

Culminating Project Proposal

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HATE CRIMES: A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR THE NATHAN HALE COMMUNITY

Short Summary of My Project:

According to the Department of Justice, Hate Crimes are on the rise in the US. Whether this is supported statistically, or anecdotally through recent events like Jenna 6 or the two well-publicized attacks on the New York City Subway, public perception is increasingly drawn to issues of racial, religious, sexually oriented, or mental or physical disability-based crimes of bias. The purpose of my Culminating Project is to shed light on this phenomenon through in-depth research, as well as to create a resource guide for the Nathan Hale community in educating ourselves and preventing such crimes.

Overview

I plan to conduct thorough research of this increasingly complex civil rights issue beyond the headline stories garnering much national attention. How much have hate crimes increased over the past decade? What areas of the country, particularly Washington state and Seattle, deal with bias-based attacks? And, how exactly does the government define a hate crime? Beyond these particulars, I will also research the level of awareness of the surrounding Nathan Hale community by surveying and interviewing students, families and community members. The purpose of this is to provide a thorough and complete illustration of the issue of hate crimes in the Nathan Hale area.

Lastly, the insight and information from government and civil rights organizations, coupled with the knowledge I gain from the community, will support my work to create a resource guide for Nathan Hale and its neighbors. I hope to incorporate factual information with current local and national programs that aim to prevent hate crimes while providing strategies in case a hate crime occurs.

Prior Knowledge

Beyond the recent news headlines of hate crimes, I have recently studied hate crimes in Social Studies and Language Arts classes. We have compared some statistical data with that of the Civil Rights era of the 1960s, while also comparing literature from that era and today.

One of the key differences I have learned thus far is that hate crimes have much broader definition today. As I mentioned above, these crimes of bias include race, religion, sexual preference or orientation, mental or physical disabilities, and other categories. This contrasts greatly with the 1960s' focus which was primarily on racial bias.

I also know that the federal government has passed laws to deter hate crimes, though I strongly believe that the awareness of such laws by the American public is far from ideal.

Expected Outcomes

In order to better understand the issue of hate crimes, I will research the topic from literature, as well as from websites such as:

<http://www.civilrights.org/issues/hate/>

<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/hc2006/index.html>

<http://www.stophate.org/stophate/>

These websites provide substantial data and information on the scope of hate crimes in the US. I will use them to provide relevant evidence of the issue of hate crimes nationally and in our community in Seattle. This research will also help me to formulate a better series of strategies for hate crime education and prevention in the form of a resource guide. This resource guide will be published and made available to each classroom at Nathan Hale High School, as well as to other schools in our community, along with the numerous other Lake City, Wedgewood and Northgate public facilities and organizations.

Final Presentation

My final presentation will include a PowerPoint presentation that highlights the important information and data that represents the realities of hate crimes in America and Seattle. The purpose of this presentation is also to communicate the survey and interview data I collected from Nathan Hale High School and the surrounding community. I hope this convinces my fellow students and community members to be more aware and motivated to address this growing issue.

Finally, I will also present the resource guide which, again, will offer current statistical information of hate crimes in the Seattle area and strategies to prevent or confront current and future problems of hate crimes.