Hidden Hate, Hidden Violence: Dismantling Myths and Identifying Fresh Challenges for Research and Policy

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Abstract
Hate crime has become an increasingly familiar term within global scholarship, with advancements in conceptual understanding and empirical knowledge helping to generate improved policy responses across many parts of the world. However, the continued demonization of 'other' identities, the escalating volume of hate incidents worldwide and the prevailing climate of rising tensions, decreasing resources and political de-prioritization all suggest that many urgent challenges remain. Contributors to this special issue have dismantled common stereotypes and misperceptions which hamper our collective capacity to address contemporary expressions of hate and violence. In doing so, they draw from their research evidence to identify "hidden" challenges which should be at the forefront of attempts to address the causes, effects, and prevention of all forms of violence. This call for reconfiguration is the unifying theme which runs through each article, and which paves the way for more nuanced analyses that offer new frameworks for responding to the diverse and changing patterns of violence. These are challenges which straddle disciplinary boundaries, geographical borders, and the physical/digital world, and which demand the international, intersectional, and interdisciplinary perspectives evident within this special issue.

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As an umbrella concept used in its broadest sense to describe expressions of violence motivated by hostility toward identity or perceived "difference" (Hardy & Chakraborti, 2019), hate crime has become an increasingly familiar term within global scholarship. Empirical and conceptual advancements have seen the emergence of new knowledge and fresh ideas which continue to inform our understanding of what hate crimes are, whom they affect, and why they are committed. This growth of academic enquiry has been both welcome and necessary, and alongside improved awareness within the domains of scholarship and activism, it has generated improved responses to hate crime across many parts of the world.

This is evident through measures such as the introduction of laws governing hate acts and speech, the publication of policy guidance documents, the provision of specific training, and refinements to reporting, recording, and victim support processes, to name just some examples of ways in which governments and law enforcement agencies have sought to prioritize issues of hate crimes, most prominently within the earlier stages of this century (Hall et al., 2015). In addition to their practical value in shaping responses to individual hate incidents, the symbolic role that such measures can play in contexts and environments where the identities, values, and cultures of particular communities are under scrutiny is particularly significant. Indeed, just as hate crimes are often described as "message crimes" designed to convey a message from the perpetrator to the victim (and their wider community) that they "don't belong," the process of criminalizing expressions of hate can convey an equally powerful message of solidarity to marginalized members of society (Chakraborti, 2012).

And yet, despite these prima facie positive developments, many urgent challenges remain. At the time of writing, levels of recorded hate crime continue to escalate across the world, with consistent and alarming surges observed over an extended number of years across the UK, US, Canada, Australia, and Europe (see, inter alia, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2021; FBI, 2023; Home Office, 2023; Hope Not Hate, 2023; Moreau, 2021; Tan et al., 2021). This upsurge in targeted violence does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it has been *fueled* by rising populism, global conflicts, and economic austerity; *exacerbated* by the ripple effects of damaging events such as the backlash toward the Black Lives Matter movement,

the inequalities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and repeated terrorist incidents; and *enabled* by structural discrimination, political inaction, and legitimized hostility. Individually and collectively, these multiple points of crisis have exposed fault lines and fragilities across Western nations and raised pressing questions for scholarship and policy.

The normalization of hostile attitudes and actions is a cause for significant concern, not least because it is rooted within a wider set of embedded processes whereby violence is used as a tool to marginalize "difference," to weaponize fear, and to sustain hegemonic boundaries. An increasingly extensive body of literature has shown that attacks against the "other" can feed off economic and political volatility to the point where violence becomes a mechanism used to reinforce power imbalances between dominant and subordinate groups and to create cultures of suspicion toward "alien" communities (see, inter alia, Chakraborti & Garland, 2012; Perry, 2001). Research has also shown how "trigger" events of local, national, and international significance can influence the prevalence and severity of hate incidents within cyberspace and the physical world, thereby heightening the vulnerability of many groups and communities at a time when "other" identities are under greater scrutiny than perhaps ever before (Awan & Zempi, 2017).

