objectives

AFTER COMPLETING THIS LESSON, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Understand historical-cultural accounts of hate crime;
- Understand sociological accounts of hate crime;
- Understand economic accounts of hate crime; and
- Think about synthesizing the six types of hate crime theories.

Please do the following required reading for Lessons Five and Six:

- Examining Hate Motivated Aggression: a Review of the Social Psychological Literature on Hate Crimes as a Distinct Form of Aggression, Chapter 8 of *Hate and Bias Crime: A Reader* (BP)
- *In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes*, by Barbara Perry
- Accounting for Hate Crime: Doing Difference, Chapter 6 of *Hate and Bias Crime: A Reader* (BP)
- Black Church Arson in the United States, 1989-1996, Chapter 12 of *Hate and Bias Crime: A Reader* (BP)
- Constructing Whiteness: The Intersections of Race and Gender in U.S. White Supremacist Discourse, Chapter 24 of *Hate and Bias Crime: A Reader* (BP)
- *The Urban Ecology of Bias Crime: A Study of Disorganized and*

In Lesson Five, we looked at individual theories of hate crime motivation. In this lesson we move to cultural-historical accounts of hate crime. Be mindful that we are switching gears: societal level accounts focus attention on more macro level concerns.

An emphasis on political discourse characterizes historical-cultural explanations of hate crime. The idea is that political discourse and political culture, as well as propensities for hate crime, are rooted in longstanding, if not immutable, cultural patterns and traditions.

In "Contemporary Radical Right Wing Violence in Canada: A Quantitative Analysis," Jeffrey Ian Ross attempts to understand the emergence and form of right-wing violence in Canada. Implicit in his analysis is a comparison to the U.S. situation.

In order to understand right-wing violence in Canada, Ross first identifies a history of that country's right-wing violence. As he says, "Traditionally, radical right-wing violence in Canada has been racist, anti-Catholic, anti-Communist, and Anti-Semitic." (1992:77)

Right-wing violence can be traced back as far as 1784 when Canada's first race-riot took place in the Nova Scotian towns of Shelburne and Birchtown: "Hundreds of recently disbanded white soldiers, many still in possession of their arms, rioted when they found that the rich of Shelburne preferred to hire blacks at wages lower than the white man's wages. They went rampaging through Birchtown, pulling down some twenty houses belonging to blacks." (1992:77). This pattern of right-wing labor violence would be repeated throughout Canada's history.

Moving to central Canada, almost a century later, 22 riots took place in Toronto from 1867 to 1892, between Protestants and Catholics: "The next prominent cases of right-wing violence were in the context of anti-orientalism in British Columbia manifested as attaches against both Chinese and Japanese. Some of the more noticeable were in may 1833 near Lytton, British Columbia when an interracial brawl between whites and Chinese left nine Chinese beaten unconscious, two of whom later died."

The bulk of the violence directed against people and property during the next decade was committed by the Ku Klux Klan. For example, in 1992 a rash of Klan-sponsored arsons destroyed several Catholic institutions in the Montreal area

During the 1930s the rise of nazism in German and fascism in Italy had spillover effects in Canada, with Nazi and Fascist parties gaining many adherents in Canada. Interestingly, during World War II and the postwar years, there was an almost complete absence of right-wing activity and connected violence in Canada.

During the 1960s, however, Canada experienced the resurgence and fomentation of radical right-wing extremism. Various groups loosely connected to racist, anti-Semitic, and anticommunist activities spawned, including the Canadian Nazi party, the John Birch Society, the Canadian National Socialist Party, the Western Guard, and the Nationalist Party of Canada.

During the 1970s, the committed members of these groups continued their hate crime activities but were often greeted with hate crime charges. For example, the Western Guard was crippled by arrests during the 1970s on bombs, conspiracy, and other charges. It was quickly replaced by the resurgence of the KKK in 1972; but by 1982 the KKK had major setbacks due to the imprisonment of many of its top leaders.

Through the 1980s, however, several other right-wing individuals and groups fomented violence. By the late 1980s skinheads became increasingly prominent in Canadian cities. In 1989, this culminated in a considerable public furor and a protest by concerned communities surrounding the meeting of 70 skinheads and a cross-burning incident in Minden, Ontario.

