Policing Hatred:
A Case Study of an English Police Force

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Each year, hundreds of thousands of people in the United Kingdom believe that they have been victimized because of their race, gender, religion, sexuality, or disability status (BCS, 2008; Stonewall, 2008). Although police officers have the critical responsibility of enforcing hate crime laws, little is known about how the British police apply these laws to everyday situations (Gerstenfeld, 2004). The concept of hate crime has gained force within the United Kingdom only during the past decade, and therefore, hate crime research from the United Kingdom is limited (Hall, 2005). Research on hate crime policing is especially rare (Hall, 2005; Chakraborti & Garland, 2009).

This article makes an important contribution to the field of hate studies by advancing the understanding of hate crime policing in the United Kingdom. The article presents an ethnographic case study on hate crime policing within a small-city police station in England. The study focused primarily on the police station's Community Cohesion Unit (CCU), which was responsible for supporting hate crime informants, and for monitoring and assisting police officers handling hate incidents and hate crimes. For ethical reasons, I use pseudonyms for people and place names, including the name of the police station itself ("Lakeview Police Station").

Various factors motivated me to perform the case study. The recent surge of hate crime laws enacted in the United Kingdom during the past decade shows that policymakers now view hate crime as a serious problem. But hate crime laws have limited practical utility if the police do not enforce the laws properly. Bell explains that police officers can "effectively nullify hate crime statutes through nonenforcement, thereby reducing the statutes to an empty symbolic gesture" (Bell, 2002, p. 2). Improving the enforcement of hate crime laws requires an understanding of the difficulties that police officers face, and the special considerations that arise, when applying these laws to actual situations.

Furthermore, a substantial proportion of empirical researchers who investigate hate crime are too reliant on official statistics, which have many

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methodological shortcomings (Perry, 2010). Due to underreporting, these statistics contribute to an underestimation of the true extent of hate crime victimization. Current hate crime statistics from the United Kingdom are also vastly underinclusive because they include race and faith only, and exclude sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. These limitations illustrate the need for researchers to investigate hate crime through other methodological approaches, such as ethnography.

Two additional qualities contribute to the novelty of the case study. First, unlike existing studies on hate crime policing in the United Kingdom, which focus primarily on race and faith hate crime, the case study focuses equally on hate crimes motivated by race, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. Taking this broad approach enabled me to investigate potential differences in policing based on hateful motivation. Second, the case study focuses on hate crime policing in a small city outside the jurisdiction of the London Metropolitan Police force. The study location allowed me to investigate whether hate crime policing in smaller cities differs from hate crime policing within London or other major British metropolitan areas.

The case study is mostly descriptive and exploratory in nature. Its primary objective is to provide needed insight into the inner workings of a police unit in order to obtain systematic knowledge on how hate crime laws are enforced in real-world settings. The study does not aim to present a new theory of hate crime policing; but in gathering fresh data from a new source, the study suggests potential directions for future empirical work and theoretical inquiry.

Part I of this article summarizes hate crime definitions and hate crime laws in England and Wales. Part II synthesizes existing research on hate crime policing in the United Kingdom. Part III explains the study's methods, data collection, and research setting. Part IV presents the study findings. Part V discusses and reflects upon these findings in relation to themes that are relevant to hate crime policing.

I.   Hate Crime Definitions and Laws in the United Kingdom

A.   *Defining Hate Crime*

The Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have agreed upon broad and inclusive working definitions of "hate incidents" and "hate crimes" in England and Wales. These working definitions include disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and gender identity (ACPO, 2005). A hate incident is defined as "any incident, which may or may not constitute a

criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate" (ACPO, 2005, p. 9).

Two points concerning these working definitions are worth highlighting. First, the definitions reflect law enforcement's stated commitment to tackle both hate incidents and hate crimes within England and Wales (ACPO, 2000, 2005). This commitment is not a universally accepted policing pledge. In the United States, for instance, hate incidents are rarely recorded by the police, and official police data include statistics on hate crimes only, not hate incidents (see FBI, 1995-2008). In fact, the FBI's definition of hate incidents is inherently tied to criminality; the number and type of criminal offences that are involved in a hate-motivated occurrence define a "hate incident" (FBI, 2008).

Second, the working definitions of *hate incidents* and *hate crimes* in England and Wales are broad. Under these definitions, the "perception of the victim or any other person is the defining factor in determining a hate incident" (ACPO, 2005). Even when police officers believe that an incident is not motivated by hatred, they should treat it as being so motivated if a victim or a witness perceives that it is. Prioritizing victim and witness perceptions in hate crime definitions is also not a universal police practice. In the United States, police officers are instructed to record a hate crime only if they reasonably conclude, after reviewing all of the evidence, that a suspect's actions were actually motivated by hatred (FBI, 2008). Researchers note that this difference results in significantly higher numbers of reported hate crimes in the United Kingdom than in the United States (Gerstenfeld, 2004; Hall, 2005).

B.   *Hate Crime Laws*

Although the specific term "hate crime" does not appear in English law (Hall, 2005), various criminal statutes prohibit hate-motivated crimes including violence, harassment, property damage, and public order offenses.