Just as the growing volume of hate incidents demands new channels of academic enquiry, so too do their associated harms and impacts. Researchers have shown that hate crimes generate harms which are qualitatively distinct from the emotions that victims of parallel crimes may experience because of the deeply personal nature of the attack on their core identity (Craig-Henderson & Sloan, 2003; Iganski & Lagou, 2015). In this context, victims are especially likely to experience greater harms when, as a member of a stigmatized and marginalized group, their experiences of violence bring to the fore the fear and pain caused by historical, systematic attacks on their identity group (see also Paterson et al., 2018). Equally, researchers have highlighted that these harms can take a variety of forms, including the psychological and emotional trauma of victimization, the physical impacts of interpersonal violence, the in terrorem effects within wider communities, and the financial costs of repairing property or seeking medical or therapeutic support (Burch, 2021; Chakraborti et al., 2014; Hardy & Chakraborti, 2019; Perry & Alvi, 2012). But less clear is how we should seek to acknowledge and respond to these harms in a climate of escalating tensions, decreasing resource, and widespread political de-prioritization. Within such an environment, the harms of hate are likely to be felt all the more acutely by victims within marginalized communities whose over-exposure to hostile behaviors

and structural inequalities poses challenges which are insufficiently addressed within existing academic and policy frameworks.

This special issue of the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* acknowledges the need for fresh lines of enquiry and seeks to promote a more nuanced understanding of issues which remain overlooked and under-explored. It offers fresh perspectives on both victims and perpetrators of violence at a time when physical and online hate continues to escalate across the world in the midst of multiple social, economic, and political crises. Within the context of hate studies and violence more generally, conceptual debates and policy developments are evolving, new lines of empirical enquiry are emerging, and academic literature dates rapidly. As such, contributions within this special issue provide an urgent wake-up call to ensure that scholars do not become settled within the comfort of what we already know.

Contributions to This Special Issue

In "The Ambivalence of Far-Right Women: Hate, Trauma, Gender and Neoliberalism in Contemporary Japan," Yoshida employs a psychosocial approach to examine the role of gendered social structures in women's decisions to participate in the far-right movement in Japan. Yoshida considers the complex life histories that can shape the trajectories of women and in doing so, is able to challenge the traditional narrative that positions far-right women as controlled and used by men. Indeed, Yoshida draws attention to histories of socioeconomic status and gender-based violence which can cause women to utilize far-right discourse as a means of projecting anger and trauma onto others.

In their article, "Lost in Translation? Applying the Hate Crime Concept to the Indian Context" Mohsin and Chakraborti propose a creative translation of the Westernized hate crime concept to the Indian context. By adopting a transnational approach, the authors support this translation, but do so with a level of caution and reflection that takes into account the complexities of violence within an Indian context such as caste systems, social stratification, institutional bias, and intersectionalities. To translate the hate crime concept, Mohsin and Chakraborti suggest that we should utilize the elasticity of the concept and employ this to the different forms of targeted violence legitimized within Indian institutions and structures. The authors also propose that Western-centric frameworks could be enhanced by engaging with the many under-explored forms of violence that are enacted outside of the parameters of the Western world.

In "Beyond the Binary: The Issue of Intra-minority Hostility and the Need to Challenge," Stein et al reveal the under-investigated yet widespread anti-semitism within the Canadian context. In this original contribution, the authors center the lived experiences of the Canadian Jewish community to offer an insight as to how contemporary online and offline discourses surrounding "Jewish privilege" are deeply embedded within historic antisemitic tropes of wealth, power, and control. Notably, Stein et al highlight that many respondents, especially community leaders, report increased confidence in the role of the police to protect and work with the Jewish community compared to other targeted groups.

Clarke's article "Challenging the Binary Perpetrator/Victim Frameworks within Hate Studies: The Issue of Intra-Minority Hostility" offers a unique exploration of the hostilities that exist *within* and *between* minority communities. Drawing upon the experiences of new migrants and refugees living in a "super diverse" area of the UK, Clarke attends to "Intra-Minority" hostility to reveal hostilities that are perpetrated by and toward ethnic minority groups. By considering "Intra-Minority" hostility within the context of anti-immigrant rhetoric, the article encourages a wider conceptualization of hate crime that can account for *all* victims, including hostility toward "new arrivals" perpetrated by established ethnic minority communities.

