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**The Phenomenon of Hate Crimes during the Trump Administration:
Potential Trend Examination and Rise or Fall Determination**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Master's Degree in Language and Culture**

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“People’s dreams have no end.”

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Abstract

Hate crimes in the United States are illegal activities that are motivated by prejudices against particular groups. They are frequently the result of ingrained stereotypes, and feelings of entitlement or superiority. To address the seriousness of these offenses, the U.S. government established laws and guidelines to discourage hate violence, hold offenders accountable, and provide support to victims. Hate speech also contributes to a social climate that fosters hate crimes by normalizing prejudiced attitudes and encouraging discrimination. This dissertation examines the effects of hate crime offenses during the presidencies of Barack Obama and Donald Trump. It compares and contrasts the approaches and conclusions of Obama and Trump concerning these offenses and investigates the influence of Liberal and Republican ideologies on incidents of bias-motivated crime. It also explores the relationship between the presidency of Donald Trump and the African American community, including Trump's treatment of African Americans, his policies, and developments related to the Black Lives Matter movement. The dissertation underscores the importance of cultivating a community that values diversity, promotes inclusiveness, and actively works to eliminate animosity and bias.

المخلص

إن جرائم الكراهية في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية هي أنشطة غير مشروعة مدفوعة بأفكار مسبقة ضد مجموعات معينة. غالبًا ما تكون نتيجة لأفكار مسبقة متأصلة، وقوالب نمطية، وشعور بالاستحقاق أو التفوق. لمعالجة خطورة هذه الجرائم، وضعت السلطات الأمريكية قوانين ومبادئ توجيهية لتثبيط العنف بدافع الكراهية، ومحاسبة الجناة، وتقديم الدعم للضحايا. يساهم خطاب الكراهية أيضًا في خلق مناخ اجتماعي يعزز جرائم الكراهية من خلال تطبيع المواقف المتحيزة وتشجيع التمييز. تبحث هذه المذكرة في آثار جرائم الكراهية خلال رئاستي باراك أوباما ودونالد ترامب. كما أنها تقارن وتظهر التباين بين مقاربات واستنتاجات أوباما و ترامب فيما يتعلق بهذه الجرائم، وتحقق في تأثير الأيديولوجيات الليبرالية والجمهورية على حوادث الجرائم بدافع التحيز. تستكشف المذكرة أيضا العلاقة بين رئاسة دونالد ترامب والمجتمع الأمريكي من أصل أفريقي، بما في ذلك معاملة ترامب للأميركيين الأفارقة وسياساته والتطورات المتعلقة بحركة " حياة السود مهمة". تؤكد المذكرة على أهمية تنمية مجتمع يقدر التنوع، ويعزز الشمولية، ويعمل بنشاط على القضاء على العداء والتحيز.

List of Abbreviations

ACA	Affordable Care Act
ADL	Anti-Defamation League
AFFH	Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
BLM	Black Lives Matter
CNN	Cable News Network
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
DACA	Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
DOJ	Department Of Justice
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
I.C.E.	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
ID	Identification
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
LBJ	Lyndon Baines Johnson
NCVS	National Crime Victimization Survey
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institution and Human Rights
SPLC	Southern Poverty Law Center
UCR	Uniform Crime Reporting
U.K.	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

U.S.	United States
U.S.C.	United States Code
V.T.H.	Verbal-Textual Hostility

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Introduction

Diversity is one of the most profound elements of nature, existing in every aspect of life. Humans as a conscious species that exists in the natural order are unique in their ability to perceive differences. From this understanding, we are able to tolerate existing varieties. The ability to abide and accept is an atypical human expression, one that is often put to practical use in our everyday social life. However, our tendency towards tolerance also indicates a tendency towards intolerance, which often results in expressions of dissatisfaction that may exacerbate those of hateful violence.

Such terms of violent intolerance often translate to criminal behavior, what is now called hate crimes. Hate crimes are defined as criminal offenses that are motivated by the offender's bias against a particular race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity (The United States Department of Justice). These crimes can take various forms, including vandalism, arson, and even murder. Hate crimes can include economic, political, and societal objectives in addition to intolerance and prejudice (Souza et al.). Although this phenomenon is not restricted to one country, this study investigates the case of hate crimes in the United States. The choice is motivated by the country's history, as well as the abundant discourse on the subject that exists there, not to mention the political and social realities of the United States that influence the degree and the extent of hate crimes both in America and beyond.

Despite the U.S. governmental efforts to fight against the spread of such crimes, harm, both physical and psychological, continues to be inflicted on the targeted victims. Hate crimes can have varying effects on their victims. According to Souza et al., victims of hate crimes may experience higher levels of posttraumatic stress and require more time to recover

than victims of unbiased crimes. Aside from these effects, committing a hate crime sends a message to every member of the victim's group, negatively influencing all of them (46).

The current study seeks to investigate the rapid increase in reported hate crimes in the Trump presidential period, along with basic information and clarifications on the subject matter. The study will also tackle significant cases that have been observed in this particular time period such as the Black Lives Matter movement.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that hate crimes are a phenomenon that has seen a significant increase in recent years in the United States, especially during Donald Trump's presidential term. On this basis, it is worthwhile to conduct this research in order to look for the causes as well as the ulterior motives that led to the high rate of such crimes. The most prominent of these instances include the increase in anti-foreign sentiment, especially Mexicans; hostility against black people and racist campaigns against them; and the persecution and harassment of Arabs and Middle-Easterners in America; whether by the government or the people.

The work presented delves into the phenomenon of hate crimes in the United States and constructs a comprehensive analysis of the causes that have led to its widespread occurrence during Trump's term. It also attempts to understand the incentives that contribute to such a phenomenon and aims to understand the role played by Trump in spreading it, whether through his speeches, which motivate society to commit such acts, or his decisions, which inevitably lead to the proliferation of hate crimes. For more grounded observations, the research exposes and explains different hate crime cases in the United States.

The significant developments in the United States in the last few years, namely, the role Trump played in inducing hate crimes, as well as the large record of reported incidents, raise

several questions that this research answers, the most prominent of which are the following:

What are the characteristics and defining elements of hate crimes? How are they distinct from other forms of criminal acts? What are the common motivations, ideologies, or affiliations associated with individuals or groups involved in such crimes? What is the relationship between hate crimes and hate speech? What are the underlying factors and motivations behind individuals or groups committing hate crimes? To what extent do political rhetoric and leadership influence the incidence of hate crimes? Did the incidence of hate crimes increase or decrease during the Trump administration compared to previous periods? How did the rhetoric and policies of the Trump administration potentially influence the occurrence of hate crimes? Were there any significant events or incidents during the Trump administration that correlated with changes in hate crime rates?

This dissertation is divided into three main chapters each discussing a key element in the research. The first chapter, entitled “Understanding the Ideological and Legal Framework of Hate Crimes”, deals with the evolution of hate crimes in the United States. It presents a step-by-step understanding of the hate crimes phenomenon through detailed background information about the subject matter. It also seeks to formulate a general idea that will help to build the following chapters. The second chapter, titled “Term Comparison between President Barack Obama and President Donald Trump in Relation to Hate Crime”, is concerned with the comparison between Donald Trump and Barack Obama’s political positions using detailed discourse analysis of the presidents’ speeches, rhetoric, relying on the analysis of scholars who are interested in the same field of research. The last chapter, which is entitled “Planting the Seeds of Hate in the State: Donald Trump vs. African Americans”, exemplifies the observations reached in the previous chapter through the cases of the Black Lives Matter movement as well as

the issues of immigrants in the United States.

The Phenomenon of hate-based crime is an extremely important issue that needs to be continuously discussed in academic circles. It is quite crucial to put into perspective what researchers, journalists, and politicians have said about hate crimes in general, as well as to develop a multi-dimensional image of the roots of the problem from different aspects, be they political, social, or moral. This literature review will act as the cornerstone of this present work examination.

Hate crimes are usually defined as violent acts based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or some other basis. In their research for Harvard University, *Reimagining Rights Responsibilities in the United States: Hate Crimes*, John Shattuck and Mathias Risse provide a general idea on this topic by giving the term in question an adequate definition. This is done in order to clarify the image in the mind of the reader. Shattuck and Risse explained the importance of distinguishing between hate crimes and hate statements, each of which has its own role in influencing society. They also offer a glimpse into the history of hate crimes in the United States, such as government protection of slavery, genocidal violence against Native Americans, anti-Chinese sentiment and the Chinese exclusion act of 1882, and finally the Ku Klux Klan, and lynching.

By the same token, Donald Altschiller includes in his book *Contemporary World Issues, Criminal Justice, Hate Crimes, the Third Edition* a general overview of the phenomenon and a historical background providing facts and data documents as well as other materials for a better understanding of the contemporary issues facing the world today.

Another key point concerning the phenomenon of hate-based crimes is that it has seen different levels of escalation in both the Barack Obama and Donald Trump presidencies,

therefore Daniel Ramsey, in his thesis *Hate Crimes: A Statistical Comparison of Reported Hate Crimes and Victimitizations during the Obama and Trump Administrations* compared, studied, and assessed deeply the potential trends in reported hate crime statistics under the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting program database, along with hate crime victimizations under the Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Victimitization Survey (NCVS) during President Obama's first term (2009-2012) and President Trump's term (2017-2020).

As an illustration of the research problem, it is equally important to mention the most compelling evidence that exemplifies hate crimes, since the phenomenon touches a number of different minority groups, such as gender, ethnicity, and especially race. Ely Aaronson in his book *From Slave Abuse to Hate Crime: The Criminalization of Racial Violence in American History* describes how the criminalization of racial violence has shaped the development of American racial history and how supremacist groups are diverse and differently characterized in age, class, and gender structures while maintaining the same goal of cleaning up the "cultural pollution" that plagues their proud nation.

The issue of racial violence is closely linked to bias-motivated violence and encompasses a broader phenomenon. A notable example highlighting this issue is the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, which gained momentum following the tragic case of George Floyd. The movement has not only sparked the interest of researchers and sociologists but also prompted a deeper examination of racism. In her article titled *Black Lives Matter, and Yes, you are Racist: The Parallelism of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries*, Henrika McCoy draws parallels between the past and present centuries, asserting that history seems to repeat itself concerning the experiences of black individuals. McCoy further contends that the year 2020,

marked by the pandemic, acted as a catalyst, resurfacing past injustices and providing an opportunity for the persistence of systemic racism against black communities by white individuals.

To support and strengthen this research, it is necessary to rely on both primary and secondary resources. While Trump's speeches and civil rights documents as well as the provided case studies will be the primary source of investigation and analysis of relevant data; a collection of books, articles, and journals will be the secondary source to give a clear and understandable view of the subject. Mostly, to complete a dissertation that remains solid for future research.

In order to solidify this research as well as the abundant discourse on hate crimes as an existing phenomenon during Trump's presidential term, this research requires the use of the three following approaches: the historical, the comparative, and the analytical approaches. The first chapter recounts the history of hate crimes in the United States. The second chapter focuses on the use of qualitative comparative analysis in order to compare and analyze data collected during both the Obama and Trump Administrations periods, thus supporting the aforementioned claim of this study. The third chapter exemplifies the previous claims through real-world cases of hate crimes (Black Lives Matter). This is done by using analytical approaches.

Chapter One

Understanding the Ideological and Legal Framework of Hate Crimes

For many decades, individuals worldwide have faced injustice, discrimination, and violence due to their perceived identity. To be treated differently and judged based on one's color, ethnicity, religion, or disability without due difference to one's character is indeed extremely cruel. This becomes even more frustrating when considering that these variances are often treated as flaws that the person concerned should correct. Closer observation of hate and bias as an existing phenomenon in the world yields the sense that it is not exclusive to one country or region. Be that as it may, the United States is perhaps the most appropriate place to examine it. This is likely due to the country's nature as a melting pot of both cultures and ethnicities, as well as other identifiers, like religion and sexuality, that provide the perfect environment for group identity tensions. This latter point is often the result of a series of socially constructed beliefs held by majority groups that may lead to an "us vs. them" mentality. On the basis of this deduction, this chapter deals with the conceptual framework of hate crimes, dissecting its major component. A step that is essential for a better understanding of the last two chapters.