1.   Race and Religion

In England and Wales, any criminal offense that is motivated by racial or religious hatred can result in more severe criminal penalties. Sections 28-32 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 create separate criminal offenses for assault, criminal damage, public order offenses, and harassment motivated by race and, following amendment by the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, motivated by religion. The Act defines racial group "by reference to race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or

national origin" (Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 28(4)), and includes all religious groups as well (Hall, 2005).

Section 153 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 applies to offenses other than those listed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: assault, criminal damage, public order offenses, and harassment. This provision requires courts to consider racial and religious hatred motivations as aggravating factors when determining punishment, rather than creating separate criminal offenses. Additionally, statutory provisions prohibit incitement to hatred, nuisance, and other hostile behavior motivated by racial and religious hostility. The Public Order Act 1986, Part III, ss. 17-23, bans certain acts intended or likely to stir up racial or religious hatred, including displays of any threatening written material and the use of threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behavior. The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 also creates criminal offenses for certain activities motivated by racial and religious hatred, including using words or behavior; publishing or distributing written material; the public performance of a play; distributing, showing, or playing a recording; broadcasting programs; and the possession of offensive material.

2. Disability, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity

Unlike crimes motivated by race and faith, no separate criminal offenses exist for crimes motivated by disability or sexual orientation. However, Section 146 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 requires courts to treat bias stemming from victims' perceived or actual sexual orientation or perceived or actual disability (mental and physical) as aggravating factors when determining punishment. Any other hostility associated with the offence is "immaterial" (Section 146, Criminal Justice Act 2003). Hall (2005, p. 124) explains that "the expression of prejudice, however strong or in whatever way, is the key issue." Additionally, the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 amends the Public Order Act 1986 by banning activities that are intended or likely to incite hatred, nuisance, and other hostile behavior on the basis of sexual orientation.

Hate crime laws in England and Wales currently exclude gender identity. This is a matter of special concern, given that research shows that transgender people are frequent victims of violence and harassment across their lifetime (Stotzer, 2008, 2009).

II. Hate Crime Policing in the United Kingdom

In general, existing studies identify various institutional and individual factors that affect hate crime policing in the United Kingdom. Institutional

factors include: (1) official policing strategies, (2) police structure, (3) hate crime policies and procedures, (4) police agenda priorities, (5) police culture, and (6) community resistance (Bowing, 1999; Ray and Smith, 2004; Hall, 2005; Iganski, 2007, 2008; Chakraborti & Garland, 2009). Individual factors include: (1) the criteria that officers consider when identifying hateful motives, (2) individual resistance to enforcing hate crime laws, and (3) formal hate crime training (Maynard & Read, 1997; Bowling, 1999; Macpherson, 1999; Gerstenfeld, 2004; Hall, 2005).

Five major studies have investigated hate crime policing within the United Kingdom. In 1997, Maynard and Read (1997) from the Home Office Police Research Group conducted one of the first government studies on hate crime policing in the United Kingdom. Through a postal survey of all 43 police forces in England and Wales, the investigators gathered information on racist incidents recorded during 1996-1997. They then performed in-depth interviews of 72 officers and analyzed police paperwork to examine how four of the police forces handled a sample of 88 racist incidents.

Maynard and Read (1997) found great variation in the handling of racist incidents by the police forces. Some forces did not view racist incidents as a special type of incident and processed racist incidents in the same way as other incidents. Other forces prioritized racist incidents and created special procedures for processing them. In some of these forces, racist incidents were given to a specialized unit that exclusively handled their investigation and follow-up. Maynard and Read discovered that in these units, racist incidents were often marginalized from front-line policing because officers would hand them over to hate crime units with no investment in the cases. Other forces that prioritized racist incidents did not create a special unit, but rather designated a specialized officer to monitor the handling of all racist incidents. The researchers found that in these units, more officers involved in front-line policing were aware of the problem of racist incidents and felt that tackling these incidents was a priority.

Maynard and Read (1997) also uncovered disagreements between officers and victims' interpretations of case facts. In 9 of the 88 cases, officers disagreed with victims' perceptions that an incident was racially motivated. Despite this conflict, the officers followed the requirement to record these incidents as racist incidents. However, it is unclear from the study whether officers' handling of the incidents differed from their behavior in cases in which they agreed with victims' perceptions of racial hatred.

Furthermore, the investigators found that 42 of the 72 interviewed officers received training on racist incidents (Maynard & Read, 1997). Officers' attitudes toward training differed. Although the investigators did not quantify how much these attitudes differed, they reported that some

officers viewed training on racist incidents as excellent and useful, whereas others viewed it as unnecessary. Three officers stated that training did not prepare them for the anti-police sentiment that they often experienced from racial minorities on the streets.

Although Maynard and Read's 1997 research provided useful insight into hate crime policing, there are many reasons to be critical of the study. Tens of thousands of hate incidents are reported to the police in England and Wales each year (Home Office, 2010). It is unlikely that meaningful generalizations can be made across all police forces in England and Wales from a sample of 88 incidents. In making generalizations, the investigators also seem to ignore policing differences between rural and city areas. It may be that different organizational structures and procedures respond to the needs of police forces in rural and city areas.