Quite apart from these historical details, Ross asked, what is the statistical pattern to this violence? In order to address this question, he assembled a detailed chronology of events of right-wing violence based on the following materials:

- The vertical files collection at the Toronto Reference Library, which contains information on various right-wing groups in Canada;
- Archival newspaper clippings from files of the intelligence branch of a policy agency;
- Files from three private organizations (newspaper articles, private complaints, and right-wing publications, and so on);
- Published chronologies of events of violence in Canada; and
- Newspaper clippings from the files of major newspapers in Canada; and
- Articles listed through manual and computer accessible news indexes of Canadian newspapers and magazines.

Clearly, this is not a comprehensive inventory, but it is "as good as it gets."

So, what did Ross find?

As the figure shows, Canada has consistently experienced a relatively low annual level of radical right-wing violence, with two exceptions.

Frequency of events per year
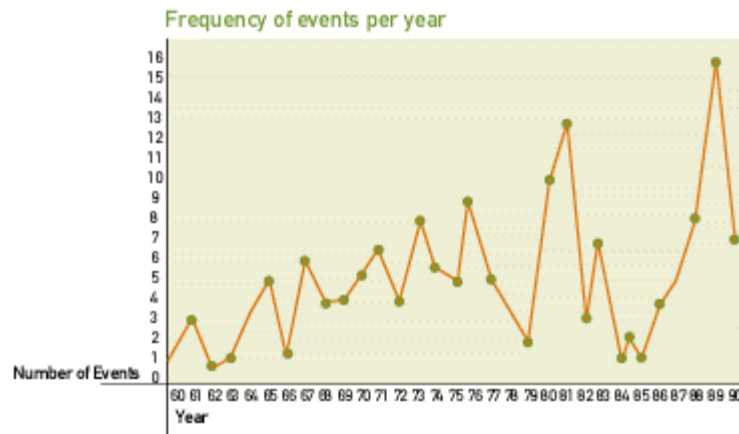
During 1980-81, there were 23 incidents (accounting for almost 15% of the total). In 1988-89 there were 27 events (accounting for 17% of the total). Otherwise, the number of attacks hovered around 5.3 incidents per year.

Ross's work shows a clustering of events between March and August. Possible explanations for this might be that these are the warm months in Canada, which are amenable to street protests and demonstrations.

Month event started

Month	Frequency	Porcentage
January	21	13.2
February	8	5.0
March	12	7.5
April	15	9.4
May	17	10.7
June	15	9.4
July	14	8.8
August	19	11.9
September	6	3.8
October	13	8.2
November	11	6.9
December	8	5.0
Total	159	100.0

Different patterns also emerge for each type of radical right-wing incident. More than half the attacks are directed at people, mostly assaults occurring in the context of a protest situation. The balance is divided between bombings and other types of actions.

Type of event

Type of Event	Frequency	Percentage
Attacks on human targets		
Assault/slashing	89	56.0
Shooting	7	4.4
Bombing's		
Unknown type	14	8.8
Molotov	9	5.7
Dynamite	5	3.1
Smoke	2	1.3
Other attacks		
Destruction-misc.	18	11.3
Arson-unknown cause	12	7.5
Armed attack-misc.	1	0.6
Skyjacking	1	0.6
Chemical spray attack	1	0.6
Total	**159**	**100.0**

Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia have experienced the overwhelming majority of racial right-wing incidents (96.9%). Not surprisingly, these events have occurred in provinces where the majority of Canadians, particularly large immigrant and minority populations, live.

Province where action took place

Province	Frequency	Percentage
Ontario	79	49.7
Québec	41	25.8
British Columbia	34	21.4
Alberta	2	1.3
Manitoba	2	1.3
Nova Scotia	1	0.6
Total	159	100.0

Clearly, urban spaces are the preferred location for racial right-wing attack events to occurs. Again, this accords with the fact that most immigrants in Canada live in large cities.

City where action took place

City	Frequency	Percentage
Totonto	63	39.6
Montreal [1]	40	25.2
Vancouver [2]	31	19.6
Ottawa	7	4.4
Hamilton	3	1.9
Winnipeg	2	1.3
Miscellaneous	13	8.5
Total	159	100.0

1 Includes Laval.
2 Includes Delta, Matsqui and Richmond

Responsibility for radical right-wing violence can be analyzed by distinguishing among (1) events for which an organization claimed responsibility; (2) events for which an organization did not claim responsibility, but the nature of the action was popularly attributed to a particular group; and (3) events that were reliably determined to have been committed by a group.

