

The University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy

DPSS Capstone - Hate Crimes in the United States

July 18th, 2019

Hate crimes are classified as a criminal offense with an added element of bias such as against race, religion, disability, ethnicity, and gender. Hate itself is not considered a crime but determining when one should be held accountable for acting on hate becomes controversial as freedom of speech and civil liberties are protected under the first amendment. The FBI began collecting hate crime data eight decades ago so as to establish preventative measures from having such crimes occur although the reporting of information from state and local law enforcement remains voluntary. The reported data used in this analysis comes from the comes from the FBI, U.S. Census, and Kaiser Family Foundation.

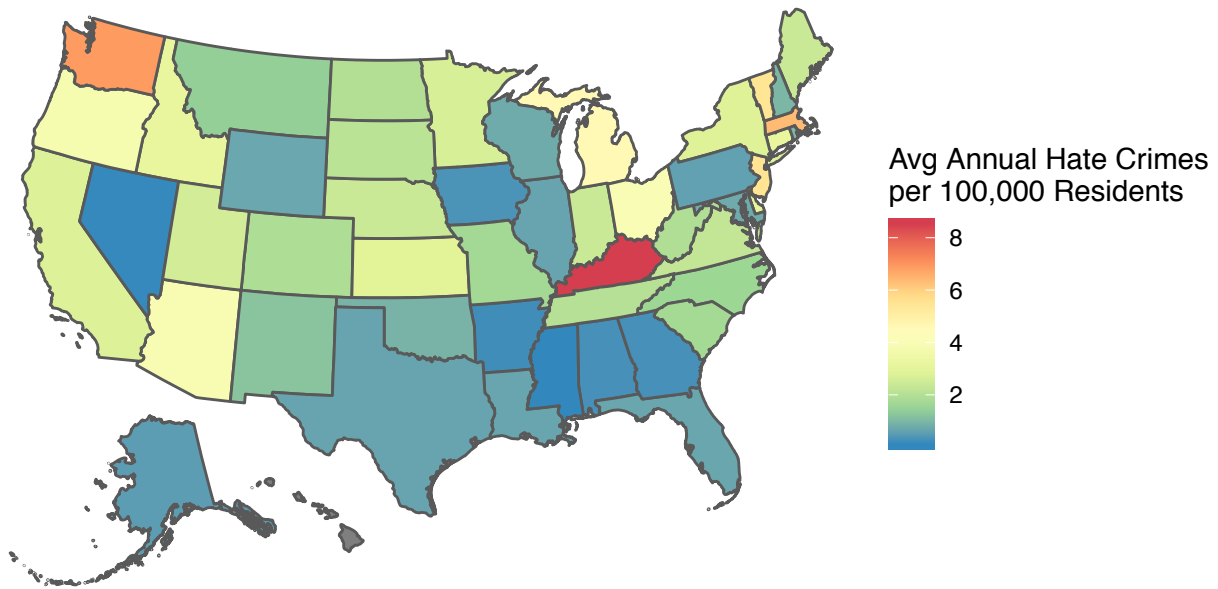
Table 1:

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	hatecrimes_per100k
med_income	0.00005 (0.0002)
pop_unemploy	0.00000 (0.00000)
pop_HS	-0.00000* (0.00000)
pov_white	-0.00000 (0.00000)
non_white	0.00000 (0.00000)
est_gini	24.769 (20.561)
non_citizen	-10.308 (21.016)
Voters	-0.036 (0.083)
Constant	-8.113 (12.800)
Observations	49
R ²	0.116
Adjusted R ²	-0.061
Residual Std. Error	1.931 (df = 40)
F Statistic	0.654 (df = 8; 40)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In replicating FiveThirtyEight's analysis on hate crimes with updated information, the data demonstrates an increase in hate crimes occurring across the nation since the 2016 election. In analyzing what causes hate crimes, this study was measured with 10 different variables, each demonstrating the varying factors that cause hate crimes: median household income, unemployment, obtained a high school diploma, white people living below the poverty line, non-white, non-citizen, bias motivations, income inequality, average amount of hate crimes per 100k and voters in the 2016 election.

