



The Ripple Effect of Hate Crimes: Diffused Hate Crime Victimization and Trauma



Kristi A. Lee, Vanessa Hooper, Samantha Green, Rhiannon
Jahns, Roza Aman, and Keira N. Howe
Seattle University





Content Warning

This presentation will discuss difficult topics which may feel personal and painful to listeners. In discussion of hate crimes, you or someone close to you may have been a victim of a bias crime. We ask that if triggered you do what is necessary to take care of yourself. This could mean turning off your camera or taking time to step away. Although difficult, we believe these topics are essential for our growth as a community. Thank you for listening.



Why is This Topic Important?

- Tree of Life Synagogue
- Walmart in El Paso, Texas
- The COVID-19 and the increase in anti-Asian violence
- Transphobia
- Ahmaud Arbery
- George Floyd

Context for Research Project

Spring 2018: Collaboration between Claudia Gross-Shader from the Seattle City Auditor office and Dr. Kristi Lee's Counseling Across the Lifespan class. The city auditor was tasked with addressing a rise in hate crimes and the impact these incidents have on targeted communities.

- Racial and ethnic
- Religious minorities
- LGBTQIA+

In 2017, there was an 88% increase in biased incidents city-wide in Seattle compared to reports from 2016 (Wareing, 2018)

Defining Hate Crimes

- A hate crime is a criminal offense in which a victim was targeted in whole or in part because of the preparator's bias against the victim's actual or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity (Cowan et al., 2005; *2017 Hate Crime Statistics Released*, 2018).
- According to Chakraborti (2017), hate crimes have been surging in the United States (U.S.) in recent years reaching an all-time high in 2017, the last year for which data was reported.

Hate Crimes Ripple Across Communities

- Direct victims are connected to a broader community of people with whom they share the targeted identity.
- Research identifies as indirect victim of a hate crime as:
 - One who personally knows victims of hate crimes (Brown, et al., 2017)
 - One who shares an identity with the direct victim (Bell and Perry, 2015)
- Hate crimes are "message crimes" (Iganski, 2001)

Related Types of Victimization and Trauma

- **Secondary trauma** - *experiencing trauma through working with the traumatized; not specific to hate crimes.*
- **Secondary victimization** - *losing one's job, being evicted from housing, or being denied public services or accommodations once one's sexual orientation is disclosed as the result of an anti-gay attack.*
- **Indirect trauma** - *can develop from knowing a trauma survivor or after family death; not specific to hate crimes.*
- **Indirect victimization** - *witnessing any crime; not specific to hate crimes.*

Diffused Hate Crime Victimization and Trauma

The experience of being significantly impacted upon learning about a hate crime committed against someone with whom you share the targeted identity.

Reactions can include changes in emotions, such as experiencing fear and hopelessness, changing in behavior in order to increase safety, impacts on sense of identity, and taking action through advocacy.

Research Methods

- Qualitative Research Design: Learning from stories
- Researchers & Our Identities
- Data Collection: Focus Groups
- Data Analysis: Identifying Themes

Our Participants and their Identities

- 12 total participants involved in focus groups
- All undergraduate and graduate students
- Could identify in more than one category indicating intersectionality
- Religious minority: 7 participants
- Racial or Ethnic minority: 6 participants
- Member of a Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity minority: 7 participants

Findings

- Diffused Hate Crimes Victimization & Trauma demonstrated through data
 - Six Themes
 - Five Sub-themes
- Each slide includes direct quotes from our participants to highlight each theme

Theme #1: Impact on Identity

41 references: the ways participants' identities were implicated in hate crimes

- “When someone or something is attacked that is connected to you it is sending a message that somebody literally hates the fact that you’re here. So, it makes me feel nervous and not like I belong or I'm not good enough or something is wrong with me.”
- “thinking about questions I have about myself and if I acknowledge those questions, will I face these things too?”
- “. . . my minority identity feels more validated in a kind of sick way when I hear about hate crime specifically being perpetrated against Jews because I think as like a white presenting person in some ways I'm not allowed to have like a minority identity.”

Identity Subtheme: Privilege

Centering Christianity

- “Christmas! . . . I don't always feel unsafe but get ready someone called me a kike on Christmas.”
- “I get a lot of negative feedback, like ‘How do you not celebrate Christmas? Why don't you celebrate Christmas?’ It is mind boggling to people that somebody doesn't celebrate their holiday. . . so that's the time of year where I don't feel like I belong here, which sucks because I hate the holidays. I hate the holiday season.”

White Privilege

- “. . . you actually don't know what that feels like until the community that you are a part of is targeted and that is something that I think a lot of white people don't understand.”

Theme #2: Visibility & Invisibility

54 references: the visibility or invisibility of their identity might make them the next victim

- “I do have an underrepresented identity or less visible and because they're less visible, they're less targeted and persecuted.”
- “. . . I wouldn't say I necessarily like feel unsafe but definitely uncomfortable and like there are a lot of spaces that I don't want to disclose where I come from and what identities I hold . . .”
- “A couple weeks after that we went to a small Pride Parade and we were in a public space and we were very scared that we just we practiced walking in a masculine way so that we wouldn't be approached.”
- “I become very like acutely aware of who's around me when I'm about to tell them that my dad's an immigrant especially from the Middle East . . . I give another thought too before I just openly tell everyone that like my dad's not white and therefore I'm not white either.”