The second major study, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999), is accepted as the groundbreaking and most influential report on hate crime policing within the United Kingdom (Bowling, 1999; Hall, 2005). The Inquiry criticized the London Metropolitan Police for its inadequate handling of a racially charged murder of a Black male teenager. The Inquiry found that the investigation was "marred by a combination of professional incompetence, institutional racism and a failure of leadership by senior officers" (Macpherson, 1999, para. 46.1). The Inquiry exposed flaws in the police's handling of the crime at every step of the process, including the disorganization of the initial response, the inadequate arrest attempts and searches, the inappropriate actions and inactions of the senior investigating officers, and failure to retain records and notes. Based on these troublesome findings, the Inquiry put forth 70 recommendations for investigating and prosecuting racially motivated crime, which resulted in significant changes to policing racial and ethnic minorities (Hall, 2005; Rowe 2007; Hall, Grieve, & Savage, 2009).

Many view the Inquiry as a "landmark" in policing history (Bowling, 1999, p. xv), but the report contains many shortcomings. Bowling (1999, p. xvii) explains that the fundamental flaw of the Inquiry is that it "lacks a coherent analysis of the problems of violent racism and the failures of the state response to it." He further states that the Inquiry is "replete with statements of principles, evidence, and recommendations for action that are not reflected anywhere in the 335 pages" (p. xvii).

Bowling (1999) thus conducted his own study on violent racism in the London Borough of Newham in order to provide a greater context for the Inquiry and its recommendations. Bowling found that of community member respondents, only 9% were very satisfied, and 44% were very or fairly satisfied, with the way in which the police handled their incidents. These rates were lower than British Crime Survey figures from that year on satis-

faction with the police handling of crime in general (22% very satisfied, 60% very or fairly satisfied).

Bowling also discovered that after combating racist incidents was made a priority within the force, racist incidents received more attention from beat officers and investigators, which improved the recording and monitoring of racist incidents. When identifying racist motives, officers used "objective criteria," such as racist language or racist graffiti. However, officers categorized racist incidents as crimes only when they were serious crimes (homicide, serious assault); minor crimes, such as assaults, threats, or abusive behavior, were rarely defined as racist crimes, and therefore hardly ever resulted in formal charges' being filed.

One shortcoming of Bowling's study is that it focuses on racist incidents, and therefore, does not provide insight into the police handling of incidents motivated by faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. Moreover, since Bowling's study focuses on one London borough, its findings may not apply to rural or smaller policing areas outside of London. The study was also conducted during the late 1990s, when racist incidents were near the top of the policing agenda because of the Lawrence investigation. It is unclear whether the findings apply today, more than a decade later.

Very few studies examine hate crime policing in the post-Macpherson era, which highlights the need for further research in this area. Hall's (2005, 2009) two studies provide needed insight. Hall's (2005) first study provides a descriptive overview (as opposed to a critical analysis) of the Met's post-Macpherson approach to combating hate crime. The study found that after the Lawrence Inquiry was conducted, the London Metropolitan Police changed its approach to policing hate crime. The most significant change was that the Met devolved hate crime policing responsibilities to 32 localized Community Safety Units (CSUs) that received extra training to respond to, investigate, and monitor hate crimes. The Met also increased hate crime training for police officers, conducted more hate crime prevention programs, and developed multi-agency partnerships to combat and to tackle hate crimes.

In the second study, Hall (2009) used participant observation, interviews, and document analysis to explore hate crime policing in a London CSU. The CSU was composed of twelve members and was responsible for responding to and investigating all hate crimes and domestic violence. The study found that the CSU's workload was "exceptionally and consistently high," which prevented the unit from engaging in proactive policing (Hall, 2009, p. 222). Officers were overwhelmed with paperwork and felt that they had been exposed to so many policy documents that it was impossible for them to read and keep track of current hate crime policy. Not all of the

CSU officers received hate crime training, and those who had received training had mixed attitudes regarding its usefulness.

One shortcoming of Hall's research is that it does not provide insight into whether hate crime policing may differ based on crime motivation. His analysis focuses on race and general themes, such as workload, policies and procedures, policing priorities, training, and multi-agency partnerships. Moreover, since his empirical research examines one London CSU only, the findings may not apply to other CSUs within the jurisdiction of the Met. The findings may also not apply to rural or small-city policing jurisdictions outside Essex, where the number of hate crimes are not as great (Hall, 2005).

III. The Research Setting, Methods, and Data Collection

A. *Research Setting*

The policing jurisdiction of the Constabulary is divided into multiple divisions. Lakeview's policing division includes a City Centre, where Lakeview Station is located, and many rural villages. The population is diverse and is expanding rapidly. It includes wealthy and deprived communities, a large student population, and communities of various faiths and races. Many areas of Lakeview's policing division are easily accessible, creating ideal locations for business and commerce. A transient workforce of foreign nationals is present in rural areas. The City Center also attracts millions of tourists each year.