With these distinctions in mind, the largest number of events fell under the category "None or not relevant." That is, most of the right-wing acts were committed by individuals unaffiliated or not claiming membership with a particular group

Group	Claimed by group Freq.	Popularly believed responsible Freq.	Actually responsible Totals Freq.
Skinheads	1	26	26
Croatian Nationalists	1	10	10
Western Guard	1	10	9
Edmund Burke Society	1	9	9
Cuban Nationalists	5	7	7
Ku Klux Klan	2	10	5
Canadian Nazi Party	3	3	3
Yugoslavian Nationalists		3	3
Coalition of Anti-Soviet Group	1	3	2
Amid Organization	2	2	2
Pro-lifers			2
Hungarian Nationalists			1
JDL Splinter Group		1	1
Hungarian Freedom Fighters Assn.	1	1	1
Anti-Soviet Action Committee		1	1
East Indian People's Assn.		1	1
None/Not relevant	126	61	60
Missing data	15	11	16
Total	*159*	*159*	*159*

[1] Includes a note or call received to the police or a newspaper
[2] Includes statements by witnesses, those targeted and police inferences.
[3] Includes only the opinions of those that are most reliable investigating th

Ross, J.I. (1992) Contemporary Radical Right Wing Violence in Canada.

The bulk of actions for which a culprit could be found have been executed in recent years by Skinheads (26), while the remainder are equally divided between the neo-fascist groups and the anticommunist/nationalist groups. Curiously, many right wing-groups in Canada during this period did not engage in violence, such as the John Birch Society.

The majority of primary targets are people (90), followed by private property (34), and public property (26). The nonhuman targets most likely hit are embassies/consulates and residences.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TARGETS

	Primary Target		Secondary Target	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
People				
	99	62.3	58	36.5
Private property				
Residences	13	8.2	8	5.0
Commercial	9	5.7	7	4.4
Means of transportation	5	3.1	4	2.5
Abortion clinic	4	2.5		
Political organizations	3	1.9		
Public property				
Embassies/consulates	13	8.2		
Religious buildings	7	4.4		
Community buildings	3	1.9		
Theatre	2	1.3		
Monuments	1	0.6		
School			1	0.6
None/Not relevant				
	0	0	75	47.2
Missing data				
	0	0	6	3.8
Total	159	100.0	159	100.0

Most importantly, analysis of the ideological types of attack illuminates the dynamics of racial right-wing violence in Canada. The majority of the events are racist in nature (58 events), followed by anticommunist/nationalistic (46) and anti-Semitic (17).

Type of radical right-wing violence

	Frequency	%
Racist attack	58	36.5
Anti-communist/Nacionalist attack	46	28.9
Anti-semitic attack	17	10.7
Anti-abortion attack	9	5.7
Counterdemonstration	7	4.4
Anti-homosexual attack	5	3.1
Inclusive attack	2	1.3
Anti-feminist attack	1	0.6
Anti-immigrant attack	1	0.6
Missing data	13	8.1
TOTAL	159	100.0

What does all this mean? What can we say about right-wing violence in Canada? To quote Ross, "The amount of right-wing violence in Canada pales in comparison to that occurring in the United States, the country that Canada is most often compared with" (1992:93).

Please read the following:

"False Perceptions of an Inclusive Society: A Century of Racism and Hate in Canada" by Matthew Lauder

Ross continues:

"Moreover, right-wing violence [in Canada] has been a predominantly urban phenomenon, compared to its southern variety. This might be due to the rural nature of America's south were racist violence has been most prominent" (1992:93). "Another interesting and related feature is that the Canadian Farmer's Movement and survivalists, unlike its southern cousin, have refrained from right-wing violent activity" (1992:93).

"Radical right-wing violence in Canada is less frequent than the similar activities occurring in Western Europe [and the US]. It has not spawned a party as powerful and durable as Britain's [British National Front] and France's [Front National] respective national Fronts, the German National Democratic Party [Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutshclands], etc., nor has it fostered the terrorists organizations and resultant violence that has developed in these countries" (1992:94).

Ultimately, Ross argues that the lower rate of violent hate crime in Canada relative to the structurally similar United States is attributable to Canada's history as a "peaceable kingdom" with a tradition of deference to authority. This is fundamentally a cultural-historical account of hate crime.