1.1. Definition of Hate Crimes

In order to grasp the essence of hate crimes as an existing phenomenon, one must first understand the meaning of the term itself. For this end, it is possible to rely on two sources: dictionaries and academic literature. For instance, the *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* defines hate crimes as "uncountable violent acts that are committed against people because they are of a different race or ethnic group." Moreover, the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines it as "any various crimes (such as assaults or defacement of property) when motivated by hostility to

the victim as a member of a group (such as one based on color, creed, or gender).”

In regards to academic literature, ever since the recognition of hate crimes as a social phenomenon in the West, especially in the United States, academics have sought to propose a proper definition that has the potential to facilitate a deeper grasp of the behavior and its ambiguities. One such academic, Kusmindar Chahal, defines hate crimes as events that are directed towards people based on their perceived membership in a group that has a certain trait (3). By the same token, Key Sun enumerates these traits in his definition, saying that hate crimes are incidents in which the victim is targeted because of his or her real or perceived race, color, religion, handicap, or national origin. The U.S. Federal legislation itself follows the same line of identification, saying that a hate crime offense is determined by the behavior in question’s likelihood to be “evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, disability, or ethnicity” (3).

1.1.1. The History of Hate Crimes in the United States

It is well known that the initial step in solving a problem is to recognize that it exists in the first place. By the same token, it is possible to say that hate or bias-motivated crimes are the results of a widespread phenomenon that goes back thousands of years before they were recognized as such. Naturally, this applies to the United States as well; discriminatory hate has existed as a human behavior both before and after the creation of the American nation where it now has the most notoriety. Its frequency in the country is largely affected by a series of socially constructed beliefs that may give criminals an excuse for bigotry and hatred, not to mention the resulting violence ranging from assault, harassment, vandalism, and verbal abuse, to murder. Shattuck and Risse touch upon this point saying that the United States has a lengthy history of bias-motivated crime. They emphasize that, although these instances of hate are recognizable now, the same cannot be said in regard to the past where these activities were frequently not

labeled in such a negative manner. The reason behind this is that, typically, these sentiments were held by certain dominant groups at the time, thus freeing them from judgment (5).

The U.S. government was often complicit in the commission of hate crimes during these times, either by deploying state violence against racial and ethnic minorities or by denying victims legal remedies. Examples of state-sanctioned hate crimes include the Native American genocides, slavery, segregation, anti-Asian violence, as well as many others. For instance, the protection of race-based chattel slavery continued to be legalized and practiced in the United States thanks in large part to the involvement of the federal government (Philbrick and Steven). The latter worked in favor of perpetuating slavery by allowing slave owners excessive political influence (History.com). This is not to mention that during the years preceding and following the Civil War, the U.S. government issued the Fugitive Slave Acts, which permitted the apprehension and return of fugitive slaves inside U.S. territory long after certain states outlawed slavery (Dobmeier).

Similar injustices befell the Native population of America, as well. In their case, the U.S. government was responsible for the violent genocide against Native Americans under the guise of “civilization” and “manifest destiny”, allowing approximately 1,500 battles, assaults, and raids on Native people. Moreover, President Andrew Jackson campaigned for the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which resulted in the U.S. Army displacing 60,000 American Indians from their ancestral territory over the next decade. Thousands of those displaced later died as a result of forced marches (Dobmeier). By the end of the late 19th century, less than 238,000 of the indigenous people of America would survive the Indian Wars out of a population of 5 to 15 million estimated in 1492 (History.com).

Asians are another concerned group, especially those of Chinese origin. Beginning in the 19th century, animosity between Chinese immigrants and American natives for jobs has been enough fuel for racially motivated violence against the former. An instance of such tensions was the 1871 “Chinese Massacre”, where a mob of around 100 white men torched and pillaged Los Angeles’ Chinatown, murdering as many as 28 Chinese (Chang). During events of this kind, the U.S. government sanctioned legal discrimination both at the state and federal levels (History.com). Another instance was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first substantial law restricting Chinese immigration into the United States. A law that is still effective today as the only piece of legislation restricting immigration for a single nationality to America. Additional regulations followed, eventually making Chinese immigration prohibited by 1902, a ban that was only abolished in 1943 when China became a U.S. ally in World War II (Fong).

Racial discrimination continued to affect the American-born children and grandchildren of these Immigrants. For instance, during the Great Depression of 1929, a California mob of hundreds of white men stormed the Filipino village of Watsonville, assaulting and killing individuals in an episode known as the Watsonville Riots. This is not to mention the detainment of 120,000 American citizens of Japanese heritage without due process in internment camps as a result of WWII tensions (Chow).

Given these points, it is important to realize that this period of complacency provided a perfect breeding ground for hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) or the Klan for short, an American white supremacist hate organization. At its height of activity, the KKK used extrajudicial lynching to prevent Black Americans from exercising their social, political, and economic rights. According to the Equal Justice Initiative, by the end of the Reconstruction era, between 1877 and 1950, there were 4084 lynchings in 12 Southern States (“Lynching in America

| EJI Report”). In locations where lynching was more widespread, the act was less likely to be recorded or punished by authorities. These crimes served as a tool of intimidation to induce racial subjugation and segregation (King et al.).

The discriminatory interests of the Klan did not target African Americans exclusively. In the 1920s, after the Klan grew in size, reaching an estimated 4 million members by 1925, it started to target immigrants on the basis of their religious affiliation (mainly Catholic Christians and Jews). The Group adopted methods such as bombing and murder to terrorize communities in the 1950s and 1960s, including the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, which resulted in the deaths of four young girls (“16th St Church Bombing: The Death Toll of White Supremacy – Academy 4SC”). The SPLC estimates that there are still between 5,000 and 8,000 Klan members active today.

This glimpse into the history of these crimes in the United States provides enough context for understanding hate crimes in the modern era. Although hate crimes have risen to the top of politicians’ priority lists at all levels of government in recent years, the topic is not new. In actuality, its extensive record in the United States is what lends it much attention in the country, often for fear of the repetition of its most extreme cases.

1.1.2. The Psychological Behavior of Bias-Motivated Hate Crimes

Since hate crimes are a phenomenon that greatly shaped the history of both the world and the United States, one must dig deeper to understand the characteristic behavior of those who commit them. It is practically impossible not to question the cruel behavior and criminal urge of hate crime actors. With this in mind, Sociologists Jack McDevitt and Jack Levin identify four bias-motivated groups of offenders in a study that is still routinely used by law enforcement today. Although there is some blurring and overlap between these categories, they have helped

to better understand criminal conduct.

Sociologists claim that 66% of hate crimes are perpetrated by “thrill-seeking” criminals who are searching for social acceptability or psychological euphoria. Almost 90% of these criminals do not know their victims, and they normally are not affiliated with any established hate groups (Lieberman). Attacks frequently include violence against persons in addition to destruction and sacrilege of material property (National Center for Hate Crime Prevention, 48).

For example, in April 2020, four teenage girls were arrested for hate crimes after reportedly harassing an Asian woman on a New York City bus. The girls screamed expletives, accusing her of bringing coronavirus, and striking her on the head with an umbrella thus wounding her. She later needed stitches for the wound (Romine).

Another disturbing incident took place in Madison, Wisconsin, where police initiated a hate-crime investigation after an 18-year-old black teenager was stopped in her car at a red light while a Black Lives Matter protest was taking place nearby. Four white males approached her, poured lighter fluid into her car window, and lit her on fire. She was later rushed to a nearby hospital to be treated for her burns (“Hate Crime Probe Underway...”).

Twenty-five percent of hate crimes, on the other hand, are motivated by “defensive” reasons. The perpetrators in this case, generally see themselves as the guardians of a valuable material object or intangible right, targeting their attacks towards a specific victim who reflects the perceived incursion. An example would be attacks against Hispanics in response to a perceived danger to “rightfully American” jobs (Brooks).

Additionally, “retaliatory” attacks account for around 8% of all hate crimes. These criminals generally become aware of a crime perpetrated by members of a religious or racial group and seek vengeance by committing a hate crime against random members of that

community. The best example that embodies this type would be crimes committed against Muslims following 9/11 or the 2015 San Bernardino terrorist attack (U.S. Department of Justice).

Lastly, “missionary” hate crimes account for around 1% of all hate crimes. In these instances, criminals generally possess antagonism toward other groups and see minority groups as a danger to American culture, economics, and racial purity, considering it their profession to plan and carry out high-precision, fatal assaults. This is the least common and most lethal type of perpetrator, yet it includes several high-profile instances, including the El Paso Walmart Shooting (U.S. Department of Justice). In another high-profile case, in March 2019, James Fields, Jr. pled guilty to 29 hate crime counts in connection with the 2017 death of Heather Heyer, an anti-racism activist, during the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. Prior to the incident, it was revealed that he shared inflammatory content on social media, and called for murder against people of color (Zraick and Jacobs).

It could be said that, oftentimes, hatred proves to be more potent than any neutralizing strategy. Unlike other types of illegal activity that contravene widely held cultural standards, hate is sanctioned in the dominant society. The offender feels supported and encouraged, he sees no need to cease his attacks, and his excuse is readily available (Levin 6). In other words, hate is clearly more than enough reason for the cruelty and violence inflicted by these perpetrators.

It is evidently clear, then, that hate crime offenders are substantially motivated by feelings of contempt and bias that can be compartmentalized based on motives like retaliation, defense, purpose, or even mere thrill-seeking. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there is no excuse in the world that could justify the heinous acts committed against the victims of these crimes.

1.1.3. Individual and Group Hate

Identifying the perpetrators of hate crimes is another component that is crucial in obtaining a firmer grasp of the topic. To this end, Abramovitz demonstrates that hate crimes are committed by people of all ages, races, and ethnicities. However, young white men are most likely to be the perpetrators. These criminals can operate on their own, as members of informal groups or organized formal ones. Every hate group has a set of beliefs or practices that target or denigrate whole groups of people, usually because of their unchangeable characteristics. Contrary to the apparent belief that organized hate groups commit the majority of hate crimes, studies show that the opposite is likely to be true: in most cases, individuals or informal groups of friends are responsible. For instance, on June 26, 2011, 18-year-old Deryl Dedmon along with nine other high schoolers abused 49-year-old James Anderson, a local black man. The encounter resulted in Anderson's death after the group ran him over, killing him immediately. The entire incident was recorded by a surveillance camera in the area and all of the participants were found guilty of a hate crime in 2015 (20).

In order to evaluate the traits of those responsible for hate-crime episodes, the FBI's UCR Program gathered data on more than 6,000 offenders. 53.6% of these offenders were White, 24% were Black, 6.9% were multiracial groupings, and 12.9% were unidentified. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), maintains findings in the related category of age groups. Statistics resulting from the survey show that 43% of offenders are older than 30. 17% are between the ages of 18 and 29, and 15% are less than 17 years old. Because bias incidents and hate crimes involving children may be classified as bullying, it is possible that this number is underreported. Additionally, the survey reveals that hate crimes are more frequently perpetrated by groups of individuals than other types of crimes. While 63% of hate crime offenders act

alone, a good number of overall violent hate crimes, 30% to be exact, featured multiple offenders than violent non-hate crimes (17%). Still, just 44% of offenders of hate crimes are known to their victims, compared to 55% for non-hate crimes. This indicates that hate crimes are more likely to be committed by an unidentified, unrelated person (Shattuck and Risse 8).

Through these numbers, it is possible to narrow down the pool of the most likely perpetrators of hate crimes: such persons are often white and fall under the broad age range between 17 and 30 years, maybe more. Hate crimes are likely committed by a group of individuals rather than committed individually, and in most cases, the victims are chosen randomly depending on the perpetrator's bias rather than their acquaintance.

1.1.4. Hate Crime Victims

Hate crimes can include a wide range of legally punishable acts: from verbal to physical abuse, including torture and murder. Even though they receive minimal public notice, less serious actions are nevertheless deemed hate crimes. Institutions or symbols linked to a specific group, such as churches, community centers, crosses, or cemeteries, may be the target of hate crimes. Based on FBI's 2015 report, 63.1% of hate crimes were committed against individuals, compared to 36.1% against property. In 47% of these incidents, the victims or the property were the objects of racial discrimination. 18.6% of the population was targeted on the basis of religion, 18.6% based on sexual orientation, 11.9 % based on ethnicity, 1.8 % based on gender identity, 1.5 % based on disability, and 0.6 % based on gender (Abramovitz 21).