Hate Crime Rates for 2017



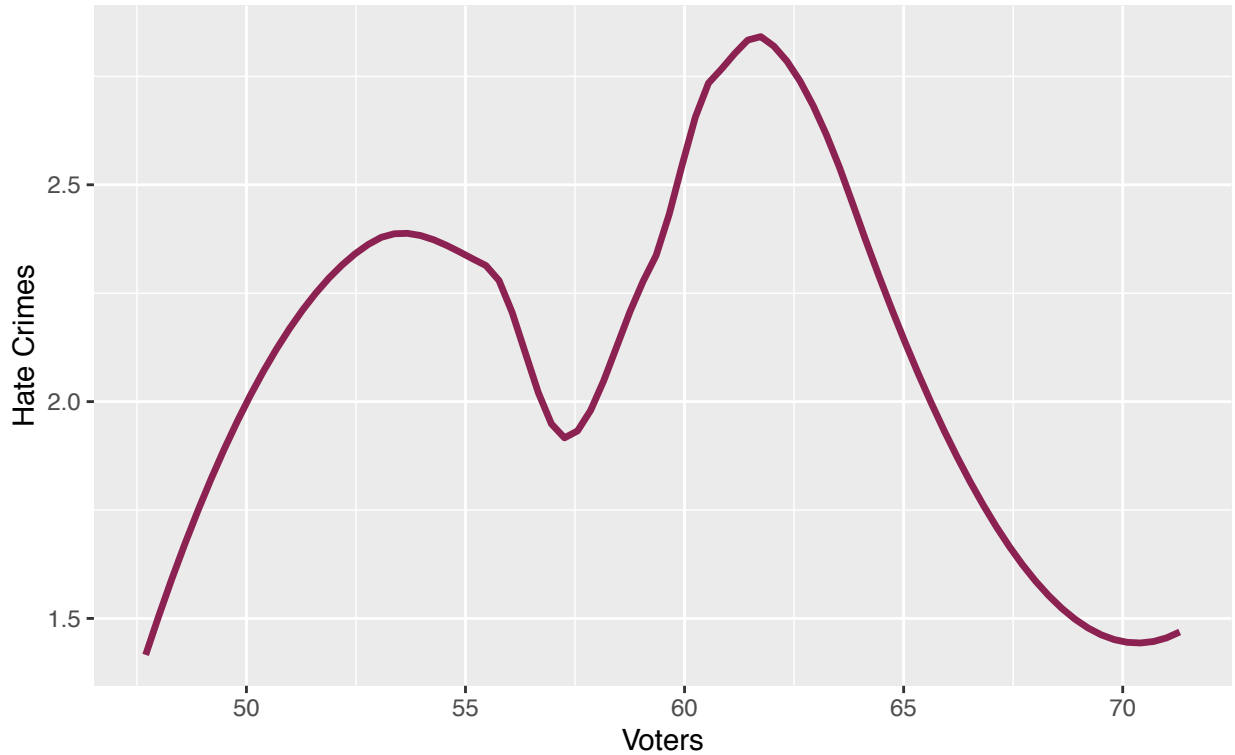
Source: FBI, Southern Poverty Law Center

These variables suggest that individuals within low-income communities, living below the poverty line, without a post-secondary education etc. are more likely to commit or experience hate crimes. By analyzing the amount of voters per state in the 2016 election and the average amount of hate crimes, the data concludes that there is a positive correlation between the two. Therefore, there is a correlation between being politically engaged and committing or experiencing hate crimes as one is often a catalyst of the other. There is an even stronger correlation between income inequality and hate crimes especially within states with more populated cities. In states with populated cities there is a higher income inequality as cities bring in more income, therefore, the greater disparity is allowing for more hate crimes to occur.

Hate crimes continue to remain prevalent in the United States due to the current political climate and the controversy that continues to arise between the Democratic and Republican parties. With the upcoming presidential election, there is an ever greater probability that hate crimes will take place across the nation at an even higher rate based on substantial precedents which makes this issue more critical today than ever before.

Race bias motivations are the most prominent causes for hate crimes across the nation. In comparison to religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, and gender identity, race bias, such as being anti-black or anti-hispanic is the leading cause of these crimes. Since these populations, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx, are on the lower end of the socioeconomic ladder, this proves that the crimes are especially driven by income inequality as these minority populations are residing within areas with a median household income below the average and with higher unemployment rates.