Lakeview Police Station is one of the main police stations in its division. The station houses an enquiry office, a custody unit, a reactive unit, neighborhood policing teams, and various specialized crime units. The Lakeview Community Cohesion Unit (CCU) is a specialized police unit with the primary role of building community cohesion throughout the entire division. At Lakeview Police Station, the CCU has a large room with desks and computers, and two smaller private offices, one for the CCU sergeant and one for the inspector.

The CCU becomes involved in incidents that can heighten conflict or fear within and among particular communities. Handling hate incidents/ crimes is a major, although not exclusive, part of the unit's work. The unit used to handle hate crime investigations entirely, but it now functions to assist police officers (both reactive officers and detectives) who become involved in hate crime cases. The CCU did not have its own reactive officers or investigators.

When the study commenced, the CCU had six members: an inspector, two sergeants (one soon to retire), a police constable (PC), a faith police

community support officer (PCSO), and a community cohesion support officer. With the exception of the faith PCSO, who had been with the unit for five years, each of the CCU members had been with the unit for less than one year. The inspector, sergeants, and PC each had more than ten years of prior experience in other police units.

B.   *Method and Data Collection*

The research design included three qualitative methods: (1) participant observation, (2) semi-structured and unstructured interviews, and (3) case file and official document analysis. I shadowed the Community Cohesion Unit (CCU) every weekday for four to seven hours per day from April to August 2010. I conducted over 150 unstructured interviews, which "are the most common in ethnographic work" (Fetterman, 2010, p. 41). I also conducted 60- to 90-minute semi-structured one-on-one interviews with CCU members and relevant officers of different ranks within a private setting at the police station. I analyzed 195 hate incident and 89 hate crime files that were stored on the computer crime database from April 2009 to August 2010. The Lakeview police did not store copies of reports of hate incidents or hate crimes on its computer database prior to April 2009. Finally, I analyzed more than 100 restricted and public documents, including hate crime policy manuals, the CCU business plan, training materials, local policing plans, and statistical reports.

For observations and interviews, I took handwritten notes. Although more accurate, I concluded that tape recorders would have caused police officer respondents to feel uncomfortable, lie, or hesitate to reveal information (Fetterman, 2010; Murchison, 2010). For these reasons, researchers have used handwritten notes during interviews with police officers to explore hate crime policing (Bell, 2002). This data collection limitation made it impossible to record extensive direct quotes from officer respondents. For this reason, I have summarized respondents' answers.

I read and coded the data by hand on a printed copy of the record. I divided data analysis into three phases: deconstruction (*open coding*), construction (*axial coding*), and confirmation (*selective coding*) (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). These distinctions were analytical only; the phases interwove in practice (Gobo, 2008). To validate my hypotheses, I used two forms of triangulation. First, I read and compared the data from a single method to assess whether a hypothesis was supported by the method at different stages of fieldwork. Second, I read and compared the data from all three methods to assess whether a hypothesis was supported by all three methods.

During the study, I was exposed to highly sensitive information about

crime victims and suspects. Furthermore, I was exposed to highly sensitive information about the inner workings of police stations and the personal thoughts of police officers. To avoid reputational harm, I agreed to use pseudonyms for the names of geographical locations, police officers, the police station, and the constabulary. I also agreed to keep descriptions of particular incidents general enough to protect identities.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings below describe how the Lakeview CCU and the Lakeview police force generally handled hate incidents and hate crimes. This descriptive analysis provides needed and structured insight into how hate crime laws are enforced by the British police.

A. *Hate Crime Policies and Procedures*

Special policies and procedures applied to hate incidents and to hate crimes at Lakeview. If an incident was labeled as a hate incident by the control room operator, or was identified as a hate incident by a reactive officer, then it would receive additional oversight by a detective sergeant (DS) in the reactive team. The CCU was also notified of the incident and was expected to provide additional support to officers and to informants. Although dispatch officers in the control room could dispose of certain incidents, such as traffic offenses, only the DS in the reactive team could dispose of hate incidents.

In addition to a standard 32-step investigation plan, special policies and procedures applied to hate *crimes*. A DS in the Crime Management Unit (CMU), which allocated resources for criminal investigations, reviewed hate crimes every week. Unlike other crimes, no hate crime could be filed without his approval. Additionally, a CMU inspector reviewed the open hate crime cases every day to make sure that a full investigation was planned and that no possible lines of investigation were missed. The CCU was notified of all hate crimes, and was expected to provide additional assistance to officers and informants.

Hate crime policies and procedures did not necessarily result in hate crime charges. In fact, the majority of the cases (73.0%) were filed because of insufficient evidence or because the victim declined to prosecute suspect(s) (see Table 1). Case file analysis revealed that charges were raised in only 12.3% (n = 11) of the criminal cases.