Theme #3: Variations of Hate Crime Violence

79 references: From Microaggressions to Murder

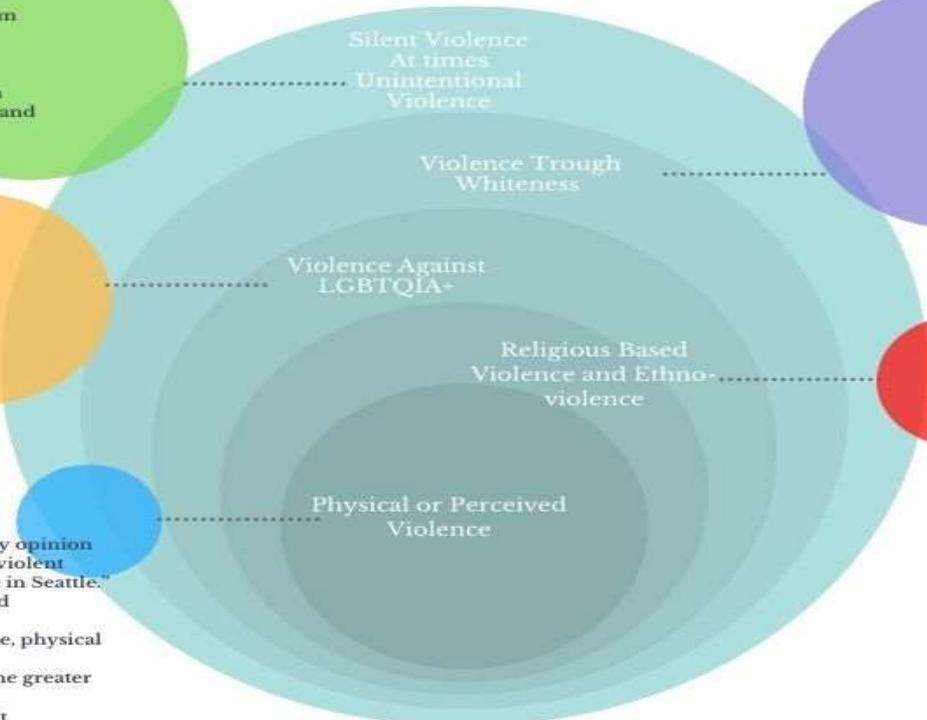
- “At times I’m in certain spaces where I feel like there’s certain things that people do, like they ignore you, they cut you in line . . . It’s not like serious things where you’re a target for like a hate crime or something but there’s small things like cutting you in line because they think they can take advantage of you.”
- “I think about police shootings of black men as a hate crime and like when I hear about that it makes me feel sad and angry.”
- “I would say . . . the Pittsburgh shooting is the most direct experience I have had with a hate crime.”
- “. . . when that happened that really revealed to me that my feelings regarding other hate crimes were more from like a spectator's perspective and less from like an actual experiential perspective.”

Variations of Hate Crime Violence

- Microaggressions
- Asking where are you from?
- Being cut in line, being ignored in public
- Gossiping and spreading rumors
- Bullying as it relates to discrimination
- Feeling like you cannot expose your identity
- Normalization and desensitization of hate crimes
- Being the only minority in the room
- Tokenism
- Racial fetishization
- Historical gatekeeping in higher education based off discrimination
- Classism - being around affluence and judged for not having that

- Religious based prejudice: "You're going to hell" – A Mormon student to a Lesbian student
- Not being accepted by family because of your sexual or gender identity
- A scary guy comes up on stage to try to hurt the queen performing at a Drag show
- Negative reactions when someone comes out or exposes an identity that is not visible
- Misgendering, using incorrect pronouns or not using their chosen name

- Attacking people online - "So in my opinion the internet is a more dark visibly violent racist place than my day to day life in Seattle."
- Verbal harassment, using racial and homophobic slurs
- Chasing people, following someone, physical harassment
- Hate crimes to send a message to the greater community
- Threats, murder, and sexual assault
- Bullying as it relates to discrimination
- Mass shootings based on discrimination
- Police brutality



- White privilege – not having to understand what it means to be discriminated or targeted because of your identity
- White fragility
- Invasion of personal space by white men
- White supremacy – feeling unsafe around white people
- A white college roommate destroying personal items belonging to her black roommate and poisoning her food

- Intersectionality: "It adds another layer that I'm wearing a headscarf as well as being black in America."
- Centering of Christian holidays – Asking a person who does not celebrate Christmas, "How do you celebrate Christmas?"
- Trump's racist rhetoric
- The Muslim ban
- Closing an Islamic school for a week for safety after 9/11
- Targeting of Muslims post-9/11
- Burning of the Bellevue mosque
- Islamophobia
- Holocaust jokes
- A swastika on a dorm room
- Hate speech through vandalism
- Pulling a knife on a person with Hebrew on their shirt
- The belief Jews are running the world, and behind all media and government
- Charlottesville march
- Firsthand assaults by skin heads and scary people
- The Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue shooting