1.1.5. Effects of Hate Crime

Naturally, hate crimes entail grave consequences, both for the individual and the community. Abramovitz states that, compared to victims of crimes without bias, victims of hate crimes usually experience greater levels of personal suffering. This is partially due to the fact

that they are frequently assaulted more viciously than any other type of victim. On the physical front, victims of hate crimes tend to spend a longer amount of time receiving care at a hospital. Moreover, the attack itself can result in irreversible physical damage to the victim's body, like maiming and crippling. Mentally speaking, the traumatizing effects tend to be invisible and prolonged. Anger, dread, obsessive recollection of the incident, social seclusion, and thoughts of retaliation are typical reactions found in victims. Such hard emotions can result in difficulty in functioning during everyday life. This is not to mention physical symptoms of emotional distress such as insomnia, and the development of destructive habits like drug and alcohol misuse (22).

Abramovitz adds that those who are members of overlapping commonly targeted groups are at an even higher risk than those who number among just one or two groups. The people concerned in this regard, are frequently attacked for an accumulated set of characteristics that they cannot alter, which is one reason why the resulting impacts may be twice as severe on them. Further, the options available for potential victims to take precautions in regard to hate crimes targeted against them are often limited if nonexistent. Frederick M. Lawrence, a legal expert, previously referred to hate crimes as an "assault with no way out" (22).

1.2. Hate Crime Laws

Hate crime laws exist to defend those who have been victimized purely because of their affiliation with a group that is legally protected; these groups typically include groups that have historically faced oppression in the greater community. The application of particular hate crime legislation and the justifications for and against their creation and implementation vary considerably across the globe. Yet research shows that typical offenders are more likely to be categorized as thrill seekers and not necessarily members of a formal hate group, considering

that organized hate groups are frequently thought to be the perpetrators of hate crimes (The U.S. Department of Justice).

State and federal legislation meant to prevent hate crimes make up the country's hate crime laws (likewise known as bias crimes). Even though state laws differ, current legislation allows for federal prosecution of hate crimes perpetrated on the basis of a person's race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, or gender. Hate crime statistics must be compiled and made public by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and campus police departments (The U.S. Department of Justice).

In their research, "Prosecuting Hate Crimes: Practical guide," the ODIHR emphasized that hate crime prosecutions can be pursued even in the absence of explicit rulings, even if hate crime legislation serves to formalize community opposition to such crimes and make data collection more efficient (ODIHR 25). Each legal system in the same way agrees that crimes that have the greatest potential for harm or are particularly contrary to the values of society should be punished with more severe penalties. These two conditions are met by bias-motivated crimes. Because it causes more harm, affects society on the whole and also contradicts the basic legal principles of equal rights and protection under the law (25). Bias offenses, by their very nature, are illegal acts punishable by law. Nonetheless, criminal justice systems must ensure that the additional harm caused by the biased motive is taken into account when making the decision and punishing the offender. Hence, biased motive evidence should be presented to the court so that this injury can be considered for conviction and sentencing (25).

1.2.1. Civil Rights Act of 1968

On April 4, 1968, civil rights leader and activist Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. After his assassination, President Lyndon B. Johnson pressured

Congress to pass additional civil rights legislation amid a wave of unrest in more than 100 cities across the United States. LBJ, hoping to have it enacted before King's funeral on April 9, argued that the Civil Rights Act of 1968 would provide adequate evidence of King and his legacy (The U.S. Department of Justice).

As a reaction to the escalating civil rights movement (and widespread dismay following the killings of civil rights advocates Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James E. Cheney in 1963), the U.S. legislature enacted this all-encompassing legislation. This has significantly expanded safeguards against any kind of bias (Altschiller 7). The protections include: Participating in any election, taking part in any service, privilege, program, facility, or activity offered or managed by the United States, requesting or taking advantage of employment benefits from any U.S. government agency, participating alongside a grand or petit juror in any U.S. court, receiving government funding, and enrolling in any public school or college regardless of race, color, religion, or national origin (7-8). As mentioned by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Section 245 of Title 18 of the United States Code serves in the image of the basic legal foundation for the FBI's authority over hate crimes (8).

1.2.2 Federal Legislation

Before 1980, only a limited number of states in the United States had implemented laws that specifically targeted hate crimes. While a few states had general regulations that banned desecration of religious establishments and obstruction of religious rituals, no consistent and all-encompassing approach was taken to tackle the issue of hate crimes. Hate crimes were previously not taken seriously and were not penalized to the maximum extent of the law. In some governing systems, particularly the criminal justice system, hate crimes were even encouraged, condoned, or disregarded altogether. However, in 1981, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), a

group committed to combating anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice, developed a prototype statute for hate crimes. The ADL's prototype law served as a template for states to follow in creating their own hate crime statutes. Thanks to the ADL's endeavors, the number of states with hate crime laws grew significantly, and almost every state now has some form of legislation to tackle hate crimes. These laws usually impose harsher penalties for crimes committed with a bias or discrimination against specific groups, such as racial, or religious hate crimes (Scotting 14).

Federal hate crime statutes that cover specific offenses committed on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or handicap are enforced by the Department of Justice. After the Civil Rights Act of 1968 was passed, the Department of Justice started pursuing federal hate crime cases. The details of current federal laws on hate crimes are provided below (The U.S. Department of Justice). Criminal Interference with Right to Fair Housing, 42 U.S.C. 3631: According to this law, it is unlawful to use or threaten to use force to obstruct someone's capacity to obtain housing because of the victim's race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial situation, or national origin (U.S. Code).

Damage to Religious Property, Church Arson Prevention Act, 18 U.S.C. 247: Whoever intentionally defaces, damages, or destroys any religious real property, because of the religious character, or attempts to do so, or obstructs by force or threat of force against religious real property, any person in the enjoyment of that person's free exercise of religious beliefs, or attempts to do so, will be punished in subsection. (Title 18, U.S. Code 247). This law makes it illegal to intentionally damage, deface, or destroy religious real property when doing so will have an impact on interstate or international trade, the property's religious significance, or the race,

color, or ethnicity of those who are connected to it. The law also makes it illegal to intentionally prevent someone from freely practicing their religion by using force or threatening to use force (U.S. Code).

Violent Interference with Federally Protected Rights, 18 U.S.C. 245: This law makes it unlawful to use or threaten to use force in an effort to prevent someone from engaging in a federally protected activity on the basis of that person's race, color, religion, or national origin. Education for the general public, employment, jury duty, travel, and use of public accommodations are all federally protected activities. Using or threatening to use force against anyone who is assisting and supporting others in engaging in these federally protected activities is also illegal under this statute (U.S. Code). Conspiracy Against Rights, 18 U.S.C. 241 forbids two or more people from planning to harm, threaten, or intimidate a person in any state, territory, or district as they freely exercise or enjoy any rights or privileges guaranteed to them by the U.S. Constitution or federal statutes (U.S. Code).

1.2.3. Why should Hate Crimes be Punished?

Troy A. Scotting mentioned in his research, "Hate Crimes and the Need for Stronger Federal Legislation," that at a communal level, biased crimes generate a lack of confidence and tension among individuals belonging to diverse groups, which can ultimately lead to a "cycle of violent revenge." Such crimes correspondingly induce a sense of detachment within society. The sufferer and others from the affected group not only isolate themselves to evade the possibility of future attacks but somehow the rest of the community refrains from mixing with them. Therefore, due to the heightened harm inflicted upon the victim, the targeted community, and society in general, it is evident that hate crimes warrant more severe penalties than comparable offenses. Treating these abhorrent acts to the same extent that hate crimes carries additional,

significant consequences. Scotting based his study on notes by Lori A. Spillane in light of a source to confirm his information; the purpose of these notes is to show that a significant consequence is that penalizing hate crimes will discourage future offenses. Bringing perpetrators of hate crimes to justice will aid in the victim's recovery following such an incident. Non-punishment of hate crime offenders actually promotes the occurrence of more hate crimes, conveys to the victim's communities that their safety is not a top priority, and neglects to hold offenders accountable for the harm they have inflicted (Scotting 12,13).

In another piece of research, Tatjana Petrushevska and Martina Gligorova stated in their book *Why Hate Crimes should be Punished more Rigorously*, that the punishment for all offenses, even those motivated by hate, must follow a logical circle under the law's purview, with a necessary connection established between criminal law and distributive justice. On the perpetrator's end, fairness is achieved by finding a balance between the severity of the crime and the punishment it warrants. Two factors determine the gravity of the offense: the nature of the act committed and the culpability or accountability of the offender (Petrushevska and Gligorova 169). They added too that the reason why hate crimes warrant severe punishment is due to the harm inflicted on the victim, which extends to society in its entirety. Besides that, the factors that contribute to hate crimes, just like those outlined above, play a role in determining the severity of the punishment. The legal treatment of hate crimes involves harsher penalties for the perpetrators, with the acts being considered separate from other offenses. This is due to the fact that hate crimes pose a threat to fundamental human rights and freedoms. The perpetrator's motive is considered an aggravating factor since it endangers not just the targeted group but society in general. The perpetrator's personality, subjective danger, intention, and motive are emphasized in determining the severity of the crime. All of these factors must be taken into account when weighing the gravity of the

offense (171).

1.3. Hate Crime vs. Hate Speech

The First Amendment protects hate speech, which is not illegal despite often seeking to shame, frighten, or incite violence or bias against specific groups. Nevertheless, the government can punish violent discrimination that targets individuals for their unique qualities by means of criminal behavior. Americans have the freedom to preach, think, and hold any views they choose. Hate crime regulations only apply when a person deliberately targets another for violence or destruction based on prejudiced beliefs. Racial, anti-Semitic, or other derogatory speech that demeans a particular group can be used like evidence when used during a hate crime (Lieberman).

Almost every criminal offense could be considered a hate crime if it meets the two criteria of “having a biased motive and being recognized as an offense by the law.” In spite of that, hate speech is a specific type of offense that involves public communication that distributes, incites, supports, or justifies hate or violence against someone or a group based on their color, race, gender, age, religious views, or physical or mental health in order to diminish their dignity. Hate speech does not have the “base offense” element found in hate crimes. This means that hate speech is not a crime unless it is motivated by bigotry or intolerance. It is merely an expression of human opinion. Consequently, the concept of hate crime is much broader than that of hate speech (Lieberman).

1.3.1 Definition of Hate Speech

In reference to the dictionary, “hate speech” (against somebody or something) is a speech or writing that disparages or threatens a certain group of people, particularly on the basis of their ethnicity, or religion (*Oxford*). In other words, hate speech is defined commensurate with “any

form of expression through language, written or spoken, or conduct that involves the use of derogatory or discriminatory terms targeting an individual or a group of people”. When “hate speech” aims to inspire violence against oppressed communities; it can be particularly deadly. However, even less extreme examples of “hate speech,” such as recurrent epithets and slurs or harmful stereotypes, can have an adverse effect on the environment. In addition to potentially causing psychological suffering, “hate speech” can contribute to more generalized kinds of social, political, economic, and cultural marginalization by making people feel like their dignity is continuously being attacked.

In his book *Hate Crimes: Facts on File*, Thomas Streissguth states that hate speech is a spoken word or written expression that is biased, prejudiced, or hateful toward a person or group because of that person or group’s real or imagined race, color, religion, national origin, etc. (136). Hate speech is frequently viewed in a manner similar to a binary option. This is partly due to efforts to automate its detection or censor or sanction it, necessitating clear distinctions to classify whether a piece of communication is hate speech or not (136).

The term “hate speech” pertains to any means of communication, whether spoken, written, or gestured, that promotes violence, prejudice, or animosity towards individuals or groups based on specific traits they possess. Hate speech is a human sentiment that can be provoked or amplified by exposure to particular forms of information. The dissemination of hate speech can be facilitated through the use of the internet and social media platforms in this digital era. Usually, hate speech is directed at individuals or groups who possess identifiable traits and is expressed through offensive language or threats to provoke or demean them. It is classified into three categories: dehumanization and demonization, incitement to violence, and early warning (Ugarte).

