, hate crime victims may not be able to say they were the victim of a random act of violence. In addition, victims of hate crime may no longer view the world as a 'just place' (Cogan, 2002). Indeed, victims of bias-motivated crime have not only experienced the same psychological consequences as crime victims in general, but also faced "challenges because of their stigmatized status in American society" (Herek et al., 1999, p. 196).

As technology communications have continued to advance and evolve, crime, has taken place online. This has included hate crimes. Scholars have argued that online threats may co-occur with violence and intimidation that takes place offline (Awan & Zempi, 2016). In addition, online intimidation can have an effect on both the primary victim and the victim's family or others in the victim's online social network (Awan, 2014; Waddington, 2010). Below we examine the effect of hate crimes on members of the victim's broader community.

Community Consequences

What is especially unique about hate crime, compared to other types of crime, is that the occurrence of hate crime may also affect individuals who identify as part of the group for which the primary victim was attacked (e.g., LGBTQ community; individuals with disabilities; individuals who have the same religious Identity). Perry and Alvi (2012) have referred to this as the *in terrorem* effect, which occurs when offenders intimidate an entire group by victimizing some individuals within that group. Violence directed toward a member of a group, or community, has the potential to yield similar emotional and behavioral responses as violence directed solely at the primary victim. Members of the community in which the primary victim belongs have also experienced, "a complex syndrome of reactions, including shock, anger, fear/vulnerability, inferiority, and a sense of the normativity of violence" (Perry & Alvi, 2012, pp. 57-58).

An example of the *in terrorem* effect includes the LGBTQ community. Bell and Perry (2014) focused on the effects of anti-lesbian, gay, and bisexual hate crime (i.e., LGB) on a victim's reference community, and found that anti-LGB hate violence had a negative effect on the LGB community as a whole. Individuals of the LGB community who had not been directly victimized still experienced negative psychological consequences. Respondents reported "anger, pain, worry, sadness, isolation, anxiety, depression, bewilderment, and disgust" as well as diminished self-confidence and self-worth (Bell & Perry, 2014, p. 106). Also, non-victims reported changes in behavior, including dress or speech. Some members of the LGB community reported they were less likely to tell others about their sexual orientation because of the violence. One respondent stated that risk of victimization, "seemed to be everywhere" (Bell & Perry, 2014, p. 107). Taken together, these findings suggest that hate crime can have an adverse effect on members of the primary victim's broader community.

When attacking a member of a group, an offender may be trying to send a message to the victim's community (Awan & Zempi, 2016). Once a community perceives that they may be targeted, feelings of safety and security decrease (Boeckmann & Turpin-Petrosino, 2002). Perry and Alvi (2012) asked Canadians in vulnerable communities (i.e., Aboriginal; African Canadians; Asian; Jews; LGBTQ; Muslims; South Asians) how they felt after they heard about a crime that occurred in their neighborhood community. Over 75% indicated that,

> They feared it would happen to a member of their community again; they lost trust in the perpetrator's community; they felt unwelcome; people were not willing to help put an end to these incidents; and they felt a sense of shame that it was happening in their community. (Perry & Alvi, 2012, p. 62)

Duncan and Hatzenbuehler (2014) reported that sexual minority youth who live in "neighborhoods with higher rates of LGBT assault hate crimes were significantly more likely to report suicidal ideation and suicide attempts" (p. 272). Together, these findings indicate that community context can have an effect on the psychological well-being of vulnerable communities and that community-level prevention programs may have potential in addressing the consequences of hate crime victimization.

Resources for Hate Crime Victims

Texas Hate Crime Resources

In 2016, Fort Worth Police Department reported the highest quantity of hate crime in the state of Texas (20 incidents) followed by Austin Police Department (17 reported incidents; Texas DPS, 2016). In Texas, there are 12 cities (Austin, Brownsville, Conroe, Dallas, El Paso, Galveston, Kyle, Lancaster, Richmond, San Angelo, San Antonio, and San Juan), and 15 locations in total, which offer specialized services for victims of hate crime. Examples of services offered at these locations include victims' rights legal services, assistance in filing compensation, advocacy, and counseling (Office of Justice Programs, n.d.). Some police departments in Texas, such as Houston, have provided extra training and education to officers and the public, and access to hate crime hotlines to help prevent or effectively respond to hate crime incidents (Houston Police Department, n.d.).

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice website (TDCJ; n.d.) offers an online resource directory for victims of crime in general and can also be used by victims of hate crime. This directory contains information on how to contact the Victim Services Division at TDCJ. It also has information on programs that serve LGBTQ individuals (i.e., Wingspan and the Anti-Violence Project; TDCJ, n.d.).

Universities nationwide and in Texas have worked to prevent and respond to hate crime on college campuses. Texas A&M University has established a peer diversity group, called *University Awareness for Cultural Togetherness* (U-ACT), that works to provide a safe educational environment for students in the hope of reducing the number of hate crimes on campus (Wessler & Moss, 2001). In early 2017, the University of Texas hosted a town hall to discuss hate and discrimination that was taking place on campus (University of Texas, 2018). The University of Texas has a policy against hate and bias and has also developed a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Since the 2017 town hall, the University of Texas undertook a series of initiatives informed by the needs of the campus community (University of Texas at Austin, 2016; University of Texas, 2018). *The Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs* at Sam Houston State University has hosted events and an annual Diversity Leadership conference.

National Hate Crime Resources

On a national scale, the *Office for Victims of Crime* through the Office of Justice Programs has provided a complete breakdown of programs and services available to victims, including victims of hate crime, for each state. Similarly, *Victim Connect* (National Center for Victims of Crime, 2012) has produced a detailed directory that can be searched by address to identify local agencies based on crime type, including hate crimes.

Hate Crime Help (available at hatecrimehelp.com) asks a user four questions related to the hate crime incident and is more specific to hate crime victimization than *Victim Connect.* Questions on *Hate Crime Help* include the type of incident, location, bias motivation, and the zip code where the incident occurred. From these responses, *Hate Crime Help* generates a list of organizations and government entities that assist hate crime victims based on the user's location and experience.

Communities Against Hate connects victims with legal services, medical treatment, and other community organizations. In addition, victims of hate crimes can contact their local police department, state attorney general, or the FBI for assistance and reporting. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) also provides resources and tools for researchers, practitioners, and victims.

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Resources

Hate Crime Help: https://www.hatecrimehelp.com/

Communities Against Hate:

http://www.communitiesagainsthate.org

Office of Justice Programs: https://www.ovc.gov/map.html

Office for Victims of Crime:

https://www.ovc.ncjrs.gov/ResourcesByState.aspx?state=tx#tabs9)

Texas Department of Criminal Justice:

http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/ks_victim.html

The National Center for Victims of Crime:

https://www.victimsofcrime.org/help-for-crime-victims

Victim Connect:

https://www.victimconnect.org/get-help/connect-directory/

Author Bios

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