Spectrum Subtheme: Current Political Climate and National Leadership

- “But as far as the leader of our country, that’s where I have a lot of mistrust and a lot of placed anger. Especially given the heavy influence he has on people; I think that it sparks a lot of anger.”
- “I don’t trust my country because it’s being led by someone who when their name is even uttered, I start to feel unsafe because of what their name represents. So yeah, there’s a lot of not feeling safe or trusting anyone around me.”
- Participants referenced feeling mistrust, hopelessness, and fear for their safety, and regarded these feelings in connection to President Trump and his rhetoric.

Theme #4: Coping Strategies and Responses

85 references: a need to *use coping strategies* to cope with managing the trauma they experienced

- “Um I don't cry very often so like crying even though it doesn't feel good ultimately is helpful to me” and another stated “I just felt really upset and so I like kind of tried to go about my like daily routine but was like crying like at the gym and like on the street yeah.”
- “I try not to live in fear because if you do that, you’re not going to be able to function day to day. I’m not trying to sound like a strong person or anything like that, but there’s days where it’s definitely hard. I just try to have hope in humanity.”

Subtheme: Seeking Support from Others

- “I’ll turn to my parents mainly and my cousins and family, they are my first line of support.”
- “In my community we find a new place to pray and start to raise funds because our mosque got burned down. And so we try to raise fund.”

Subtheme: Activism and Advocacy

As hate crimes send messages to communities, for some participants, these messages ignited a desire to respond.

- Creating Gay-Straight Alliance
- “In terms of involvement in those organizations, definitely increased mostly by spite but also just because I was like ‘I’m in this now. I’m doing it’ and I want to create positive change right the wrong sort of indirectly but by paying it forward.”
- “I would say it has altered my self confidence in a positive way which is probably not the expectation, but it has. It has made me feel more confident about all of the identities that I am a part of and to take more initiative to take care of people who identify with those identities.”

Theme #5: Experiencing a Lack of Safety

Feeling unsafe or under threat after hearing about a hate crime was referenced 64 times.

- “I think that safety and inclusion go hand in hand right, and like if I'm not allowed to feel as though like I can like connect to my minority identity that does not make me feel particularly safe.”
- “I think other places I would feel unsafe is in a room full of other people who don't look like me.”
- “I have a really hard time, no matter their intent, with trusting white people.”

Safety Subtheme: Scary Guy

Participants referencing fearing men or hypermasculinity

- “..there’s always a hesitance with interacting with straight white men.”
- “There’ll be times when a white man will come up and just invade my space, like I’m standing here, I’m shopping, what are you doing? Can you not see me?”

Safety Subtheme: Fear

- “I feel scared and I wonder who is going to be targeted.”
- “There's this component of fear about like this could happen to me, like my dad goes to synagogue literally every day and like this Pittsburgh shooting was just a bunch of people at an early morning service.”
- “The experience of like hearing about a hate crime that targets a group that I am a part of is a different feeling is much worse and it involves more fear.”
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N11L9xa7Qkk>



"A westernized approach
of mental health looks at
the symptom, but a
decolonized one looks at
the story."

@GabesTorres



What does this mean?

- Hate crimes are message crimes, meant to threaten and intimidate.
- The Black Lives Matter movement - Trayvon Martin in 2013 to George Floyd in 2020.
- Protests have ignited in all 50 states, and all over the world, making it the biggest civil unrest in recent years.
- This movement is an example of a response to diffused hate crime victimization and trauma through advocacy and activism.
- COVID-19 & Anti-Asian Racism.

Implications for Professional Practice

- Complex and multi-disciplinary solutions to a complex and multi-disciplinary problem
- How can this data inform your work?
- Identifying the impact on clients
- How are you contributing to environments where variations of hate crime violence occurs?

Limitations

- Focused on broad range of minority identity groups
 - Further research necessary for examining sub-groups
- Populations were left out
 - Immigrants, refugees, and individuals with disabilities...
- Conducted at a University
 - How is diffused hate crime victimization is experienced across the lifespan
- Further research should look to new or different forms of analysis and treatment approaches that do not further harm the individual.



Questions and Comments

Resources

Global and COVID-19 Related:

- [Global Perspectives on the Trauma of Hate Based Violence](#)
- [Covid-19 has inflamed racism against Asian-Americans. Here's how to fight back](#)

School Aged Resources:

- [Race and Equity Resources | American School Counselor Association](#)
- [How Community Trauma Can Hurt Student Learning](#)

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Contact Us!

Kristi A. Lee, Ph.D.:

leekrist@seattleu.edu

Samantha Green:

greens3@seattleu.edu

Vanessa Hooper:

hooperv1@seattleu.edu

Roza Aman:

yadettag@seattleu.edu

Rhiannon Jahns:

jahnsr@seattleu.edu

Keira Howe:

howek2@seattleu.edu