Dehumanization involves belittling groups and equating them to culturally despised subhuman entities, comparable to pigs, rats, monkeys, or germs. This can have two political outcomes: it can collectivize members of the out-group into a detested single entity and release members of the in-group from any guilt for supporting or committing violence against them. Demonization and dehumanization are extreme forms of negative group characterization that justify political violence. Hate speech involves incitement to violence, which is illegal in many jurisdictions. Even in the United States, it is considered a crime to incite “imminent lawless action” when such action is likely. Early warning signs of hate speech include creating an in-group versus out-group dynamic, criticizing negative actions, and referring to groups by negative traits. These can help develop hatred for outgroups, making it easier to employ more extreme types of hate speech (Ugarte).

1.3.2 The Effects of Hate Speech

International studies, made by John Dovidio in his book *On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty Years after Allport*, Dovidio notes that hate speech has a negative effect on democratic participation and social cohesion. Dovidio’s research suggests that even if hate speech is considered legal, it still generates a sense of fear and marginalization among target groups, which in turn deters them from participating in society (143). Besides, hate speech is more than just a symptom of prejudice and bias, as it actively defames both the target group and other readers or listeners. This generates a vicious cycle of hate speech that creates fear and anxiety among the target group and undermines their sense of dignity and equality (158). The author highlights the importance of recognizing the detrimental effects of hate speech on both individuals and society totally. It underscores the need for legal and social frameworks that effectively address hate speech and protect individuals from its harmful impacts (203). The findings presented by

Dovidio provide valuable insights for scholars, policymakers, and activists working towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society (203).

1.3.3. The Relation between Hate Crimes and Hate Speech

Hate speech and hate crimes are interrelated phenomena that stem from the same underlying reasons for hatred and intolerance directed at people or organizations primarily based on certain characteristics. Although they may be awesome concepts, they frequently overlap and may be collectively reinforcing. Hate speech and hate crimes frequently intersect and affect each other. In a few cases, hate crimes are preceded by means of hate speech, with perpetrators publicly expressing hostility, prejudice, or violent purpose towards a selected institution or individual. Hate speech can contribute to the development of a climate of hostility and prejudice, which may inspire people to behave with violence or discrimination. Furthermore, hate speech can function as a catalyst for hate crimes by dehumanizing or demonizing certain organizations, legitimizing violence against them, or discriminating against them, and creating an environment conducive to the commission of such crimes. Besides, Hate speech can contribute to emotions of fear, anxiety, and lack of confidence amongst goal communities, exacerbating social divisions and undermining social cohesion.

In his report to the University of Harvard Kennedy School titled *Reimagining Rights and Responsibilities in the United States: Hate Crimes*, John Shattuck mentioned that the current increase in hate crime incidents can be partly attributed to an increase in hate speech in public, which normalizes hatred of particular groups of people and fosters an environment where offenders feel more free to express their hatred through violent deeds (Shattuck 7). Shattuck believes that this upheaval of hate speech was led by President Trump, who was inciting hatred

in his Twitter speeches and tweets, attacking Mexicans, Muslim immigrants, Jews, and even African Americans and Native Americans (7).

Karsten Müller and Carlo Schwarz, in their research paper “Fanning the Flames of Hate: Social Media and Hate Crime,” claimed that there has been a heated discussion surrounding hate speech on the internet, with proponents contending that it has tangible consequences and opponents asserting that regulating it infringes upon freedom of expression. To comprehend the correlation between online hate speech and its repercussions in the physical world, it is imperative to have empirical proof. Nevertheless, it can be subjective, and diverse individuals and cultures may construe certain forms of speech differently. Despite the fact that online hate speech has been the focus of extensive debate and policy measures, there is a scarcity of empirical data that demonstrates its translation into social media behavior in the real world. To acquire a comprehensive comprehension of the impact of hate speech and to devise effective methods to mitigate its harmful effects, research is needed to address self-definitions, restrict access to data, and establish causal links (2).

In conclusion, it becomes extremely obvious that a world without hate is far from being achieved. A fact that becomes more apparent if the extensive series of hate crimes that shaped human history ever since the last century is taken into consideration. It was only when the effects of hate crimes became noticeable that the world began to see the necessity of taking action to prevent further disaster. Consequently, with this intention in mind, rigorous studies of the phenomenon and its components and its legal ramifications continue to be conducted by academics towards the goal of reaching potential solutions.

Chapter Two

Term Comparison between President Barack Obama and President Donald Trump in Relation to Hate Crime

The previous chapter has established that the United States has a long history of discrimination that has continued to the present day. Reports according to various sources such as the FBI, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and civil rights organizations, show that hate crime numbers have fluctuated significantly in recent years, specifically during the presidencies of Barack Obama and Donald Trump. In relation to this, it is possible to observe the number of notable differences in how Obama and Trump addressed and responded to the issue, resulting in divergent outcomes: Hate crime reports decreased during Obama's presidency but significantly increased during Trump's tenure. To understand the two presidents' approaches to hate crimes, it is crucial to examine the issue from both the party and presidential perspectives, as these factors shape the overall conduct of the administration. This chapter aims to analyze and compare the reasons behind the differing hate crime reports during the presidencies of Obama and Trump.

To this end, it is important to keep in mind that bias-motivated hate is a complex phenomenon that comes into being as a consequence of an intricate web of variables, which scheme changes on a situational basis. Examples may include societal attitudes, economic disparities, historical contexts, and individual motivations, as well as many others. This chapter focuses strictly on politically-induced variables, namely party ideology and presidential influence.

2.1. Political Party Influence on Hate Crimes

In order to make an adequate conclusion regarding the Obama and Trump Administrations' influence on the increase and decrease of hate crimes, it is necessary to understand the political ideologies of the parties that they are affiliated with. For instance, President Trump is aligned with the Republican party, which generally emphasizes individual freedoms and limited government intervention (“Ideologies of Political Parties: Lesson Overview”) President Obama, on the other hand, is aligned with the Democratic Party, which tends to prioritize social justice and equality (“Healing the Soul of America”)

Conservative and Liberal ideologies, as existing forms of political thought, have had a significant impact on shaping the legal landscape of the United States. Each ideology holds a distinct perspective on the role of law in society and has influenced legal systems both in the United States and abroad. Conservatism emphasizes tradition, order, and hierarchy. Its followers believe that the law should uphold traditional values and maintain social order. Liberal ideology, in contrast, prioritizes individual rights and equality. Those who endorse it view the law as a tool to protect individuals from oppression and discrimination (Rawat). Thus, Conservative ideology, as represented by the Republican Party, typically prioritizes law and order (Rawat), emphasizing the importance of strong law enforcement and punishment as a means to deter and combat hate crimes. Republicans often advocate for robust law enforcement agencies and support measures such as stricter sentencing and increased funding for police departments (Teles and Dagan).

On the opposite end, Liberal ideology, as represented by the Democratic Party, prioritizes social justice, equality, and addressing the root causes of hate crimes. Democrats are committed to ending discrimination based on various factors such as race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, language, gender, or disability status. They actively reinforce and strengthen legislation

to limit discrimination on the aforementioned bases, such as the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act to combat racial and religious profiling in law enforcement (“Healing the Soul of America”). When it comes to social issues, the Republican Party tends to lean towards social conservatism and place a stronger emphasis on traditional values and individual responsibilities. The Democratic Party, on the other hand, is often more socially progressive and supports policies that aim to promote social equality and protect individual rights (Rawat).

The Democratic Party strives for equality of opportunity for all Americans, irrespective of sex, age, race, ethnicity, religion, creed, or national origin (Cano). They often perceive hate crimes as a manifestation of systemic issues such as discrimination, inequality, and prejudice. Their approach focuses on fostering inclusivity, promoting tolerance, and addressing the underlying social factors that contribute to hate crimes. Democrats advocate for policies such as educational initiatives, community outreach programs, and social reforms aimed at promoting understanding and empathy among different groups (UNESCO).

The Democratic Party seems to have better traction with minorities themselves. This could be due to its Liberal stream, which pays close attention to their particular needs and hardships, not to mention the utopian promise of a root solution to hate and discrimination in the United States. There is plenty of evidence that showcases minority group support for the Democratic Party, for example, based on a study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2020 analyzing election numbers by party support, approximately 53% of registered white voters align themselves with the Republican Party or lean towards it, whereas a significant majority of 83% of registered black voters identify as Democrats or lean towards the Democratic Party (“Parsing Party Polarization in Congress”). This comes as a complete contrast to the historical record of

political parties in the United States: during a time when slavery created divisions between Northern and Southern Americans, the Democratic Party aligned with the interests of Southern slaveholders, while the Republican Party emerged as a champion of Northern and anti-slavery sentiments (Library of Congress). The tendency of the African-American minority to lean towards the left is not exclusive to it. The same can also be said about other minorities such as immigrants, religious and sexual minorities, women, as well as others.

As a general idea, it could be said that political parties are one variable that greatly affects the increase or decrease of hate crimes and overall group-based tensions. Additionally, both parties are a crucial element in the democratic process, ideological identification with either one of the United States political parties is greatly motivated by the appeal of the overall handling of hate and criminalized hate by the party in question.

2.2. Presidential Influence on Hate Crimes

Presidents have a unique platform and the ability to shape public discourse. Their statements and positions on issues related to race, religion, ethnicity, and other identity markers can influence public sentiment and potentially contribute to a climate conducive to hate crimes. When political leaders use divisive language, promote discriminatory policies, or fail to unequivocally condemn hate and bigotry, it can send a message that such behavior is acceptable or even encouraged. On the other hand, presidential leadership that emphasizes inclusivity, equality, and respect for diversity can help foster a society that rejects hate and discrimination. When presidents use their positions to advocate for tolerance, understanding, and unity, it can promote a culture of acceptance and respect. Additionally, the implementation of policies aimed at addressing systemic inequalities and promoting social justice can contribute to the prevention of hate crimes.

2.2.1. Presidential Influence in Rhetoric

Rhetoric employed by political leaders can have a significant impact on societal attitudes and behaviors, particularly concerning sensitive issues such as hate crimes. Thus, it is crucial to highlight the contrasting approaches of the two former U.S. presidents subject to analysis in this work: Barack Obama and Donald Trump. This is especially true when considering their party affiliation. In general terms, Donald Trump, the 45th President of the United States, was known for his controversial and often divisive rhetoric, which included inflammatory statements regarding race, religion, and immigration, while Barack Obama, the 44th President, consistently promoted inclusivity, unity, and the rejection of hatred. This part will explore how the different rhetoric of Trump and Obama influenced public discourse, and societal tensions, as well as the resulting incidents of hate crimes during their respective presidencies. Examining both presidents' rhetoric and their effects is one of two steps towards gaining an insight into the role of political leaders in shaping attitudes and behaviors pertaining to hate crimes, the second being the practical applications of political leaders' proclaimed ideology in that regard.

2.2.1.1. Examination of Trump's Rhetoric

The significance of Donald Trump's speech and its harmful influence on public discourse, policies, and the lives of innumerable individuals, both American citizens or otherwise, is widely recognized. Several studies have examined Donald Trump's speech and rhetoric, attempting to identify common themes or patterns in it, and then linking that speech to increases in hate crimes in the United States, as well as specific acts of bias-motivated violence around the world (Miller and Schwarz).

A number of analysts anticipated that Trump's rhetoric throughout and after his campaign would empower individuals committing hate crimes ("The Trump Effect"). An estimation that

proved to be true: numerous victims of hate crimes have recounted being targeted by assailants who explicitly invoked Trump during the assaults. For instance, in Boston, two men encountered a homeless Mexican immigrant sleeping near a train station after attending a Red Sox game. They proceeded to physically assault the man using a metal pipe, engaged in urination on him and employed racial slurs throughout the attack. Following their apprehension by the police, one of the assailants informed the arresting officer, “Donald Trump was right. All these illegals need to be deported” (Claus). Similarly, in New York, a Caucasian businessman faced legal charges after assaulting an airline worker wearing a hijab, proclaiming, “Trump is here now [and] he will get rid of all of you” (Bever). Additionally, in Michigan, an undocumented immigrant reported that two individuals affixed a note with a racial slur to his abdomen and asserted, “Trump doesn't like you” (Barry and Eligon).