Police discretion undermined the effectiveness of hate crime policies and procedures. Five CCU members complained that officers did not document their actions on the computer crime database, which hindered the

Table 1.
*Actions Resulting From Hate Crime Investigations at Lakeview
April 2009 to July 2010*

	Volume	Percentage
Filed – Insufficient Evidence	63	70.8
Filed – Charges Dropped	2	2.2
Charge	11	12.4
Caution	4	4.5
Final Warning	3	3.4
Reprimand	2	2.2
Unknown	4	4.5
Total	89	

Source: Lakeview Crime Files, April 2009-July 2010

CCU from having an awareness of police activity on certain cases. At times, CCU sergeants felt that the CMU inspector and CMU sergeant did not place enough pressure on officers to investigate hate crimes promptly. The sergeants expressed that it was not uncommon for a hate crime to go an entire week without any updates from officers. Case file analysis provided some support for the sergeants' claims. There was no indication of CMU DS or inspector review in 41.2% (n = 37) of the hate crime case files. However, 88.4% (n = 46) of the crimes that received CMU DS or inspector review were reviewed within one week of the crime report.

Miscategorization also undermined the effectiveness of hate crime policies and procedures. CCU members frequently expressed frustration because hate crimes were labeled as other crimes, such as common assault or rowdy nuisance. Three CCU members read all incoming incidents regularly and relied upon certain criteria (see the next subsection) to identify potential hate incidents. Because of this monitoring practice, the CCU became involved in many hate incidents that were originally labeled as other incidents during the research period. Incomplete information in the case files, however, made it impossible to quantify the number of hate incidents and hate crimes that were miscategorized during the research period.

B. *Identifying Hateful Motives*

Hateful expression was the most common indicator of hateful motivation. Of the police cases filed, 88.2% (n = 172) contained explicit references to hateful speech or symbols. In three case files, informants stated that they were unsure whether the incident was motivated by hatred because the suspect(s) did not use hateful language. Moreover, all of the inter-

viewed officers, both inside and outside of the CCU, stated that hateful comments or symbols were the key pieces of evidence that they looked for when identifying hate crimes. For one officer inside the CCU, hateful expression was the determining criterion; the officer felt that a crime could not be a hate crime without the presence of hateful speech or symbols.

Hateful motives were not always easy to identify. All six of the CCU members acknowledged that hateful motives often do not surface during the initial interaction between victims and law enforcement. The CCU members were also fully aware that hate incidents were often miscategorized. Members of the CCU read the incident and crime log daily and relied upon a series of indicators to identify potentially miscategorized hate incidents and hate crimes. These indicators included incident type (neighborhood disputes, violence, and rowdy behavior were viewed as potentially hate-related), victim names ("ethnic" names could indicate potential victimization), and neighborhoods (certain neighborhoods had higher minority populations).

Miscategorization was not the only factor that posed problems in terms of identifying hateful motives. Four CCU members stated that some victims perceive incidents to be motivated by hatred when they are not, especially when the victims suffer from mental illness. Two CCU members expressed that some informants deliberately lie about being targeted by hatred in order to get quicker access to services from the local council. During the research period, for instance, an informant who lived in council-owned housing lied about being targeted at his residence because of his sexuality in order to avoid being put on a long waitlist for other council housing.

C.   *Hate Crime Training and Official Policy Guidance*

All CCU members viewed training as useful, but none of them received training on hate crime or community cohesion issues upon joining the unit. Five CCU members believed that the force was educated about hate crimes in an abstract sense, but felt that additional training would provide more practical guidance on identifying and handling hate crimes. Two CCU members stressed that the job required training on issues relating to child protection, mental health, learning disabilities, and domestic violence. Although the Constabulary did not offer formal training, four CCU members took it upon themselves to attend external training courses on relevant topics that appealed to them, such as mental health, vulnerable adults, and religion.

Official hate crime policy guidance from the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) was not communicated to the

CCU. CCU members were unfamiliar with the hate crime manuals published by the ACPO, which are the main policy documents intended to guide hate crime policing in constabularies within England and Wales. One of the CCU sergeants was unaware of any existing hate crime manuals, but learned after sending emails to other inspectors in the constabulary that a new manual was soon to be released. The sergeant did not know that the last manual published by the ACPO was sitting on the CCU inspector's bookcase, only a few doors away.

D. *Dividing Hate Crime and Other Community Cohesion Work*

Hate crime, community outreach, and counterterrorism were the three major items on the CCU's agenda. The CCU had no systematic approach to dividing the time that it dedicated to each item. Sometimes, this caused the CCU's work to be lopsided toward one or two agenda items. During the research period, there were weeks when the CCU's work focused mostly on counterterrorism and community outreach, and rarely on hate crime.

Although the CCU promoted itself as a unit that resolved tensions between communities, in practice, it had no strategy to increase communication or resolve tensions between communities. Most outreach work involved resolving tensions within particular communities, especially when two members of a community were involved in a disagreement. Moreover, the CCU's outreach efforts were heavily slanted toward race and faith. During the research period, the CCU conducted very little face-to-face community outreach in the area of disability, and no face-to-face outreach in the area of sexuality or gender identity. However, the CCU did have relationships with local advocacy organizations in these areas.