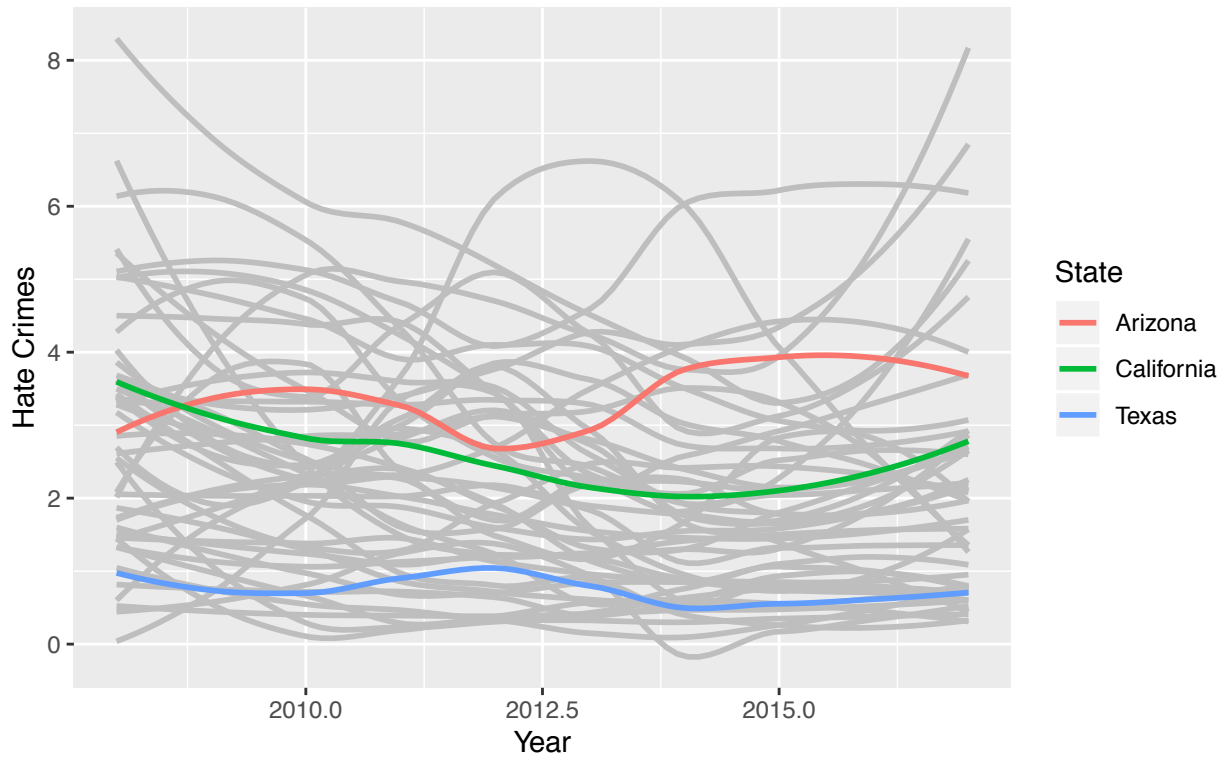
Percentage of Voters in 2016 Election



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2016

As a result of this inequality, preventative measures should be put into place so as to lower the ability of hate crimes towards these targeted populations from occurring. It should be a requirement instead of voluntary that state and local law enforcement agencies across the United States must submit data regarding all hate crime incidents and offenses despite the uncertainty of what is classified as one. This will allow for a more accurate database that is representative of the conflicts arising across the nation so solutions can be implemented over time in order to avoid such instances from continuing to occur. It is essential that more data is collected since reports are not comprehensive or consistent and it is even more critical that there are better data collection methods implemented equally across the board of all states. Not only is it essential but it is better because it will make society more aware as it will encourage others to raise awareness bias by working collectively towards implementing solutions as a society.

Change in Hate Crimes per 100k (2008–2017)



Source: FBI, Southern Poverty Law Center

Similarly, not everyone, including states and individuals residing within them, is reporting the hate crimes they are experiencing. Therefore, nationwide initiatives are being launched that are working towards comprehensive hate crime reporting and taking measures to prevent them. By increasing funding for these types of long-term projects, high level effects will be developed as it will allow for the enhancement of a more peaceful society. American society at this point in time is not a place of acceptance and measures are not being put into place so as to reduce this because there is not sufficient data or evidence to support the initiatives this nation is in need of.