Despite the fact that the link between hate speech and hate crime is readily recognized in the legal codes of numerous countries, the same cannot be said about the United States. This comes in contrast to the fact that hate crimes are commonly described as “message crimes” by scholars and observers due to the perpetrator’s intent to intimidate, dominate, and exclude the targeted victims and their social groups from society (Chakraborti and Garland). Following this idea, the content of Trump’s speech may be categorized as such. In their study, Valcore et al. systematically analyzed Donald Trump’s campaign and rally speeches for this end: They used a typology of verbal-textual hostility (V.T.H.) as developed by Asquith from criminal hate incidents in the United Kingdom. Their Empirical research gave a clear interpretation of Trump's political speech as hate speech in the context of the United States (144).

2.2.1.1.1. Sociopolitical Context

Considering the importance and influence of political campaign promises on the

nation, the best place to develop an adequate understanding of a president's rhetoric is to observe his or her language during election campaigns. To achieve this, it is crucial to first understand the socio-political conditions as well as the environmental factors encountered in the Trump electoral campaign (Mukunda). Broadly speaking, the literature on race in political campaigns across various countries highlights the intertwined themes of economics and nationalism as factors that influence support for politicians with racist political campaigns (Casmir). Inequitable distribution of resources, experiences of marginalization, and middle-class discontent have been linked to increased support for such campaigns, as well (Bessel).

Thus, factors such as Anglo heritage, racial resentment, and ethnocentrism were identified as aligned with support for Trump during his campaign (Osborne and Sibley). Politicians aligned with racist political campaigns often emphasize border management, national identity reinforcement, and criticism of global governance (Schmidt). This is not to mention that Nationalist discourse typically frames the "other" as a threat to employment and resources, further linking it as well as the economy to racist tendencies (Schmidt). With these considerations in mind, it could be said that Trump's speeches reflected a nationalist populism that appealed to emotions, harnessing anger towards the establishment, fear, and hatred of the "other", and the championing of a charismatic outsider as a common enemy (Rowland).

2.2.1.1.2. Theoretical Framework

According to the study conducted by Asquith, which functioned as an inspiration for the one conducted by Valcore et al, there are eight distinct types of verbal-textual hostility (V.T.H.). These include interpellation, which involves naming and calling the other into being, Pathologization, which entails associating the other with dirt and disease, demonization, which portrays the other as devils, demons, or mongrels; sexualization, involving the sexualization of

organs and acts; criminalization, where the other is labeled as liars, cheats, or criminals, Expatriation, which encompasses the idea of exile from space, neighborhood, or nation, terrorization, characterized by threats of violence and death, and profanity, which involves cursing and swearing (147).

Expanding upon the framework established by Asquith, Valcore et al employed this typology to delve into the analysis of Donald Trump's captivating campaign speeches. Their theoretical framework combined speech acts theory, critical race theory, and linguistic theories, collecting 90 speeches from 2015 to 2018 and coding them using an expanded typology that was later analyzed by NVivo software to reach its conclusions (148).

2.2.1.1.3. Results and Discussion

The analysis of Trump's political speeches by Valcore et al. revealed that the most common forms of verbal-textual hostility (V. T. H.) were criminalization, domination, and expatriation. Unlike interpersonal hate crimes where victims are targeted, Trump's speech acts were more about inciting hatred in others rather than expressing his own. He used dog-whistling techniques to provoke his audience, including inciting them to take action, potentially involving violence. These dominant themes of criminalization, domination, and expatriation were executive, requiring the authority of an authorized force to be effective. While individuals may use derogatory language or make demands towards others, it is only the state that has the power to expatriate individuals or criminalize and incarcerate them (148).

It is important to note that these forms of V. T. H. are interconnected and overlap, with Trump often employing all three in a single speech act. It is also worth mentioning that sexualization, a common theme in interpersonal hate crimes, was not prominent in Trump's speeches. Although some of his statements about Hillary Clinton could be considered sexist, they

did not involve the same type of sexualization observed in interpersonal instances of V. T. H. (148).

The study provides detailed sub-themes that fall under the bracket of the more general themes of criminalization, domination, and expatriation particular to Trump's rhetoric. For instance, the theme of criminalization was emphasized and expanded upon to include sub-themes such as Liars, Cheaters, and Criminals (149).

Table 1: Trump's Verbal-Textual Hostility

<i>Theme/Subtheme</i>	Number of speeches within theme (n=90)	Number of speech acts within theme (n=2498)	Percentage of all VTH
Criminalization	86	1091	44%
<i>Liars</i>	65	195	8%
<i>Cheaters</i>	74	441	18%
<i>Crime/Criminals</i>	79	392	16%
Deprecation	74	686	27%
Domination	82	396	16%
<i>Nationalist populism</i>	76	179	7%
<i>Racist nativism</i>	53	122	5%
Expatriation	52	158	6%
<i>Get them out</i>	29	70	3%
<i>Keep them out</i>	59	72	3%
Pathologization	21	55	2%
Denigration	19	55	2%
Interpellation	18	21	<1%
Demonization	12	18	<1%
Terrorization	10	15	<1%

Source. Valcore, Jace, et al. "We Will Build a Great Wall": Domination, Criminalization, and Expatriation in Trump Campaign and Rally Speeches." *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, vol. 9, no. 4, 18 Dec. 2020, doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.1647. Accessed 18 May 2023.

These sub-categories indicate verbal tactics used by Trump to portray his adversaries.

For instance, as is shown in the table above, (table 1: Trump's Verbal Textual Hostility, p. 36) the first sub-theme of criminalization, liars, is a very effective tool in Trump's verbal arsenal. This sub-theme is perhaps best exemplified by Trump's speech on March 15, 2017, at the "Make America Great Again" rally in Nashville, Tennessee. During the rally, the ex-nominee dismissed the media's claims about his inability to construct a border wall between the U.S. and Mexico as dishonest, repeatedly referring to it as "fake news." Trump extended this sub-theme to various other groups other than the media, including ethnic communities, and political opponents, accusing them of dishonesty and labeling them as liars. Hilary Clinton, his opponent during the 2016 elections, was naturally one of the main targets of this tactic. In reference to her, Trump said: "She was all the things you needed to be, but she lied to Congress, she lied to the FBI, she lied to everybody she even lied in the debates about the gold standard, right" ("Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion..." 148).

Accusations of this kind also relate to the second sub-theme criminalization in Trump's rhetoric, namely his tendency to suggest that, if someone is lying, it is likely because they are trying to deceive or cheat the system. This particular theme of cheating became more prominent in Trump's speeches following the emergence of the email scandal, with the first mention occurring on June 22, 2016. From July 11th, 2016, until June 20, 2018, he consistently referred to Hillary Clinton as "crooked Hillary", emphasizing the perception of her as someone involved in deceitful practices. It is noteworthy that the theme of cheating diminished significantly from Trump's speeches after his election on November 7, 2016. This shift can be seen as a strategic move to preempt what he and his campaign team anticipated would be a landslide victory for Clinton in the 2016 election. To that end, Trump extended the cheating accusations to the voting system itself, explicitly referring to it as a "rigged system" in eight campaign speeches prior to

the election. This phrase would also disappear from his vocabulary after November 7, 2016. This sudden change in rhetoric could have been an attempt to divert attention away from his previous comments on cheating, as well as to deflect any scrutiny regarding his own lies and potential manipulation of the system (“Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion...” 149).

Concerning the third sub-theme of Criminals, Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Party, immigrants, gangs, media personnel, and so on, were accused by Trump of criminal activity, going as far as to call for their immediate arrest (“Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion...” 149). For instance, during one of his speeches, Trump reacted to crowd chants concerning his opponent, Hilary Clinton, demanding to “lock her up”, by saying, “Yeah. I agree with you. I used to just be quiet on that. I agree with you 100%” (Samuels).

Domination is another type of Verbal Transgressive Harassment (V.T.H.) employed by Trump, and perhaps the most prevalent. It is also an element that is distinct from the typology established by Asquith. This category encompasses instances where Trump utilized racist dog whistles and nativist rhetoric to instill fear and incite violence in the audience. Unlike other categories, domination was not aimed directly at the subject but rather targeted the audience's perception of it (“Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion...” 150). Trump frequently employed nationalist populism and racist nativism in his speeches, particularly when discussing topics such as national restoration, immigration, and border security. In these instances, he consistently expressed white American supremacy while promoting the subordination or criminalization of non-white immigrants (150).

Throughout Trump's candidacy, Republican nomination, and presidency, domination speech remained a consistent feature. It was most prevalent during his tenure as the Republican nominee for the presidency, between July 19 and November 7, 2016. A recurring theme within

the category of domination was his repeated emphasis on securing borders and constructing a wall, with Trump affirming his intention to build the wall on 88 occasions (150).

Trump consistently employed the concept of expatriation to address immigrants, regardless of their legal status or reasons for seeking asylum. This concept can be divided into two sub-themes: “Get them out”, which involved forcibly removing individuals from the speaker's vicinity, and “Keep them out”, which aimed to prevent their entry or reentry. One of the significant pledges Trump made during his campaign was the swift deportation of criminal immigrants (“Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion...” 151).

2.2.1.2. Examination of Obama’s Rhetoric

Concerning Obama’s rhetoric, there is no significant literature, discourse analysis-wise, that analyzes his electoral speeches in a manner similar to that regarding Trump. However, that does not necessarily mean that a general understanding of Obama’s approach in terms of rhetoric is unachievable. In his book *The Rhetoric of Hope*, Mark S. Ferrara presents an adequate account of the general themes that can be found in Obama’s message to the United States as a president.

Ferrara defines the concept of “the rhetoric of hope” as a consciously constructed form of political discourse that envisions societal improvement driven by shared values. It culminates in a promise of a better future and the attainment of a “more perfect union”. In particular, Ferrara is intrigued by the utopian idealism prevalent in Obama's campaign rhetoric. American rhetorical techniques are employed to construct Obama as a quasi-prophetic figure who possesses the necessary leadership qualities to guide the nation toward collective salvation. Ferrara emphasizes that the rhetoric of hope relies on a dialectical tension between the ideal and the current reality, offering a transformative vision to transcend the existing status quo and achieve a salvific purpose (Ferrara).

Another key point that must be pointed out is that Barack Obama's racial identity played a significant role in his efforts to promote peace and unity. As the first African American president of the United States, Obama's very presence in the highest office symbolized progress and inclusivity. He often used his platform to address racial divisions and advocate for equality and understanding among different racial and ethnic groups. Obama's rhetoric emphasized the importance of embracing diversity and rejecting discrimination. He spoke about the shared values that unite Americans regardless of their racial or ethnic backgrounds. By highlighting the contributions and experiences of marginalized communities, Obama sought to bridge divides and promote a sense of common purpose (Andrews).

During the period from 2004 to 2009, when Barack Obama publicly addressed his racial background, he conveyed a message of optimism and unity, emphasizing America's capacity to transcend diversity. Through his speeches, he portrayed himself as a symbol of positive change and progress in the United States (Andrews). In his 2009 Inaugural Speech, Obama eloquently expressed this message of unity, highlighting America's ability to transcend diversity “We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace”.(Hernández).

The way a president speaks to the nation has significant influence over how people think and act. It shapes their perceptions and sets the boundaries for their behavior. The combination of a president's words and the collective mindset of the people is what forms the foundation of

our society. When a nation's leader promotes unity, peace, and freedom, it has a positive impact, resulting in fewer societal issues such as hate crimes. This was exemplified during President Obama's transformative era. However, when a president uses rhetoric that encourages violence and hatred, it has a negative effect. It creates an environment where aggression thrives, giving those driven by animosity the freedom to act on their worst impulses. The consequences of this can be seen in the differing statistics of offenses, incidents, and victims between the administrations of Obama and Trump .

2.2.2. Presidential Influence in Praxis

The concept of presidential influence in praxis refers to the practical application and impact of presidential leadership on policy-making, governance, and decision-making processes. The president of a nation holds a significant amount of power and authority, which can shape the direction and outcomes of various governmental initiatives and actions. Presidential influence in praxis can be observed across different areas, such as domestic policy, foreign affairs, economic management, and social issues. Through their policy proposals, executive orders, and legislative agendas, presidents can set priorities and shape the policy landscape of a country. Their decisions and actions can have far-reaching consequences, influencing the lives of citizens, the functioning of institutions, and the overall trajectory of a nation.

