

Book review: Hate Crime: Impact, Causes and Responses (2nd edition)

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Neil Chakraborti and Jon Garland

Hate Crime. Impact, Causes & Responses (2nd ed.)

London: Sage, 2015, pbk, ISBN 978-1-4462-7251-0, xv + 192 pp.

In this updated textbook Chakraborti and Garland compile an overview of the relevant and current legislation, discourses, and social problems pertaining to hate crime. This is a welcome edition for students, criminologists, and hate crime scholars who seek an up to date, comprehensive understanding of hate crime. The book holistically interlaces current scholarly debates on the causes, impacts, and problems of hate crime with legislative and criminal justice responses. Structured and separated into 11 chapters, each chapter is dedicated to a particular area of hate crime, creating an easy and accessible format as a textbook. Much of what is discussed is situated to the UK; however this is reflexively balanced with international perspectives and processes of hate crime in a global context.

Chapter 1 introduces the main premise of the book and acts as a preface by discussing the academic and legal definitions of hate crime. It provides a solid foundation needed to understand the interdisciplinary perspectives on hate crime by discussing the problems faced when defining 'hate crime'. The conflicts in scholarly debates and the current disputes surrounding hate crime terminology and legislation are well covered. It is cemented as a comprehensive introductory chapter before dedicating the following five chapters to each recognised strand of hate crime.

Chapter 2 provides a thorough discussion on how ethnicity is used as a tool to victimise people. A clear picture of the historical racism within the UK is provided as a backdrop to contemporary debates on racism. Key socio-political events are assessed sufficiently, such as the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the Macpherson Reports findings on institutionalised racism. These examples provide a holistic discussion which bridge political, social, legislative, and academic understandings of racist hate crime together.

Chapter 3 brings readers a useful outline of religiously motivated hate crime. Chakraborti and Garland nuance the differences between ethnic vs. religious identity as being reasons for religious hate crime. They outline how these two are often conflated and viewed as the same. Sociological discussions on the social construction of race are utilised, highlighting how 'dark-skinned' people can become victims of Islamophobic hate crime regardless of their actual religious identity. This chapter frames the intersectionalities of identity in an accessible way for lay audiences and students to understand. A premise for which the authors base or define 'identity' as a sociological concept would be a welcome advancement for any future editions however.

Specific focus is given to the victimisation of LGBT people in Chapters 4 and 5. A historic backdrop to homophobic hate crime and institutional homophobia is appropriately provided, however the specific *ways* the criminal justice system persecuted LGBT people could have been expanded on. The merit of Chapter 4 sees the authors unpack the hidden, less visible, contexts of homophobic hate crime - such as homophobic bullying in schools and the

workplace. It provides solid evidence for the need to research this area of hate crime. Often prejudice towards gay people needs to be balanced with having the right to certain religious freedoms and beliefs. This is carefully explored using sensible case studies which help to distinguish freedoms of speech vs. hate speech. The key value in this edition is how the authors carefully explore the nature and extent of hate crime for transgender people. They critically compare homophobic and transphobic hate crime – noting the marginalisation of trans people as being different from lesbian and gay non-trans people. This warrants real credit as many debates involving LGBT people often become muddled together. However much of the language used when discussing transgender identity in Chapter 5, such as: ‘someone who is physically male’; ‘have hormone treatment and surgery and *physically* become female’; and describing non-transgender people as having a gender that ‘matches the one they were biologically born with’ (original emphasis, pp. 63) would be disputed and contested in transgender and queer scholarship. Future editions may need to utilise much of the sociological debates surrounding transgender and queer language.

The book moves on and does great justice to the overall literature and debates surrounding violence against disabled people. The concept of ‘cuckooing’ – where intimate partners, family, or friends manipulate and control a person with a disability or learning difficulties – is explored sufficiently despite being an under researched area. However, Chapter 6 lacked a discussion on the structural impact of ableism and ableist attitudes. This would have been beneficial to situate the complex nature of disablist hate crime as a social problem.

Tying in debates dedicated to the five strands of hate crime, Chapter 7 provides a complex theoretical insight into the unexplored terrain of ‘hate’. It sophisticates hate crime scholarship by exploring the aspects of vulnerability and ‘difference’ of other groups not protected by legislation – such as homeless, sex workers, and alternative subcultures. The content is very insightful for lay audiences, but the understandings of vulnerability are vague; it is unknown as to what the authors specifically mean by vulnerability.

Criminologists interested in offending and perpetrators would advance their knowledge by reading Chapter 8. This chapter explores how hate groups such as the National Front and the BNP form, what their political agendas are, and how they balance the line between free speech and hate speech. Much discussion takes place on the political rhetoric of the far right. The case studies provided highlight how hate groups capitalise on community tensions by seeding hatred into the public consciousness. These facets are then expertly drawn together in Chapter 9 which exposes the various and multi-layered responses to hate crime. The reader is guided through a solid yet brief overview of the historical, conflicting relationships with the police and minority demographics. Nuanced information on restorative justice interventions, a very niche area in hate crime scholarship, persuades the reader to think of alternative measures to punishment.

Chapters 10 and 11 conclude the book by exploring the international perspectives of hate crime and the future directions for scholarship. The legislative differences on hate crime in other cultural and national contexts situate the pivotal role hate crime debates have on protecting minority groups in the UK. The background complications within hate crime

scholarship highlight the ever growing need for further research into the area. The authors provide good directions for future research and leave a hopeful message for the readers of this book – things are changing. Overall this textbook is an important contribution for gaining a comprehensive understanding of hate crime.