In sharp contrast, hate crime waves in Germany in the 1990s were often explained by journalists and academics alike as outbreaks of racist violence that represented the resurgence of the far right and the simple revival of nazism. Indeed, Tuttle (1994), von Trotha (1995), and McFalls (1997) linked contemporary right-wing extremism and xenophobic violence to the Nazi past by way of an ongoing national identity crisis exacerbated by reunification in the 1990s.

Following this line of thought, Donald Green and his coauthors suggest that "the very manner in which societies define and debate hate crime depends on their political-cultural traditions so that a similar occurrence might be termed a racial incident in Britain, an attack on Republican values in France, and a problem with refugee policy in Germany" (2001:486).

In sharp contrast, hate crime waves in Germany in the 1990s were often explained by journalists and academics alike as outbreaks of racist violence that represented the resurgence of the far right and the simple revival of nazism. Indeed, Tuttle (1994), von Trotha (1995), and McFalls (1997) linked contemporary right-wing extremism and xenophobic violence to the Nazi past by way of an on-going national identity crisis exacerbated by reunification in the 1990. Watch the following five-minute clip from an MTV documentary on "hate music" and the clip from an independent documentary to see how this might be the case.

- MTV Documentary
- Nazi Hate Rock

If you have trouble viewing this video, you might need to download RealPlayer.

Do you think nations have distinct "cultural milieus"? Are some national cultures just conducive to hate crime? Moreover, do you think that some nations are more committed than others to warfare based on race, religion and ethnicity?

Share your thoughts on the questions posed in "Critical Thinking" on the previous screen. Provide evidence, examples, or both to support your position.

To participate in the discussion, select OUTLINE from the TOOLS menu. Once you are back at the OUTLINE, select the appropriate FORUM from this lecture.

Most sociological accounts of hate crime direct attention to one of two things: "an anomic outburst of socially disintegrated individuals" or, alternatively, "the solidaristic reaction of a threatened community or group." Because sociologists focus on social structure, explanations of hate crime often point to changes in the features of social structure, including rapid social change, social disorganization, economic downturns, or social threats of some sort that lead to violence in general and bias-motivated violence in particular.

To understand what is meant by "changes in social structure" and the ways in which social disorganization in particular can create an environment in which people turn on each other, let's look at some sociological work that attempts to explain the conditions under which people engage in prejudicial violence (that is, hate crime).

To illustrate how an "anomic outburst" can encourage participation in hate crime activities, consider "White Boys to Terrorist Men: Target Recruitment of Nazi Skinheads." In this article, Randy Blazak explores how racist skinheads target specific youth populations for recruitment into Nazi Skinhead groups known to participate in bias-motivated violence. To do so he relies upon ethnographic data collected over a seven-year period, from 1987 to 1995.

During this time, participant observation projects were run with groups of skinheads in Orlando, Atlanta, Chicago, and other cities across the United States. In addition, Blazak conducted 65 face-to-face interviews with racist skinheads. Of these 65 individuals, over half admitted to being involved in some form of recruitment of skinheads.
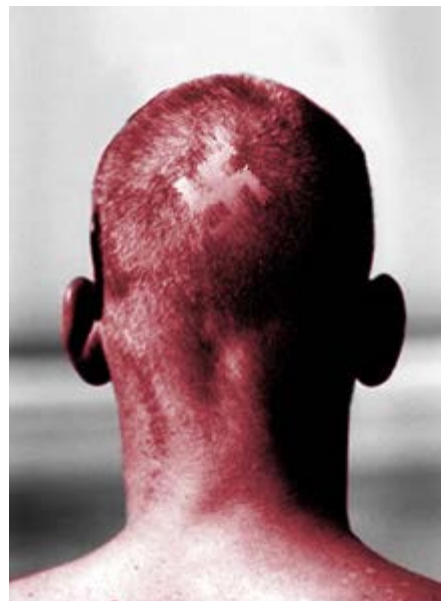
Blazak found that "strained youth are actually targeted for recruitment by delinquent subcultures" - in this case racist skinhead groups (2001:986). He also found that "although the musical tastes and styles of dress differ from group to group, these adolescents share one commonality: they are experiencing what sociologists refer to as anomie, a sense of rootlessness or normlessness. In part, to combat this state, they join groups and assume identities that, for many become a 'master status,' the core way of defining themselves" (2001:987).