E. *Client Sensitivity*

All six CCU members acknowledged that many hate crime informants feel vulnerable and frightened, especially when it is their first time interacting with the police. During each client interaction that I observed, CCU members made a deliberate effort to use sensitive language. CCU members would explain informants' options and prioritize what informants wanted out of reporting an incident. CCU members did not push informants to press charges. Two CCU members expressed that informants from minority communities commonly fear that pressing charges will harm their reputations within their communities.

CCU members were also aware of the consequences that stemmed from their visible presentation. One year before the study was conducted, the unit decided to stop wearing police officer uniforms regularly on the

job. Two CCU members stated that uniforms made some informants appre-
hensive and reluctant to reveal information. These members also believed
that it was easier to do community outreach in "plain clothes." They felt
that community members viewed the CCU when in uniform as "enforcers"
as opposed to "community cohesion builders." When travelling to homes,
the CCU also used police-owned vehicles that looked like ordinary cars, not
police cars. Two CCU members said that they used ordinary cars when
visiting clients in order to shield them from reputational harm in their com-
munities for interacting with the police.

F.   *CCU Culture and Management*

The atmosphere of the CCU was generally positive. All of the CCU
members believed that the unit served an important purpose. Three CCU
members said that the unit showed a less aggressive side of policing, which
they believed was critical to building bridges between communities and the
police. Two CCU members also felt that without the CCU, victim service
would decline, and in many cases, victims' perceptions of the police would
deteriorate.

Despite this high internal perception of the unit, all CCU members felt
that many frontline officers and investigators did not know that the CCU
existed, or were confused about what the unit did on a daily basis. Five
CCU members identified lack of promotion as a major weakness of the unit.
These CCU members also felt that the unit was underutilized by frontline
officers. Evidence of CCU involvement in hate crime cases appeared in
only 47.2% (n = 42) of the police case files. However, it is possible that
CCU members did not record their involvement in the files that do not
mention any CCU involvement.

CCU members had good working relationships and respected one
another. All CCU members felt as though they worked as a team and
helped each other. At the same time, they recognized that each person in
the unit had different connections and worked on certain projects indepen-
dently. This created the perception among CCU members that each person
brought something new to the unit.

The inspector avoided aggressively micromanaging the CCU because
she felt that the nature of the unit's work demanded flexibility. Two CCU
members said that they valued her management style and enjoyed the flexi-
bility of their positions. However, not all of the CCU members were happy
with the unit's management. Two other CCU members felt that members
work so independently that they are often unaware of what other members
are doing. One member said that because of the lack of management, out-
reach was determined by CCU members' personal connections to particular

communities. This member felt that certain communities were left out of the CCU's outreach as a result, especially in the areas of sexuality and disability.

G. *Monitoring Hate Crimes and Exposing Poor Performance*

On the computer crime database, CCU members could see when crimes were not being dealt with promptly and when officers had taken wrong steps during hate crime investigations. CCU members also used the system to task officers to take additional actions and to record any actions that the unit had taken. One common problem was that it sometimes took many days for officers to record actions on the computer system, which prevented the CCU from having an awareness of what was happening with certain cases. CCU members did not feel that these omissions were deliberate, but rather felt that officers often did not have the time to enter information because of their high caseloads.

CCU sergeants and the CCU inspector spoke to frontline officers and supervisors when a case was not being handled properly. Because of their rank, other CCU members did not feel that it was their place to speak to another officer's supervisor about the handling of a case. They did use the computer crime database to task officers to take additional specific actions, which officers rarely ignored. All of the CCU members said that if an individual is tasked to do something, and a problem occurs that is traced back to that task, then the blame falls on the individual. At times, the CCU sergeants felt that that some officers viewed them as intruding upon their territory when they exposed an officer's poor performance, especially when a case involved a specialized unit. But for the most part, they felt comfortable speaking to an officer or a supervisor when something went wrong during a case. They said that the most common problems were that officers did not update their actions on the computer database promptly and that officers sometimes took too long to perform certain tasks during investigations.

H. *Other Challenges*

The CCU was constrained by limited resources. Limited time, staff, and funding made it impossible for the CCU to reach out to many communities in the Division. Since the CCU did not have its own car, it had to borrow vehicles from other units. Sometimes cars were unavailable, which meant that the CCU had to delay its work or use alternative modes of transportation, such as bus or bicycle. Not having a car made it especially difficult for the CCU to do community outreach in rural areas of the Division.

Turnover was another challenge. Five out of six of the CCU members

had been in the CCU for less than one year. On the one hand, CCU members felt that this gave them the opportunity to rebrand the unit. On the other hand, many CCU members said that they felt they had started their positions from scratch and without any guidance or feedback. Nobody knew who would take over the work of the CCU sergeant who was soon to retire.