2.2.2.1. Potential Trend Examination in both the Obama and Trump Administrations

In his study, Ramsey conducted an analysis in order to examine hate crime statistics reported by the FBI's UCR program database, as well as hate crime victimizations statistics reported by the Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Victimization Survey, during President Obama's first term (2009-2012) and President Trump's term (2017-2020). The study aimed to identify trends in hate crimes during these time periods. To achieve this objective, the

researcher utilized charts containing the total number of hate crimes and victimizations during each administration. The findings revealed a consistent decline in hate crimes during the Obama administration, whereas a significant increase was exhibited during the Trump administration. Additionally, the study examined how these results corresponded with the policy actions and rhetoric employed by both President Obama and President Trump, highlighting their potential impact on the occurrence of hate crimes across the nation (Ramsey).

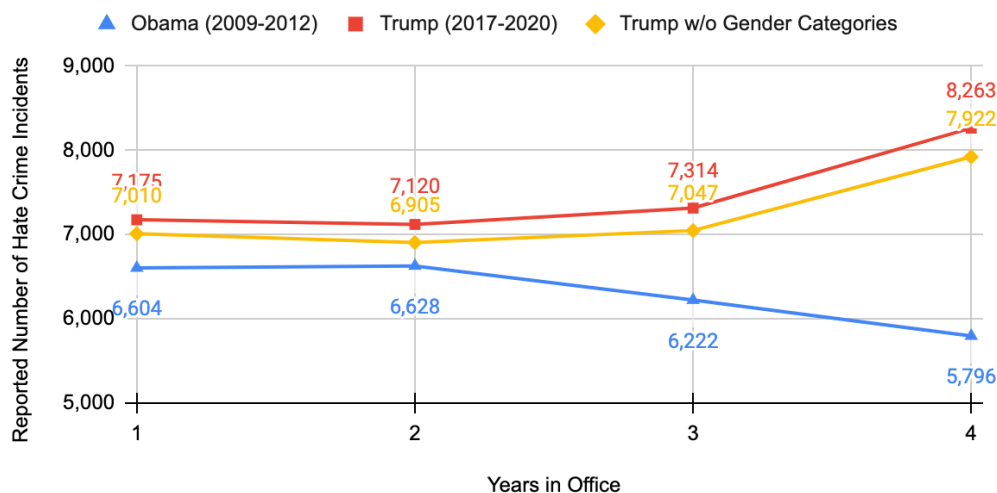
Ramsey also conducted a comprehensive analysis of descriptive statistics using the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. By utilizing this database, the study aimed to ensure a wide range of data sources to enhance the accuracy in identifying potential trends within hate crime data between the Obama and Trump administrations. The results found were presented in the charts below (31).

During the Obama administration, the number of reported hate crime incidents saw a slight uptick of 24 cases between 2009 and 2010. However, there was a notable decline of approximately 12%, accounting for 808 incidents, from 2009 to 2012. On the other hand, the pattern of reported hate crime incidents during the Trump administration (2017-2020) diverged from the data observed during the Obama administration. Although there was a decrease of 55 incidents, going from 7,175 to 7,120, the overall trend demonstrated a significant rise, with reported hate crimes escalating from 7,175 incidents in 2017 to 8,263 incidents in 2020. This represents an approximate 15% increase over the course of Trump's term (32). The outcomes appear in the chart below.

Figure.1. The Number of Incidents by Bias Motivation in the United States during the Obama and Trump Administrations.

Hate Crime Incidents

Obama and Trump administrations



Valcore, Jace, et al. “We Will Build a Great Wall”: Domination, Criminalization, and

Expatriation in Trump Campaign and Rally Speeches.” *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, vol. 9, no. 4, 18 Dec. 2020, doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.1647.

Accessed 21 May 2023.

There was a notable surge in hate crime incidents motivated by race and ethnicity/national origin from 2017 to 2020. Specifically, the number of hate crimes driven by race increased substantially, rising from 4,131 incidents to 5,227 incidents. Another noteworthy observation is that there were around 500 more reported incidents during the initial two years of President Trump's term compared to President Obama's term. However, a significant disparity emerged in the final year of each president's tenure. In the fourth year of their respective terms, there was a significant gap of 2,467 cases between President Trump's 8,263 incidents and President Obama's 5,796 incidents. This indicates a considerable divergence in the overall trend and total number of hate crime incidents reported during each administration (33).

The UCR data also includes information on the total number of offenses committed based on their biased motivation during the periods of 2009-2012 and 2017-2020. It is important to note that an offense differs from an incident as multiple offenses can be committed within a single crime.

The trends observed in the previous chart (see figure1,page ,,) regarding reported hate crime incidents during these periods are similar to the trends reflected in the chart below, (see figure 2, page 44)which present the number of reported hate crime offenses. During President Obama's term, there was a decline from 7,789 offenses in 2009 to 6,718 offenses in 2012, representing a decrease of approximately 14%. Furthermore, each bias category exhibits a similar pattern of decline as observed in the 2009-2012 period (33).

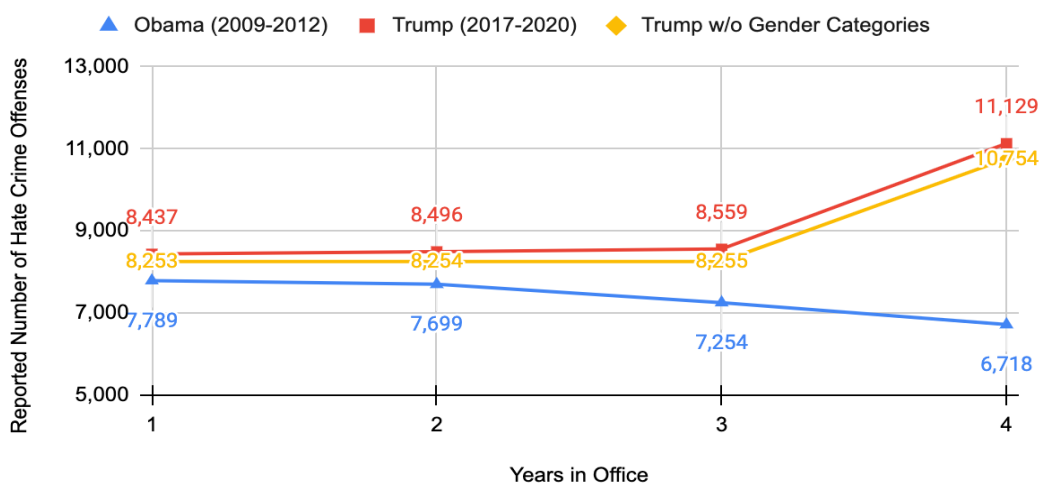
Under the Trump administration, there was a consistent rise in reported hate crime offenses from 2017 to 2019. However, there was a sharp increase from 8,559 offenses in 2019 to 11,129 offenses in 2020. This notable surge in total hate crime offenses can be attributed to three specific bias categories: race (witnessing a 40% increase from 4,784 to 6,677 offenses), sexual orientation (experiencing a 57% increase from 1,395 to 2,185 offenses), and gender identity (observing a 31% increase from 224 to 294 offenses) (Volcar et al.34).

From 2009 to 2012, hate crime offenses gradually decreased over President Obama's four-year tenure. Conversely, between 2017 and 2020, there was a consistent rise in reported offenses, followed by a significant surge in 2020 (35).

Fig. 2. The Number of Offenses by Bias Motivation in the United States during the Obama and Trump Administrations

Hate Crime Offenses

Obama and Trump administrations



Valcore, Jace, et al. “We Will Build a Great Wall”: Domination, Criminalization, and

Expatriation in Trump Campaign and Rally Speeches.” *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, vol. 9, no. 4, 18 Dec. 2020, doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.

1647 *Justice and Social Democracy*, vol. 9, no. 4, 18 Dec. 2020, Accessed 21 May 2023.

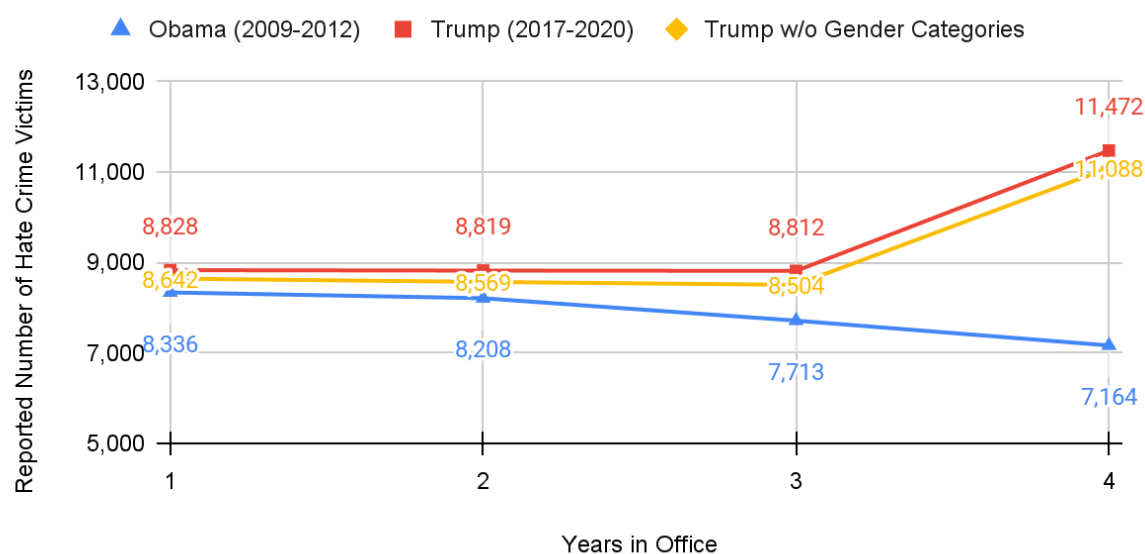
In addition to the data on hate crime incidents and offenses, information regarding the total number of victims affected by hate crimes were also included to analyze if these three factors display similar trends or any potential anomalies. Evaluating the victims of hate crimes during the Obama administration, a consistent decrease in the number of victims is observed from 2009 to 2012 (8,336 to 7,164, representing a 14% decrease). This decline in victims is reflected across most bias motivation categories, except for sexual orientation and disability. The number of victims targeted based on sexual orientation shows a steady increase from 1,482 in 2009 to 1,572 in 2011. However, between 2011 and 2012, the number decreased from 1,572 to 1,376. The number of victims associated with disabilities initially decreased from 2009 to 2010

(99 to 48), but then steadily increased from 2010 to 2012 (48 to 102 victims) .The charts bellow have been included for better visualization (Valcore et al. 35).

Figure. 3. The Number of Victims by Bias Motivation in the United States during the Obama and Trump Administrations

Hate Crime Victims

Obama and Trump administrations



Valcore, Jace, et al. “We Will Build a Great Wall”: Domination, Criminalization, and

Expatriation in Trump Campaign and Rally Speeches.” *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, vol. 9, no. 4, 18 Dec. 2020, doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.1647.

Accessed 21 May 2023.

During the Trump administration, the number of victims remained relatively stable from 2017 to 2019 but witnessed a significant surge in 2020, rising from 8,812 victims in 2019 to 11,472 victims in 2020 (approximately a 30% increase). This substantial increase can be primarily attributed to the rise in victims targeted based on race and sexual orientation. The

number of victims targeted due to race increased from 4,930 in 2019 to 6,880 in 2020, representing a 40% increase. Similarly, the number of victims targeted based on sexual orientation increased by 56%, from 1,429 victims in 2019 to 2,229 victims in 2020 (36).

Overall, the trends observed in the data concerning victims align with the previous data on incidents and offenses. The total number of victims reported during the Trump administration remained higher than during the Obama administration, exhibiting an increase over the four-year term. Furthermore, the total number of victims reported during the Obama administration decreased over the course of four years, similar to the patterns observed in the previous charts (36).