Read "You May Be a Target of Hate Group Recruitment" by Matthew Lauder

Finally, Blazak identified what he called "red flags of strain," which he conceptualizes as the following types of threats:

- Threats to ethnic or racial status: Growth in the minority student population, minority student organizations, or events shifts to multicultural curricula racial conflict in which the institutions appear to support the minority group.

- Threats to gender status: Conflict over female participation in male activities; feminist activist groups; and antisexual violence events and programs.
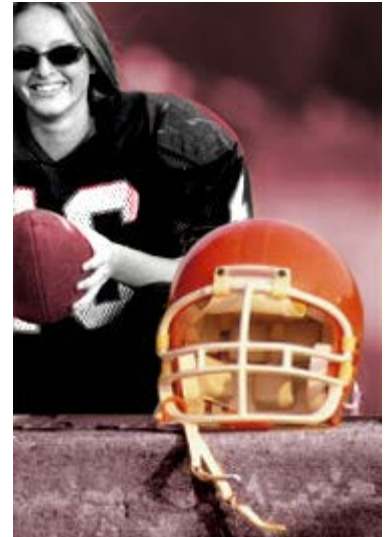
- Threats to heterosexual status: Sexual minority organizations; gay pride events; inclusiveness movements or sponsored dialogue.

- Threats to economic status: Factory layoffs; large employer downsizing; high competition for manual labor or service sector jobs.

Listen to the way these threats are experienced by those who identify as white racist skinheads.

Trey, a 21-year-old Portland skinhead, said: "There was this fight at [Walker] High School between a Black kid and a White kid and everyone was supporting the Black kid who had been picking on this White forever. Typical bullshit, right? But we knew that there were Whites there who were sick and tired of being called 'racists' just for sticking up for themselves. So we went down there one day, right, when school was letting out and beat the shit out of some gangster-looking nigger. Then next day everyone at Milwaukee was talking about, 'Oh man, did you hear that the skinheads kicked some nigger's ass?' It was the talk of the school so we went back a week later and put up a bunch of flyers and got a bunch of calls from kids wanting to know what they could do" (2001:991).

Jack, a 20-year-old skinhead from Orlando, said: "It's a fun Saturday night for us. We go down to [the club] and drink beer, slam dance, and pick up some punk chicks and fight. All it takes is one spic to start something and we just open a can of whoop-ass. It's great for us because we know that half the White kids there are getting harassed by the Hispanics in their school and they are just waiting for someone to stick up for them. I've had these totally straight looking kids come up to me later, maybe a month later, and say, 'Hey, that was really cool what you did. I wish you guys would come to my school and kick some ass.' It's like a commercial for Youth Corps" (2001:991).

Other quotes from skinheads:

"The easiest place to recruit is around some big layoff, which is pretty common around here [Chicago]. You wait for things to get bad and you go talk to the kids, not the parents and say, 'You know why your dad got laid off? It's because the money hungry Jews sent his job to China. They care more about the fucking Chinese than they do about the White workers.' You know, they're all fucked up because their world is upside down and here is someone explaining it to them in very simple terms" (Sid, 18, Chicago skinhead) (2001:992).

"The suburbs are the new battle zones. We hardly even go into the city anymore. But the burbs are supposed to be White! I mean, Whites moved out here to get away from all the crime and niggers and shit and here they come. And now we have gangs out here and drugs and these nice clean White kids getting jumped. We know that White parents are tired of moving and White teachers are scared to death and the young people are on the front line" (Bryan, 25, Atlanta skinhead) (2001:992).

"The feminists are as bad as the queers are. We try to get our guys to talk to dudes who think feminism is cool. You know, they're into it because they think they'll get laid. But we say, 'Hey, you know what happens if the feminists gets their way? No one's gonna listen to you because you're a man and you're gonna be cleaning out the toilet. And even fewer White babies are gonna be born because if a chick has sex with you and gets pregnant she's gonna have an abortion so she can keep her paycheck. Do you think the niggers and the Mexicans are having abortions? Hell no!' So then they see feminism as the nail in the coffin. It's like, who wants to be a minority?" (Harley, 24, San Francisco skinhead) (2001:992).