The CCU also faced external challenges from minority communities. Some community members were reluctant to talk to the CCU because of their distrust of the police. One CCU member who had ties with local Muslim communities stated that it took years for her to develop those relationships. Furthermore, language barriers hindered the CCU from conducting personal outreach to many communities in the Division. The Faith PCSO spoke many South Asian dialects, which helped to build many bridges between South Asian communities and the CCU. However, language barriers prevented the CCU from reaching out to non-English-speaking Chinese and European communities; most of the outreach to Chinese communities was handled by a PCSO outside of the CCU who spoke Mandarin. It was also difficult for the CCU to reach out to communities, such as Buddhist communities, that were dispersed throughout the division and had no community centers or public places of worship.

V. Discussion and Reflections

The study findings have implications for improving hate crime policing. Although the study findings confirm some of the hypotheses made in existing research, they also challenge other assumptions and raise new questions. As a result, the findings suggest promising directions for future research on hate crime policing. The following analysis focuses on three broad topics: (1) the influence that the content of hate crime definition of hate crime definitions and hate crime laws has on hate crime policing, (2) the role of discretion in hate crime policing, and (3) the specific responsibilities of hate crime units.

A. *Definitions, Laws, and Hate Crime Policing*

The working definitions of hate crime in England and Wales are broad because they (1) require law enforcement to record a crime as a hate crime if the victim (or any other person) believes it is motivated by hatred, and (2) require law enforcement to record and to respond to hate *incidents* and hate *crimes*. Hall's research (2005, 2009) found that these broad definitions caused hate crime units in London to have high caseloads, which made their work difficult to manage. This research raises the issue of whether hate crime definitions in the United Kingdom should be narrowed.

CCU members did not feel that the broadness of the current hate crime definitions made their workloads unmanageable. Unlike the studies conducted in London, the findings of this study demonstrate that police forces in smaller policing areas can manage their caseloads under the current definitions. Some clear benefits deriving from the scope of the current hate crime definitions arose during the study. For instance, CCU members stated that responding to hate incidents helped Lakeview officers to identify victimization patterns in particular neighborhoods. Moreover, in responding to incidents, officers did not have to wait for actual crimes to occur before they could resolve situations between hate victims and perpetrators.

Furthermore, the study findings suggest that the *devolution of hate crime responsibilities* may enhance caseload management under the current hate crime definitions. In many ways, the devolution of hate crime responsibilities at Lakeview helped the force to manage hate crime caseloads. Since the Crime Management Unit (CMU) handled only crimes, and the responsibility to investigate hate crime was devolved throughout the entire force, the CMU could allocate resources to respond to and to investigate hate crimes in a way that did not overwork a single unit. This differs from Hall's research (2005, 2009), in which a single unit handled all aspects of every hate crime case. As a result, the study findings imply that devolving certain hate crime responsibilities, such as investigations, may be an alternative to changing the current definitions in order to help police forces manage hate crime caseloads. More rigorous studies on hate crime caseload management are needed to determine whether this is a viable alternative, especially within major city police forces where there are large volumes of hate crimes that are reported to the police (Ministry of Justice, 2010).

The study findings also raise important questions about the law's influence on officers' conceptions of hate crime. Race and faith were included in hate crime laws years before sexual orientation and disability were included; gender identity is still not included in these laws. From officers' use of language and terminology at Lakeview, it became clear that race was inextricably linked to officers' conceptions of hate crime. This finding is not unsurprising given that hate crime laws in England and Wales originated from very public events involving race, such as the Lawrence Inquiry.

At the end of the research period, I sensed that certain hate crimes, especially those motivated by sexual orientation, disability, and gender identity, were not being categorized as hate crimes because they did not fit officers' narrow conceptions of hate crime. The study findings thus indicate that the historical origins of hate crime laws may be perpetuating underinclusive hate crime categorization practices. Future research is needed to assess whether the historical origins of hate crime laws are hav-

ing similar effects in other British police stations. Although policy recommendations should be viewed tentatively due to the exploratory nature of this study, the findings suggest that hate crime training may necessary to broaden officers' conceptions of hate crime in the post-Macpherson era.

Furthermore, English law creates separate criminal *offenses* for certain crimes motivated by racial and religious hatred only. The law does not create separate criminal offenses for crimes motivated by sexual orientation and disability, but courts may consider hateful motivation to increase criminal penalties. Academics have presumed that these legal differences do not have any tangible effect on hate crime policing (Gerstenfeld, 2004; Hall, 2005).

The study findings suggest otherwise. At Lakeview, differences in hate crime laws may have caused race and faith hate crimes to receive greater oversight. Lakeview police performance was measured by detected and undetected *crimes*, indicating the importance of having a hate crime criminal *offense*. Moreover, the Constabulary's hate crime performance reports included figures on racially aggravated *offenses* only. Concrete actions, such as internal reports on the detection of racially aggravated *offenses*, stemmed from these figures. The study findings therefore challenge the current presumption in the literature that legal differences based on hate crime motivation have no tangible effect. Future research, however, is needed to explore whether differences in hate crime laws are creating disparities in hate crime policing inside other police stations.

B.   *Police Discretion*

Discretion had a major role in hate crime policing at Lakeview. To be charged as a hate crime, an incident had to pass through a series of decisions made by different officers, each of whom had great discretion in making those decisions. As a result, the study findings support the notion that hate crimes are made and constructed through a "process" of policing events (Martin, 1999; Bowling, 1999; Bell, 2002; Hall, 2009).