Taking into account the information presented in the examination of the potential trends of both presidents, it is safe to say that the contrasting approaches of President Obama and President Trump had indirect impacts on the trends in reported hate crimes during their terms. During the Obama term, hate crimes experienced a decline, which can be attributed, in part, to the President's active efforts to raise awareness about hate crimes across the United States. Additionally, Obama's administration adopted a more stringent federal approach to prosecuting these crimes. However, the steady increase in the total number of hate crimes during the Trump administration serves as a significant warning about how presidential leadership and policies can potentially contribute to a rise in hate incidents nationwide. The Trump administration's actions, such as engaging in rhetoric that openly alienated certain ethnic groups within the country, created an environment that heightened the occurrence of hate crimes.

In summary, President Obama's proactive measures and federal approach helped reduce hate crimes, while President Trump's policies and rhetoric had the opposite effect, leading to an

increase in such incidents. This highlights the potential influence that a president and their administration can have on shaping the level of hate incidents within a nation.

Chapter Three

Planting the Seeds of Hate in the State: Donald Trump vs. African Americans

Donald Trump has been one of the most contentious leaders in the United States. Throughout his term from 2017 to 2021, his policies have caused division, his language has been inflammatory, and his actions have been polarizing. This has left an enduring impression on the nation. While Trump's impact on various communities cannot be overlooked, African Americans have been at the epicenter of a storm of feelings and political arguments. The fight for racial equality has always been a defining characteristic of America's past, which has been characterized by both progress and setbacks. However, the Trump administration has ushered in a unique chapter in this ongoing story, exposing divisions and testing the durability of the nation's social fabric. Since the start of his presidential campaign, Trump's words and deeds have had an impact on the African American community, eliciting a range of emotions from optimism to dread and from outrage to perseverance.

As the origins of the animosity sown in the country is explored, it is critical to approach this subject with rigor and an unwavering commitment to the truth. Throughout this chapter, we will endeavor to illuminate the complexities and subtleties of this tumultuous era, as well as spotlight the vital Black Lives Matter movement, by examining its activities and outsized role in American society, how it opposes Trump's policies, and Trump's efforts to undermine the organization and the dignity of African Americans.

3.1. Trump's treatment of African-Americans

Michael Starr Hopkins wrote an article on "Hill.com" titled "Donald Trump has done more for African Americans than we think", which argues that Trump's claim of doing more for black

Americans than any president since Abraham Lincoln inadvertently highlighted the struggle against implicit and explicit racism in the United States. According to Hopkins, Trump's presidency raised awareness of racial issues and sparked a paradigm shift in race relations, leading to actions such as major corporations supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and widespread protests. The article suggests that if Hillary Clinton had won the presidency, these changes may not have occurred. The author contends that although Trump's administration may seem unfavorable to those unfamiliar with the treatment of black Americans, it reflects the reality experienced by many black Americans (Hopkins).

The article stresses that black Americans do not need to imagine a government that inflicts physical and psychological harm or perpetuates poverty and unfair education systems, as they face these challenges daily. The author criticizes rhetoric that dismisses the impact of institutional racism and bias, asserting that the election of Barack Obama did not bring an end to racism as conservatives had insincerely claimed. Examples such as the defense of George Zimmerman in the Trayvon Martin case and the criticism of Colin Kaepernick's protest are cited to support this argument. The article suggests that Trump's rhetoric and behavior, although indefensible, have brought attention to the need for social and economic justice more effectively than any recent president (Hopkins).

Hopkins concludes by stating that the death of George Floyd may be seen as a turning point that forced the country to confront its racial issues, but he credits Trump's presidency and the spread of his bigotry for unintentionally enabling white Americans to hear the voices of black Americans (Hopkins).

3.1.1. The Impact of Trump's Presidency on the Well-being of African Americans

Donald Trump has actively attempted to reverse significant policy objectives of the

Obama administration ever since he was elected president of the United States. He has made numerous attempts to undo the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), the president's most significant piece of legislation. Many of the Obama administration's regulatory enforcement initiatives are being reversed as a result of President Trump's cabinet nominations. In order to safeguard the welfare and safety of the people of the country, the cabinet departments under the Trump administration are diverging from the federal bureaucracies' traditional compliance duties (Clayton, et al. 713). Donald Trump also tried to win over African-American voters by asking, "What do you have to lose?" When considering the policies of President Trump's administration, the solution is simple. The criminal justice system, voting rights, and environmental racism are three specific areas of human rights and civil rights where the Trump administration has reversed course to harm African Americans (713).

In their research titled *Between Anger and Engagement: Donald Trump and Black America*, Towler and Parker claimed that intense African-American protests against Donald Trump during his campaign were sparked by his unrepentantly racially conservative policies as well as the violence and discriminating treatment of blacks that he tolerated at his rallies. In addition, Trump publicly resented the African-American community's criticism of his rhetoric and his positions. At a campaign event, Trump denounced the Black Lives Matter movement, saying that its members are "looking for trouble." A serious threat to the advancement of African Americans is posed by Trump's political appointees. The attorney general, Jeff Sessions, has restarted America's war on crime and blindly supports police and prosecutors. Trump is also choosing white men for federal judges at a rate that is higher than it has been in the past three decades (227).

3.1.2. Trump's Administration Policy toward African Americans

Trump has set policies toward African Americans, some of these policies are mentioned in an article written by Clayton et al. They asserted that there are three important policies to consider, the first policy is the criminal justice, Under the Obama administration, investigations were made against 25 police departments to look into their procedures and make sure they were conducting themselves in a reasonable and fair manner. Fourteen consent decrees were subsequently agreed upon, requiring these police forces to change their methods. The objectives of this effort were to resolve problems with police misbehavior, enhance ties with the community, and encourage accountability. In contrast, the Trump administration's term in office saw no consent decrees approved. The “tough on crime” platform that President Trump ran on throughout his campaign called for tighter law enforcement and sentencing procedures (Clayton et al, 714).

Although specifics of the restructure are not discussed, his Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, implemented alterations to a community-policing program. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that a bipartisan legislation on criminal justice reform was enacted into law by President Trump in December 2018. This bill targeted various favorable outcomes such as reducing federal mandatory minimum sentences, granting inmates more opportunities to gain credits for early release, providing funds for rehabilitation and re-entry programs, and prohibiting the shackling of pregnant women in federal prisons. This reform legislation marked a shift from the “tough on crime” rhetoric and demonstrated a commitment to pursue criminal justice reform. In the wake of Jeff Sessions' exit, William Barr was nominated by President Trump as the succeeding Attorney General. In February 2019, he was confirmed by the Senate and assumed the responsibility of leading the Department of Justice (714).

The second policy is about voting rights, President Donald Trump launched the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity to investigate the 2016 presidential election. Vice President Mike Pence and Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach served as vice chairs. The commission was widely criticized by civil rights organizations, election law scholars, and Democratic secretaries of state. The Brennan Centre for Justice sued the DOJ for refusing to turn over documents related to a letter requesting election officials share details about how they are complying with federal laws. The U.S. Supreme Court decision *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) struck down Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, allowing individuals who feel they have been discriminated against to bring a lawsuit and prove the new election law discriminates against them. Since then, many states have issued tough voting restrictions, such as strict voter ID requirements, reducing the number of days of early voting, and eliminating same-day registration during the early voting period. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg argued that the Voting Rights Act had changed from ‘first-generation barriers to ballot access to “second-generation barriers’ like racial gerrymandering.” (715,716).

The third policy is called environmental racism, environmental racism pertains to the unequal exposure of underprivileged communities, especially those belonging to racial and ethnic minority groups, to environmental hazards and contamination. In the given context, it implies that African Americans have been adversely affected by environmental injustice during the Trump presidency. During the Trump administration, there were apprehensions about regulations and procedures that disproportionately impacted African Americans. These included concerns such as police brutality, mass incarceration, voter ID laws, and environmental racism (718).

Police brutality refers to the unnecessary use of force by law enforcement against African Americans and other minority groups. This has resulted in instances of violence and institutionalized prejudice, leading to a lack of confidence between the police and African American communities. Mass incarceration refers to the high levels of incarceration, particularly among African Americans, due to policies such as mandatory minimum sentences and the War on Drugs. This has contributed to the disintegration of families and communities, limiting opportunities for education, employment, and upward mobility. Voter ID laws have been a topic of discussion, with critics arguing that such laws unfairly affect minority communities, including African Americans. These laws impose additional requirements, such as presenting specific forms of identification, which can create obstacles to voting and potentially limit political representation. Environmental racism encompasses the notion that certain communities, frequently low-income and minority neighborhoods are unfairly burdened with environmental hazards and contamination. This can include the presence of industrial facilities, waste disposal sites, or other sources of pollution that negatively impact the health and well-being of residents (718).

In the case of African Americans, this exposure to environmental hazards can lead to adverse health effects and a higher risk of conditions like asthma, respiratory issues, and other illnesses. The impacts of these regulations and procedures can have far-reaching consequences. For African Americans, they may experience limited earning potential due to systemic obstacles, reduced access to quality education and employment opportunities, and a lack of positive male role models due to high imprisonment rates. These factors, coupled with environmental injustice, can contribute to higher poverty rates within African American communities. Furthermore, environmental racism exacerbates the disparities faced by African Americans by exposing them

to higher rates of air pollution, contaminated water sources, and soil pollution. These environmental hazards further contribute to adverse health outcomes, creating a cycle of compounded disadvantages. It is crucial to note that the impacts of environmental racism and the policies discussed above are intricate and multifaceted, influenced by a range of social, economic, and historical factors (718).

3.1.3. The Reaction of African Americans to Trump's Policy

African Americans typically had a negative response to Trump's policies since they were viewed as being harmful to or insensitive to the black community in many cases. For instance, many African Americans felt that Trump's administration did not treat issues like racial profiling and police brutality seriously enough and condemned him for how he handled them (National Immigration Law Center).

Furthermore, Trump faced backlash for his rhetoric, which numerous individuals deemed polarizing and discriminatory. He gained notoriety for utilizing language that was derogatory or apathetic towards marginalized communities and for expressing views that were perceived as endorsing white supremacist beliefs. Trump's stances on topics including suffrage, reform in the criminal justice system, and accessible healthcare have similarly faced disapproval from a significant portion of the African American population. Trump has been accused of attempting to hinder the voting rights of black individuals by supporting restrictive voting regulations and establishing a committee to investigate alleged voter fraud, which many construed as a strategy to deprive African Americans of their right to vote (National Immigration Law Center).

Many African Americans have opposed Trump's attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act or "Obamacare", which widened the reach of healthcare for numerous low-income individuals and families. The black community, which has traditionally faced higher levels of

uninsured individuals and health disparities, has been particularly impacted by the ACA (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities). Trump's immigration policies, specifically his choice to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals "DACA" program, have been met with disapproval from many African Americans. DACA provided protection to undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children, a considerable number of whom were black and from African and Caribbean nations (National Immigration Law Center).

Trump's language and actions were seen by many as damaging and polarizing. He was criticized for using racially charged language, such as describing African countries with outrageous and inappropriate words, and for his response to the 2020 protests against police brutality and racial injustice that swept the nation. Overall, African Americans have largely reacted negatively to Trump's policies, with many believing that his administration has not given priority to the needs and concerns of the black community (National Immigration Law Center).

3.2. The Movement of "Black Lives Matter"

Black Lives Matter is a political will and movement-building effort that was founded in 2013 by three female black organizers, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi. Following George Zimmerman's acquittal in Trayvon Martin's shooting death in 2012, Black Lives Matter was born as the social media hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. After the deaths of Michael Brown in Missouri and Eric Garner in New York in 2014, the campaign escalated on a nationwide scale. Since then, it has become an international movement, especially in the wake of the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis, Minnesota, police. Recent protests against systemic racism and police violence that disproportionately affect the black community have been led by #BlackLivesMatter (Howard University).

The Black Lives Matter website states that the organization was “formed in 2013 in reaction to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer. Black Lives Matter Foundation, Inc. is a global organization with offices in the U.S., U.K., and Canada. Its goal is to end white supremacy and develop local power to stop violence against black communities that is committed by the government and vigilantes. They are achieving immediate benefits in their lives by preventing and fighting acts of violence, fostering black invention and creativity, and putting a focus on black joy” (Howard University).

