Hate Crimes Essay, Research Paper

Hate Crimes

I. What are Hate Crimes

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1. White Power

2. Black Power

II. Examples of Hate Crimes

A. Hate Crime penalties

III. Reasons for Hate Crimes

Even though Hate Crimes have been around in the past, and have been most

certainly been more violent in the past. Hate Crimes are most certainly still a

problem in today’s society, but it is not dealt with the same violent manner as

previously performed in the past. There are still violent acts done out of hate,

but the battle has been a lot more words. Hate crimes are a serious problem in

today’s society.

In this paper, three topics will be discussed. (1) What are Hate Crimes,

(2) Examples of Hate Crimes, and (3) Reasons for Hate Crimes.

Hate Crimes are crimes done out of severe anger, ignorance, and lack of

knowledge about other’s ideas and beliefs. Racism is a belief that one or more

races is superior to others. Prejudice is prejudging others. “Gordon Alport, a

professor at Emeritus of Psychology at Harvard University and an expert at

prejudism defines prejudice as.. `a hostile attitude toward a person who belongs

to a group, simply because he belong to that group, and therefore presumes to

have the objectable qualities ascribed to that group’(Lang)23″

The most common way prejudice works is by stereotyping people, that is

putting everyone form the same ethnic group together and assuming they all have

the same negative characteristics or behave in the same way. This does not only

apply to ethnic groups but also applies to race, religion, and other minorities.

Hate crimes are so hard to count because it is not certain whether a

crime is being committed out of hate.

In 1989-1991, a study done by Southern Poverty Law Center in Birmingham,

Alabama, recorded an increase of hate crimes in those three years. The number

of murders went up 100%, Cross burnings went up 200%, and vandalism went up 50%.

These acts were said to be committed by a group of “skinheads” in the Ku Klux

Klan.

Ku Klux Klan started out as a secret club in 1866, just after the war,

claiming “superiority of the southern white man.” (Lang)20 Basically the KKK is

a group of extremist individuals stalking, intimidating, hanging, and hurting

anyone that was not a straight puritan white male. Many of nowadays extremists

stemmed form these “Knights” of white terror. (Lang)32.

Hate Crimes are not only against Races (Blacks, Whites, Hispanic,

Chinese…) they are also against religious beliefs, sexual preferences, and

other minorities in today’s society.

There are what they call far left extremists and far right extremists,

and both have had there leaders. The far right extremists are the ones who want

change and want it now. They want to have Black power. Not equal rights for

all as preached by the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who was a minister that

spoke out for the equal right of African Americans. Far left extremists want to

rid the country of anything that is not “Pure” (the white Anglo/Saxon Puritan

Male. [Lang]24)

Here are a few of the many examples of hate crimes. In 1980 a man

shouted that he hated “fagots” and sprayed gunfire at a gay bar, killing two

patrons (Out Now). In Maine, a gay man was thrown to his death off of a bridge

by three teenagers, in 1984 (Out Now).

In June of 1982, Vincent Chin, a 27 year old Chinese/American was

fatally beaten with a baseball bat outside of a Detroit bar by two white

automobile factory workers who called him a “Jap” and blamed him for the loss of

their job in the automobile industry (Jost)8.

There are also laws against hate crimes and punishments that are

questionable. The question is “Should hate Crimes penalties be stiffened?” The

yes side of this argument says “enhancing a criminal sentence for any hate crime

in no way creates a thought crime or penalizes anyone’s conduct based upon a

non-prescribable viewpoint or message that such conduct contains or expresses.”

(Tribe)17

“In it’s present form HR 4797 (Hate Crime Penalty Enhancement Law) is

unconstitutional has this both content based and view point based. It directly

violates the First Amendment of the Constitution. It violates the Due Process

Clause of the Fifth Amendment , because it is impermissible vague in several

respects giving inadequate notice of what it prohibits and inviting arbitrary

and discriminatory enforcement”(Gellman)17.

About one half of all americans(about 50 million to 60 million) own at

least one gun. More than half a million subscribe to survival or pre-military

magazines that are full of articles on survivalism, weapon use and guerilla

tactics(lang(69). Meanwhile paranoia is growing as the Budget Deficit

skyrockets, A.I.D.S epidemic threatens health and health care systems. These

times can cause fear, insecurities, frustration, and anger which in turn

inflames scapegoating and racial stereotyping and in turn results in resurgence

of racism.

Freedom of Speech is one of the most significant rights given to all

Americans but it is by far one of our biggest problems. The price we pay for

Freedom of Speech and the ability to talk our mind is that we have to tolerate

other person’s beliefs and opinions.

In the final analysis, one can frankly acknowledge that hate is taught.

If each new generation were more tolerant of those who are different, perhaps

hatred and prejudice would someday disappear from our world. (Lang)155.