The study findings also show that attempts to limit officer discretion are not always effective. Lakeview implemented hate crime policies and procedures to limit officer discretion that could hinder hate crime responses or investigations. However, many officers were unaware of or ignored these policies and procedures. Some officers identified the computer crime database as a deterrent to misbehavior since the system forced them to record their actions in a space that could be seen by superiors. However, the success of this system was undermined when officers did not input information promptly.

Although researchers have endorsed the use of hate crime policies and

procedures to limit officer discretion (Walker & Katz, 1995; Martin, 1995), the study findings illustrate that rigid procedures can sometimes deter hate crime policing. For instance, three CCU members felt that the rigid set of questions that the police telephone operators were required to ask hindered the operators from probing more deeply in order to determine whether an incident had been motivated by hatred. As a result, allowing for police discretion in some circumstances may improve hate crime classification.

Placing these findings in the context of previous research, effective hate crime policing seems to depend on limiting "bad" discretion that may hinder hate crime policing and fostering "good" discretion that may enhance it. Since policing varies among localities, police stations may have to adopt different policies and procedures to provide this proper balance. Consequently, this exploratory case study cannot put forth recommendations that apply to all policing areas. However, a few provisional recommendations arise from the study findings. Policies and procedures that take the form of topical bullet points or broad processes, as opposed to rigid and detailed action plans, may give officers the flexibility that they need to handle hate crime cases appropriately and to ensure that they do not miss important aspects of the case. Moreover, establishing systems of accountability, as was the case with the computerized crime system at Lakeview, may help to reduce officer misbehavior that can obstruct hate crime cases. Stations must work within their forces, each with specific cultures, to motivate officers to follow existing policies, procedures, and systems of accountability.

C. *Hate Crime Unit Responsibilities*

One important distinction between this case study and previous studies is that this study examines a hate crime unit that does not handle all aspects of hate crime cases. The analysis above addressed the relationship between devolving hate crime responsibilities and hate crime caseload under existing hate crime definitions. The analysis below discusses additional topics relating to hate crime unit responsibilities and hate crime policing.

Hall's (2009, p. 236) study of a hate crime unit in London found that proactive policing within the unit was weak because the unit was overburdened with hate crime investigations. Conversely, the Lakeview CCU was able to prioritize proactive policing on its agenda because the unit was not burdened with other aspects of hate crime cases. All of the CCU members felt that the proactive aspect of their agenda would disappear if the unit took on an investigatory role. Although limited resources prevented the CCU from reaching out to many communities, proactive policing was a major component of the CCU workload and enabled the unit to

develop relationships with many members of minority communities that have tense relations with law enforcement. Future research is needed to explore whether proactive policing is compromised when hate crime units take on investigatory responsibilities.

The study also raises the question of whether devolving hate crime responsibilities can improve officers' attitudes toward hate crime units and hate crimes generally. The Faith PCSO of the Lakeview CCU expressed that when the CCU had handled hate crime investigations in the past, other officers were extremely hostile to the unit when it needed help with investigations. The Faith PCSO also felt that the CCU was disrespected and that officers handed hate crime cases to the unit without any sense of investment. These findings are consistent with Maynard and Read's 1997 study described above. Three CCU members believed that officers' perception of the unit was greatly improved now that it plays an assisting, rather than investigatory, role. They also felt that frontline officers were more invested in hate incident and hate crime cases because it was now their job to handle them appropriately.

Furthermore, the study findings illustrate some of the benefits of having hate crime units handle community cohesion work. In smaller policing areas such as Lakeview, where the number of reported hate crimes is relatively low, it may be a more efficient use of police resources to broaden the role of hate crime units to include general community cohesion work. All CCU members stated that if the CCU did not take on a broader role, then the Lakeview police would likely miss resolving a lot of tensions within communities that are created by crimes other than hate crimes.

But the study findings also highlight some of the serious risks of having hate crime units handle broader community cohesion work. This broad responsibility diluted the unit's focus on hate crimes specifically. Proper management and communication are thus critical to ensure that hate crimes do not disappear from agendas. Hate crime units must plan carefully to determine how they will balance hate crime work with other agenda priorities.

VI. CONCLUSION

One shortcoming of any case study is that it is difficult to determine whether the results apply to other contexts. This case study does not claim to provide a universal account of hate crime policing. It is highly unlikely that such a universal account exists. Organization, culture, available resources, geography, and population demographics vary among police departments. A police department may tailor and particularize its hate crime policing strategy based on these variables.

Despite this limitation, the case study is an important contribution to the field of hate studies because it provides systematic knowledge on a topic that is relatively unexplored in the United Kingdom: hate crime policing. By investigating policing in natural settings, this article provided insight into the difficulties that law enforcement may face, and into the special considerations that may arise, when applying hate crime laws to actual situations. It is my hope that this study's methods and findings can facilitate and supplement future empirical research and theoretical inquiry on hate crime policing.

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