3.2.1. Black Lives Matter Developments during Donald Trump's Term

Despite the fact that BLM existed before President Trump’s presidency, his rigid law and order principles oppose and demonize BLM. Unlike BLM, which portrays society as predisposed to the annihilation of black people, President Trump defends equality and freedom for all people, especially those who uphold the law. This may lead some white Americans to associate African-Americans with criminal activity. In addition, BLM recognizes and condemns violence committed by police enforcement, but President Trump enthusiastically supports law enforcement, praises their work, and acknowledges their importance in our society. It is obvious that the two frames are vying for viewers’ attention. The term that resonates with the broader public and is reflected in public opinion, however, should be the one that has been repeated most recently or in greater volume (Adams 16).

According to the Pew Research Center’s survey in September 2020, there was a decline in backing for the Black Lives Matter initiative among American adults compared to June 2020. Nevertheless, the study indicates that the movement still has strong support among black Americans, with 87% of them expressing their support. The Pew Research Center survey

included 10,093 U.S. adults and was conducted from September 8 to September 13, 2020 (Pew Research Center).

In September 2020, 55% of American adults showed their support for the Black Lives Matter campaign, as opposed to 67% in June 2020. However, support for the cause remained high among black Americans, at 87% in September, compared to 87% in June. Among white adults, backing for the movement dropped from 60% in June to 45% in September. Similarly, among Hispanic adults, support decreased from 77% in June to 66% in September (Pew Research Center).

The survey also revealed that the level of support for the Black Lives Matter movement varied by political affiliation, with 92% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents expressing their support, compared to 21% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents. While support for the movement remained high among adults aged 18–29 at 74% in September, compared to 80% in June, it decreased among older age groups, with 61% of adults aged 30–49 and 44% of adults aged 50 and older showing their support for the movement in September (Pew Research Center).

During an interview with CNN Politics, Garza discusses the evolution of the Black Lives Matter movement since its inception in 2013. She explains how it has become a powerful force for social and political transformation, particularly following the killing of George Floyd in May 2020. While the movement has successfully raised awareness of systemic racism and police brutality, Garza emphasizes the importance of persistent efforts to address these issues. Concerning the 2020 US Presidential Election, Garza expresses both optimism and doubt about the potential impact of BLM's activism. Although she acknowledges the movement's role in mobilizing voters and influencing the election result, she also notes that Joe Biden's victory does

not necessarily guarantee significant change with regard to racial justice and police reform. She underscores the need for sustained advocacy and activism to hold elected officials accountable and push for meaningful change (CNN Politics).

3.2.2. Donald Trump’s Propaganda on “Black Lives Matter”

Article By “POLITICO” titled “Trump Goes after Black Lives Matter ‘toxic propaganda’ in Schools”, focuses on a speech made by Donald Trump in which he discusses a range of subjects related to cultural conflicts and racial tensions in the US. Trump spoke at the National Archives Museum on the day the US Constitution was signed in 1787. Throughout his speech, Trump censured the Black Lives Matter movement, the 1619 Project (an initiative by the New York Times that analyzes the history and influence of slavery in America), and what he called “toxic propaganda” in school curriculums. He accused left-wing activists of demolishing statues, vandalizing memorials, and promoting violence and disorder. Trump positioned himself as a protector of American exceptionalism and pledged to reclaim the country’s history and values. The article underscores Trump’s wider endeavors, including instructions to federal agencies, aimed at pushing back against protests for racial justice and restricting the teaching of concepts such as critical race theory. The Office of Management and Budget released a directive to halt the use of “critical race theory” in training sessions, and the Department of Education is reviewing its materials to remove what the White House perceives as “anti-American propaganda” (*POLITICO*).

Trump threatened to withhold federal funding from schools that integrate lessons from the 1619 Project, labeling such teachings as a “distorted web of falsehoods.” He declared his intention to create the “1776 Commission,” which would promote patriotic education as a counterbalance to what he viewed as the negative influence of the 1619 Project. The article also

mentions the response from Nikole Hannah-Jones, the initiator of the 1619 Project, who stated that the year 1619 and its importance in American slavery cannot be erased, regardless of efforts to undermine it. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos praised an alternative initiative called 1776 Unites, which aims to present a more positive and extensive history of African-Americans in the United States. The article discusses Trump's efforts to confront racial unrest and attract critical voter groups, such as suburban voters. He blamed left-wing indoctrination in schools for the recent rioting and unrest, appealing to parents who, he claims, will reject indoctrination, cancel culture, and suppress traditional values (*POLITICO*).

Another article by "CNN Politics" written by Kevin Liptak and Kristen Holmes, titled "Trump calls Black Lives Matter a 'symbol of hate' as he digs in on race", explores President Donald Trump's position on racial matters, his strategy for handling protests against racial inequality, and demands for the removal of symbols and monuments with racist connotations. The article highlights Trump's defense of Confederate symbols, his branding of "Black Lives Matter" as a "symbol of hate", and his focus on safeguarding statues and monuments instead of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic or intelligence reports concerning Russia. Holmes and Liptak suggest that Trump's emphasis on these topics is intended to attract voters concerned about safety and order, despite the widespread disapproval of his handling of race relations. The article underscores Trump's use of Twitter as a tool to fuel racial tensions, citing examples such as the sharing of a video in which a supporter chants "White power" (later deleted) and a video of white homeowners protecting their property during a Black Lives Matter march. It also mentions Trump's directives to administration officials to prioritize the issue and the creation of a task force by the Department of Homeland Security to safeguard monuments and statues (Liptak, Holmes).

The authors observe that some of Trump's political advisers worry that his focus on racial issues detracts from the pressing health and economic crises facing the country and distances moderate swing voters. Polls cited in the article indicate that most voters, including women, disapprove of Trump's handling of race relations. However, Trump remains resolute in his defense of monuments and symbols linked to America's discriminatory past, even threatening to veto a defense authorization bill that includes provisions for renaming military bases honoring Confederate leaders. The article also mentions a past lawsuit against Trump's housing practices, where black individuals were allegedly denied leases in Trump buildings while white renters were offered them. It notes the Trump administration's efforts to postpone the implementation of the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule, which aims to combat racial segregation in housing, and the opposition to the proposed elimination of the rule by housing advocates (Liptak, Holmes).

German Lopez, a journalist for "VOX", has written an article titled "There are proven ways to keep protests peaceful. Trump is doing the opposite." The article examines President Donald Trump's and some Republican leaders' reactions to the Black Lives Matter protests that ensued after George Floyd's death. The article contends that Trump's words and deeds run the risk of augmenting tensions and intensifying protests instead of fostering peace. The article highlights how Trump labels the protests as violent, despite the majority of them being peaceful. It also censures his disregard for the protesters' concerns and his unwillingness to pursue police reforms. The article notes Trump's criticism of local leaders, whom he perceives as being too lenient on the demonstrations, particularly in cities like Portland, Oregon. It observes that Trump dispatched federal agents to intimidate and detain protesters in Portland and other cities, and his administration branded New York City, Portland, and Seattle as "anarchist cities" that could lose

federal funding. The article argues that Trump's belligerent and dismissive approach, coupled with some Republican leaders' proposed amendments to toughen penalties for riots, could exacerbate the situation. It underscores that the objective should be to ensure that protesters can exercise their First Amendment rights while preventing violence. The article cites experts who underscore the significance of addressing instances of police brutality and allowing protesters to have a voice (Lopez).

The article proposes that law enforcement should take measures to safeguard both protesters' well-being and their rights to free speech and assembly. Unselective actions by the police, such as tear-gassing everyone, can escalate tensions and make protesters feel that their rights are being stifled. The article expounds that when protests are in response to police actions, forceful conduct by the police can validate protesters' grievances and further intensify violence. The article accentuates the importance of giving protesters a voice and permitting them to express their views peacefully while safeguarding public safety. It acknowledges the difficulties faced by authorities in responding to protests and suggests methods such as negotiated management, where terms of engagement are established with protest organizers. The police should support peaceful protests while promptly addressing individuals who cause harm. The article concludes by stating that police actions, such as wearing militarized gear, can make situations more challenging and potentially trigger escalation. It underscores that escalation usually arises when government agents engage in active suppression (Lopez).

The article asserts that President Donald Trump has worsened the situation by aggravating tensions and escalating violence during the protests for "Black Lives Matter". The author posits that Trump's actions may be deliberate, perhaps to divert attention from his perceived shortcomings as president and to promote his narrative of "law and order" for political

advantage. The article cites various instances to substantiate its claims. Firstly, it notes that Trump disregarded or dismissed protesters' grievances regarding systemic racism, belittling the issue by arguing that white people also suffer from police brutality. This response ignores the disproportionate impact of police brutality on the black community. Secondly, the article mentions the deployment of federal agents to Portland, who purportedly acted indiscriminately against both peaceful and violent protesters by using tear gas, and rubber bullets, and making arrests. The author implies that this led to further violence and turmoil, which only abated after the federal agents withdrew (Lopez).

Additionally, the article highlights Trump's justification of violence in situations where it was not perpetrated by Black Lives Matter protesters. It cites Trump's reaction to the shootings in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where he appeared to condone vigilante violence by suggesting that the shooter acted in self-defense. The article also features comments from experts who criticize Trump's approach. These experts contend that Trump's rhetoric exacerbates the situation, making it difficult for the police to manage the protests efficiently. They stress the need for productive discussion and a reduction in polarization to address the underlying problems. The author implies that Trump's campaign may view the chaos and violence as advantageous, as they bolster his message of "law and order." The article quotes former White House advisor Kellyanne Conway, who said that the more chaos and violence there is, the better it is for Trump's campaign (Lopez).

The article concludes by drawing parallels between Trump's actions and those of authoritarian leaders. It suggests that sowing discord and infiltrating peaceful movements to incite violence aligns with an authoritarian playbook. The author speculates that Trump may be willing to tolerate short-term violence if it serves his ultimate goal of reelection (Lopez).

To conclude, Donald Trump's interactions with African Americans have been characterized by a strained relationship that has had a lasting impact on the United States. His speeches, which are often controversial and divisive, have only served to exacerbate tensions. Trump's handling of the Black Lives Matter movement and his policy decisions have disproportionately affected African Americans and exacerbated pre-existing divisions. Despite the efforts of the Black Lives Matter Organization, which received support from both white Americans and minority communities, Trump's attempts to portray the organization as divisive have been well-received by some of his supporters, who have tried to undermine the organization. However, these efforts will not prevent the organization from continuing to strive for the betterment of African Americans' lives.

Conclusion

Throughout history, people across the globe have faced injustice, discrimination, and violence based on their perceived differences. The notion of being treated unfairly and judged solely on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, or disability, disregarding one's true character, is undeniably cruel. What adds to the frustration is the realization that these prejudices exist not only in one particular country or region but are pervasive worldwide. The extensive series of hate crimes that have shaped human history since the last century further underscores the fact that a world without hate is far from being achieved. It is only when the effects of hate crimes become noticeable that the world begins to recognize the necessity of taking action to prevent further disaster.

In this context, the role of the president in shaping the nation and preventing hate crimes becomes crucial to consider. Presidents such as Barack Obama and Donald Trump serve as significant examples, as they had different approaches in dealing with hate crimes during their respective presidential terms. Their rhetoric and ideology reflected their distinct views on hate and its place in society.

Barack Obama, during his presidency, consistently emphasized the importance of unity, inclusivity, and tolerance. He spoke out against hate crimes and worked towards promoting a more harmonious and diverse America. His approach aimed to bridge divides and foster understanding among different communities, striving to create an environment where hate crimes were less likely to occur.

On the other hand, Donald Trump's presidency was marked by a different rhetoric and approach. His public statements and policies sometimes drew controversy, with critics arguing that they exacerbated divisions and fueled animosity towards marginalized groups. While it is

essential to note that the relationship between presidential rhetoric and hate crimes is complex, it is evident that the words and actions of a president can have a significant impact on the nation's social climate. the movement of black lives matter is one instance from trumps term that exemplifies his impact as a president on the rise of hate crimes

Examining the divergent approaches of Obama and Trump towards hate crimes underscores the importance of presidential leadership in setting the tone for the nation. The rhetoric employed by a president can either foster inclusivity and tolerance or contribute to an atmosphere of division and hostility. It highlights the need for presidents to prioritize promoting understanding, combating discrimination, and creating policies that protect vulnerable communities.

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