

Public Policy Exchange – Hate Crime 04/03/21

Paddy Tipping – former Sherwood MP and PCC

- Difficult to make progress with hate crime – hopelessly under-reported as people don't feel the police will do anything about it. Frightened victims but not reporting and belief police will not get involved. Need to work harder to reach out to communities to improve rates of reporting. Need to understand better HOW to report and the different ways to do it.
- Peaks and troughs in hate crime incidents due to political landscape – Brexit, Trump, pandemic spikes
- A big discussion urgently needs to be had on policing the online world. Cannot be right to be abused and threatened online. Social media providers need to get their act together. Not just a matter for police – for all of us.
- Use how pandemic has pulled us together to build on as well as the work of the third sector.
- Need much more work around not being a 'bystander' to make culture change.

Loretta Trickett – Nottingham Trent University - Research in policing of hate crime

- Did evidence based research to learn from public agencies, victims and public and connect them to policy and practice.
- Hate crimes are aggressive, based to have an impact on a community and individual to give them a message that they are not wanted.
- Needs a multi-agency response. Needs to be holistic.
- Still very difficult to achieve prosecution despite better reporting and recording.
- Nottingham the first police force globally to record misogyny as a hate crime in Nottingham. This challenged the normalisation of misogyny. Needs to be more widespread. Tendency to focus on individual responsibility and not link it to a huge societal problem with misogyny. This normalisation HAS to be challenged. Effects women's movements every day. Research and educational pack can be shared.

Victims

- Victims often don't want a prosecution. Victims have greater fear of hate crime and adapt their lives around this.
- Many victims just want the person spoken to and warned. Mediation. A quick response in the aftermath and ongoing services for the stress. Feeling they are taken seriously.

Training

- A real issues with training on hate crime is that risk assessment is crucial – similar to ASB. Risk assessment is underplayed. Helps provide a framework on how the police respond. Gives more consistency and has aligned policy and practice. Must be used intelligently and not just a tick box.
- Involve communities and victims in training. Draw on good practice and learn from mistakes.
- Make good use of case studies and testimonies.
- Training 'hate crime champions' – they are energised and they share the information.

Unmesh Desai - Chair of Police and Crime Committee 19/20

- Hate crime affects the individuals but also the whole community
- Every year – gradual increase of hate crime. Is it a genuine rise in offence or people feeling free to report?

Recent Stats

- After London Bridge attacks – spikes in Islamophobic/racist attacks.
- Attacks to Chinese people during the pandemic. Far-right are trying to legitimise violence.
- In London – 20% increase after Brexit referendum.
- National phenomenon in rise in hate crime. Still most hate crimes assumed are still going un-reported.

Pandemic

- Misinformation and abuse been allowed to run wild online, especially social media with no accountability. Even in politics itself – racism e.g. Donald Trump and some Conservative MPs fuelling xenophobic hatred.
- The Met Police – set up a fortnightly forum with Chinese and SE Asian communities in response.
- Fear of these hate crimes rising again when the restrictions release. Targeted action is needed and proactive planning in anticipation of surge in hate crimes when we leave lockdown.

Politics and the Media

- Lack of leadership from national government – political language and rhetoric is so important. Cannot be ambivalent about how we talk especially to media.
- Don't have a balance press coverage. People being disregarded as 'woke'. A politics of denial. Much of the press in right wing hands – what do we do about this?
- Blame game –denial that BAME communities have suffered. Where is the counter narrative? We have government ministers denying institutional racism!
- Hate crime caused by insecurity, jobs, feeling the Government doesn't care about them has driven the far-right blaming.

Nadia Whittome – MP, Member of the APMG for Hate Crime in England

Rise of Hate Crime

- Hate crimes have doubled from 2013. Huge increase in hate crime against people, 11% rise in last year.
- According to LSE research, more pronounced in pro-remain areas meaning bigots felt emboldened but were minority in these areas.
- Anti-immigrant views more widespread than believed and more 'acceptable'.
- Use of the word 'letter boxes' huge increase after our PM used this racist slur. Shows how media and our leader's language and attitudes matter! Toxic mix of divisive politics and misinformation – breeding ground for increased hate.

Research on systematic racism

- Research shows the role of systemic racism on adverse health outcomes and how this has been exacerbated by Covid-19.
- Pandemic showed BAME x2 as likely to die from Covid-19, rates of admissions etc.
- Not so much discussed about residential segregation. This is a form of structural racism – causing health inequality.

Going forward..

- Bystander training is very important. Having people stay silent can feel almost as bad as the hate crime itself for the victim.
- Hate crime legislation can overlook intersectionality. Attacks can be racial, gendered and against religion.
- Third sector hate crime, equality and anti-racist organisations need more funding.
- We need to have structures that give power to the people with the experience and expertise of having suffered hate to make the changes needed.

Iman Atta OBE – Director of TellMAMA

About TellMama

- Collects stats on all four UK nations.
- Tell MAMA advocates and lobby for victims of Islamophobic attacks
- Many victims do not want to report – TellMAMA liaise
- Workshop in schools, justice and mediation work

Current landscape

- From 2015 – increase in offline hate crime – influenced by major attacks in France led to a backlash in UK Muslim communities. EVERY time there is a terrorist attack - impact on Muslim communities
- Brexit impacted ALL communities who were ‘different’. Increase in 465% due to Brexit
- During pandemic, BAME blamed as being ‘super spreaders’ due to the higher prevalence (due to poverty and key worker jobs). Muslims accused of not taking vaccine.
- Rise in spitting and coughing on people – neighbourhood disputes
- Muslim communities have lost confidence in the police’s ability to protect them during the release of lockdown
- Some police forces have actively debunked anti-Muslim misinformation
- TellMAMA have done workshops on ‘social media literacy and how to ‘de-bunk’ myths
- Hate must be looked at equally across all stands and no hierarchy – causes resentment

Victims

- Listening to victims and making them feel heard is very important.
- Again – witnessing silent bystanders is more/equal hurtful and damaging than the hate crime itself
- Victims need updated on their cases.
- Response to hate crime is patchy and inconsistent due to austerity, movement of knowledge and training through pandemic shifting people around. How do we have consistent training in all police forces?

- Not enough resources – victims waiting long time to get taken to make a report.
- Restorative justice can help if victim is comfortable.
- Importance of people coming forward – witness or victim- it is critical to report.

Importance of regulating and legislating social media

- Need to understand better what is motivating the hate crime. Need to question what people gain from spreading this misinformation.
- Providing training to challenge and debunk misinformation.
- Prevention work. Not enough done in terms of citizenship and religious education.
- ‘Think before you click’ education for young people looking at the repercussions of sharing things online.
- It’s about making people ‘human’ and not ‘suspicious communities’. Address misconceptions and stereotypes
- Hate promoted through gaming in some cases.
- We need to use social media better to counter narrative and promote good.