In "'Working 'With' Not 'On' Disabled People: The Role of Hate Crime Research Within the Community," Burch reflects upon the openness of the research space, and the opportunity to work *with* victims of interpersonal violence by welcoming shared vulnerabilities and dependencies upon one another. In doing so, Burch encourages readers to think more creatively about the possibilities of hate crime research as an opportunity for working with victims of violence in collaborative ways. Such participatory approaches dismantle traditional research relations and importantly, can challenge the power imbalances and notions of vulnerability that are embedded within encounters of hostility.

In her article "Hating Women: A Constitution of Hate in Plain sight," Brayson argues that misogyny is both hidden and explicitly present. Misogyny is both hyper-normalized within our society, yet hidden within the logic of neutral constitutional laws that privilege the white, middle-class, heteronormative, male figure. Within this rich conceptual exploration, Brayson reflects upon the values and tensions of including misogyny within the policy landscape of hate crime by engaging with a diversity of decolonial feminist theories. In doing so, Brayson encourages us to be open to scholarship across disciplines as a means of thinking about misogyny in new and helpful ways.

Finally, Kingdom and Winter present an analysis of the evolution of Ku Klux Klan online political activism in their article "Digital Reconstruction: A Critical Examination of the History and Adaptation of Ku Klux Klan Websites". The authors employ qualitative analysis to reveal not only the content of websites, but also the processes, methods, and approaches utilized by creators. This analysis shows how networked technology has enabled the Klan to grow beyond their traditional regional or national boundaries and connect internationally, adapt to changing needs, conditions, and opportunities, as well as organize and mobilize offline. Such understanding could provide a unique contribution to responding to online extremist activity in the future.

Each of these articles presents powerful and timely insights, and each has been framed in a way which not only encourages empirical rigor but which facilitates dialog between academics, policymakers, and practitioners whose collective expertise is pivotal to the development of effective responses to hate incidents. Contributors to this special issue have dismantled common stereotypes and misperceptions which hamper our collective capacity to address contemporary expressions of hate and violence. In doing so, they draw from their research to identify "hidden" challenges which should be at the forefront of attempts to address the causes, effects, and prevention of all forms of violence. This call for reconfiguration is the unifying theme which runs through each article, and which paves the way for more nuanced analyses that offer new frameworks for responding to the diverse and changing patterns of violence. These are challenges which straddle disciplinary boundaries, geographical borders, and the physical/digital world, and which demand the international, intersectional, and inter-disciplinary perspectives evident within this special issue.

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Author Biographies

Neil Chakraborti, PhD, is a professor in Criminology, Director of the Institute for Policy, and Co-Director of the Centre for Hate Studies at the University of Leicester. He has published extensively within the fields of hate crime, policing, and "othering," and has been commissioned by numerous funding bodies including Amnesty International, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Leverhulme Trust to lead research studies which have shaped policy and scholarship. Neil is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, Chair of the Research Advisory Group at the Howard League for Penal Reform and series editor of *Palgrave Hate Studies*. He has received awards for his work from a variety of sources, including the Royal Television Society, Learning on Screen, the President's Award from the University of Leicester and the Hero of Leicestershire Award. He holds a diverse range of advisory positions which include roles with the Crown Prosecution Service, the Human Dignity Trust, the International Network for Hate Studies, Oxford University Press, and Protection Approaches.

Leah Burch, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences and member of the Centre for Culture and Disability Studies at Liverpool Hope University. She has published widely within the fields of disability studies, hate crime, affect theory and sexual violence. Her first monograph, *Disability and Everyday Hate* was published in 2021 by Palgrave Macmillan, which examines the diverse ways in which disabled people understand, negotiate, and respond to disability hate crime within their day-to-day lives. Her research has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, Ministry of Justice and Home Office. Leah is a member of the British Society of Criminology Hate Crime Network, where she co-leads on postgraduate and early career research events. She actively works with key stakeholders, including Disabled People's Organizations and the Disabled Police Association and holds advisory roles within the Crown Prosecution Service.