

The debate over hate crime argumentative essay

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



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Introduction

People usually have prejudices against each other. They will even engage in hateful behavior. It is not all times that hateful behavior leads to hate crimes.

“ People engage in hateful behavior...still, no one really believes a Columbia lecturer is about to be lynched” The statement is not however conclusive or true, due to hate, a Columbian lecturer may be killed. Hateful behavior may lead to crime. Hate crime is different than other crimes and therefore necessitates to be treated differently. There are several reasons why the penalties should be high for these crimes. It is a highly personal crime since an individual attacks another due to the victim’s persona such as race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion and disability.

These are aspects of an individual that he cannot change and do not affect anyone in any way. A recent case, the murder of Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorian immigrant who was killed in New York by youths who derived pleasure from beating up Hispanics, revealed that the youths had spoken racist comments before knifing him. The man was killed for simply being Hispanic. Since the hate crimes are directed at a person for who he is physically, they cause intense emotional and psychological pain to the

community the victim comes from be it the gay, women or black community. The community ends up having a lot of fear, feeling vulnerable, isolated and terrorized. The law needs to protect the victims from these perpetrators. These hate crimes communicates a message to the people in the society. The message says that these different people are not welcomed or needed. Studies show that hate crimes are more dangerous than other kind of crimes. The victim of a hate crime is more likely and by a great percentage to require hospital treatment than a victim involved in another type of attack. The police community has come to appreciate that these hate crimes have a higher tendency to lead to riots in the community where more people may be injured or killed.

The enforcement of hate crime laws limits the potential of the hate crimes spiraling out of control and leading to a cycle of violence and community chaos (Lieberman, 3) The FBI publishes a report on the Crime in the United States. The report focuses on only two kinds of crimes that the institution believes has a great impact on American citizens. The first report focuses on the policemen killed in the line of duty. The second report is on hate crimes showing the magnitude of these kinds of crimes. In 2008, under the hate crime report, the highest number of crimes were race-based crime, religion-based crimes were second while in the third category were crimes against gays and lesbians. The hate crimes are morally worse since a victim is individually selected to be attacked on his physical qualities that he cannot change.

These crimes should be punished severally as they adversely affect a community's safety and happiness. There have been people who are arguing

that the people's right to speech and other freedoms is being compromised due to the hate crime laws. However the laws do not in any way criminalize speech. It is when an individual attacks another individual that the person is punishable under these laws. The case Wisconsin v. Mitchell evoked strong reactions in the communities. Mitchell received an enhanced sentence as he had incited a racial assault on a white boy by a group of young black men. There are those who argued that he had received the enhanced sentence under the law "that criminalizes speech that results to violence". This is a faulty argument since for one to be punishable under this law one must have been selecting that person because of his physical qualities.

It is not just about any other kind of speech leading to violence. There are those who argued that the upholding of the sentence would lead to the disregarding of the First Amendment's freedom of free speech. It is argued that the country is making small steps towards criminalizing hate speech and even thoughts! All these people forget that the hate crime laws apply only when a crime has been committed. People fear the country may end up being like Canada where hate speech is a criminal offence. In England, laws have been introduced to curb the hate crimes by criminalizing the acts of an individual inciting others to hate homosexuals or people of different races (Tatchel, 23). These countries have seen that the hate speech more often than not leads to people being attacked and even murdered. Clearly the hate crimes are a serious problem internationally due to the adverse effects on the whole community. The governments in these countries simply want to protect the minorities due to the long history they have had of being attacked and their members even getting killed.

The reason for singling out incitement of speech against homosexuality and race is that the hate crimes in these two categories are higher than any other category of hate crime. However in the United States this cannot happen as there is a restraining control called the First Amendments which makes the country unique. The hate crime laws have to continue existing as long as racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and bigotry continue to persist in the nation. The message that should be sent across the country when hate crimes occur is that the crimes are regarded seriously. That prejudices that lead to crime are unacceptable. Hate crimes therefore require specialized and quality attention.

Conclusion

The hate crime laws have to continue existing as long as racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and bigotry continue to persist in the nation. The message that should be sent across the country when hate crimes occur is that the crimes are regarded seriously. The prejudices that people have that lead to crime are unacceptable. Hate crimes therefore require specialized and priority attention. The effect of hate crime on victims and the community is awful, causing insecurity and trauma. These people need to be protected by the laws of the country.

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