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INTRODUCTION

Hate crimes, also known as bias crimes have continued to haunt particular groups of people since the beginning of time. Although laws are in place today in order to decrease hate crime, hate crimes continue to increase. In order to change the incidence of hate crime, the ideologies of the offenders of such crimes must be changed. More importantly, education and new programs must be developed and taught to the culprits of this original sin; the professionals who work for our criminal justice system; a system rooted and established with a discriminative nature.

WHAT IS HATE CRIME

Hate crimes, also called bias crimes are motivated by bias toward a particular group of people, usually minorities. Minority groups include race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disability (Sgarzi & McDevitt, 2003), gender, language, age or mental disability (Calgary P.D., n.d.). So hate crimes are committed because of the perpetrator's own prejudice; due to reflections of the offenders personal biases (Questia, 2004).

According to the Calgary Police Department, the following are examples of hate/bias crimes: violence, threats of violence, vandalism, graffiti, threatening phone calls, physical assaults, hate mail, destruction of religious symbols, and fire bombings. The department also maintains that the following incidents do not have the elements required to prove a crime, however; they can lead to violent or criminal behavior: name-calling, using racial slurs and receiving material promoting prejudice (Calgary P.D., n.d.).

CRIME STATISTICS, 1997

Of the 9,861 hate crimes reported in 1997:

- 60 % racial bias (42 % of *all* hate crimes are anti-black)
- 15 % religious bias
- 14 % sexual orientation bias

- 11 % ethnic bias
- % disability bias (FBI, n.d.).

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR HATE CRIMES

In order to change the incidence of hate crimes, it must be understood why these crimes exist. There are many factors that lead to prejudice and hate, so in turn there are many changes that must be made. The following may be some factors as to why discrimination exists:

- Fear of the unknown (Brady, 2005)
- Ignorance of other cultures (Brady, 2005), or cultural changes (FBI, n.d.).
- Fear of the success of a particular group (Brady, 2005)
- Feeling out of place (alien) or out numbered (Brady, 2005); increase in immigrant population/new waves of immigration (FBI, n.d.).
- Taught by parents (Brady, 2005)
- Abused in childhood (Brady, 2005)
- Historical discrimination from the American Justice System (Brady, 2005)
- Demographic changes (FBI, n.d.).
- New family structures (FBI, n.d.).
- Political issues (referendum /ballot questions) (FBI, n.d.).
- Growing levels of religious intolerance (FBI, n.d.).
- Economic factors (FBI, n.d.).

I have based the above reasons for hate on “Anglo America” because predominately White North America has become quite diverse (Haviland, 2002). The Americas have become the melting pots of the world, more specifically; North America because S. America has always been quite diverse (Whiteford & Whiteford, 1998).

Fear of the unknown may come from living in a White country that has become quite diverse. *Ignorance of other cultures* is tied into the Justice system because the US government once allowing slave trade and segregation sent a message that discrimination

was acceptable. When slavery was abolished along with segregation, Americans were not educated in the cultures of other people. As many different people from all walks of life moved to the US, Americans were forced to accept a multitude of cultures without education. This is quite a bit to swallow so the government should have provided education for all of society. This may also account for *feeling out of place* and *feeling outnumbered* (Brady, 2005).

The American Justice system has to take responsibility for its employees as well; after all, our system was built on discrimination. Racial slurs blurted out in the courtrooms by attorneys and prosecutors, and abuse of peremptory challenges used by prosecutors in order for minorities to have unfair trials has been the norm. Most minorities are not afforded a jury of their peers, and this is unconstitutional (Walker et al., 2004). It is no wonder racism and hate crimes persist. Let us not forget racial profiling, the norm for attempted drug busts in the state of New Jersey. Then there is the fact that many people are prejudice and *teach their children* their ideologies. In other cases, children are *abused* in the home so they look for attention outside. This attention may include joining gangs and racist organizations. These people who are vulnerable, are loved by hate organizations and gangs because these types are easily brainwashed (Brady, 2005).

CHANGING THE INCIDENCE

Unfortunately there is not an easy answer for this one. Can we change the environment in which hate crimes take place? We can be sure to walk in groups most of the time, but we have to realize that members of hate groups will attack other groups of people, especially if they are minorities. They will also attack people in or near their homes (Sgarzi & McDevitt, 2003). What do we do, segregate and put walls around us. We would also have to concentrate on changing the color of skin and racial characteristics. Externally change the synagogue to look like a church while practicing the Jewish faith internally. We must concentrate on the government, offenders, and the communities we live in. Changing the communities means changing the victims, potential victims, and potential offenders. We have to:

- Change Laws: harsher laws are **not** the answer, but mandated programs that teach hate offenders tolerance of other cultures, race, religions, disabilities, sexual orientations and genders is a necessity. Six months to one year of classes and therapy may change the offender (Brady, 2005).
- Offender/Victim reparation: The offender should be forced to apologize face to face to the victim. This should be mandated in all crime, not just hate crimes. If a person is not made responsible for his actions, how is he to know he has done wrong? Jail makes many people better criminals, not remorseful offenders. (Brady, 2005).
- Education: Criminal Justice professionals need lessons in professionalism. Any person hired for a position in the Government or field of justice should have to complete culture courses for a mandated amount of time. (Brady, 2005).
- Community: Community outreach programs and community watch may help communities pull together and bring the neighbors back into the neighborhoods. A community without neighbors is like bread without flour, it will not rise, only fall (Brady, 2005).
- Signs used for threatening or frightening people should be illegal. Somewhere in Chicago, a swastika is hung in I believe a racetrack. Why is this possible? The swastika may be an old Hindu symbol, but it also symbolizes genocide for some of us (Brady, 2005).
- The following type of resource should be posted in all communities, police stations, law offices, and professional buildings: *If you have been a victim of or a witness to a hate/bias crime, you can report it anonymously at www.reportheate.org.* (Calgary P.D., n.d.).

The Calgary Police Department works with the community with a Cultural Resources Unit in order to find ways to solve the seriousness of these crimes. The Unit strives to:

- raise awareness of our diverse communities,

- reduce the fear of hate/bias crime,
- reduce the occurrence of hate/bias crime (Calgary P.D., n.d.).

The Calgary Police Service is “committed to partnering with the community to address and eliminate hate/bias crime” and maintains that all people can help to prevent these types of crimes by reporting hate or bias motivated crimes and incidents to police, and to support positive interaction in all diverse communities (Calgary P.D., n.d.).

ARGUMENT

Is there one context of hate-crime that would be easier to address than others? Absolutely! Awareness is the answer. Although education and programs are important, like anything else, we must first attack the root of the problem which is the government in this case. I would like to see the government stand up and apologize and explain to the nation that due to a lack of responsibility on their part, Americans had no understanding of this new diverse nation. This issue should be brought up in every classroom, every business manager’s meeting, every law enforcement agency, and courthouse. This is called being aware of the problem, which will inevitably lead to healing the nation. This is the best solution because surface work is ineffective without root work.

CONCLUSION

Programs need to be developed for criminal justice professionals and politicians should take certain tests, answer certain questions, and be educated about all cultures for a mandated amount of time. Hate should be made aware of in school, and maybe we should present more historical facts, show more historical pictures and have more historical field trips for our children. I think hate talk shows should increase in number except after putting the haters on, their parents or other family member should follow. Other races should follow as well for confrontation, maybe with a therapist or police officer between them. The shows should be based on help and prevention instead of battles. These people have to confront their worst fears. If they do not, they will continue to be our worst fears.

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