And Sam, who spent years recruiting high school youth into the Aryan skinhead movement, explained the importance of manipulating the recruit mentally: "It's really easy. You find out what's happening in a school and then find out where the kids hang out. You get some stupid conversation going and then you ask them about school. They bitch and moan and you say, 'Yeah, it was a lot better in my day when we didn't have gangs and people who can't even speak English and all at this multicultural shit.'"

"I'd say, 'Don't you think it's fucked up that you can have a Black student union but not a White student union? Why are the Blacks allowed to be racist?' And you can see them agreeing. I say, 'Did you ever own a slave? Did you ever kill an Indian? So why are they trying to make you feel guilty for being White?' Before they can answer I'd start telling them about ZOG. About how the Jews are behind all this to fuck over the White man. I give them the whole line, multiculturalism, gay rights, affirmative action. These kids don't know shit so they just eat it up. Then I tell them they should hang out with us or start an 'unofficial' White student club. They just look at me like I'm Jesus Christ and I just saved them" (2001:993).

In contrast to Blazak's study of racist men, Kathleen Blee focuses on women who are involved in contemporary white supremacist political groups in "Becoming a Racist: Women in Contemporary Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazi Groups."

Critical Thinking

What common themes do you hear in the words of Blazak's and Blee's subjects? Is there evidence of strain? If so, what might be the structural sources of such strain?

Read the following interviews with former skinhead T. J. Leyden:

"The Making of a Skinhead"
"Confessions of a Skinhead"

{content2}

Critical Thinking

- Do Leyden's words essentially echo those discussed in the work by Blazak and the work by Blee? Or are there some substantive differences between them?
- To what extent do you think that strain theory/anomie adequately accounts for hate group membership?

Exercise

Visit the following skinhead websites. Each site represents a different interpretation of what it means to be a skinhead. Spend several minutes familiarizing yourself with the attributes of each of them.

- Sharp Site
- Queer Skinhead Brotherhood

Clearly, a very broad spectrum of individuals and groups seem to occupy the space under the skinhead umbrella. Many do not embrace the racist politics and hate motivated, violent behaviors that are commonly attributed to skinheads generally. That fact notwithstanding, the very activity of being a skinhead could be construed as deviant behavior or as the "anomic outburst of [a] socially disintegrated individual."

With that in mind, discuss what the variability in violent behaviors among the skinhead population might suggest and discuss some variables that might help to explain their participation in bias motivated violence.

To participate in the discussion, select OUTLINE from the TOOLS menu. Once you are back at the OUTLINE, select the appropriate FORUM from this lecture.

Now let's consider another piece of work that focuses on structural strain in an effort to explain bias-motivated violence - in this case a classic historical event: the hunting and persecution of witches.

Kai Erikson's classic *Wayward Puritans* focuses on brutal religious persecution in colonial America. By examining court records and other historical documents, Erikson documented patterns of witch hunts - the identification and brutalization of some members of the community who were deemed deserving of extreme forms of social control - in Massachusetts Bay Colony. He attempted to reconstruct the role of witch hunts among the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in an effort to understand the conditions under which people will engage in prejudicial violence and, ultimately, turn on each other.

To set the stage for analysis, Erikson first lays out an overview of the "The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay" by detailing who the Puritans were and what they believed in. On who they were, Erikson writes:

"They were Englishmen leaving their native land, brethren leaving their congregations, Puritans defecting in time of trouble, men and women, leaving their homes, families, friends, and careers. They were moving away from the only world they had known; and, perhaps, it was not surprising that many of them would begin to feel a double-edged concern that they were abandoning England, and that England, in its turn, was abandoning them" (1966:39).

Read [The Character of a Puritan](#)

And on what they believed in, Erikson wrote: "The main purpose of the Puritan experiment in those early days was to show that men could govern themselves in a church congregation - that the Bible could serve as a feasible basis for citizenship, and the ministers could act as the final authority in civil as well as spiritual matters" (1966:72).

Once on the eastern shore of the Americas, the Puritans pursued "the New England Way" of life. As described by Erickson, "The New England way was to represent their uniqueness as a people, their justification for withdrawing into the empty spaces of America; it was to be their history, their folklore, their special emblem, their destiny" (1966:68).

It was, to be short, a religious and pure life, where religious rules dominated definitions of acceptable behavior and neighbors had license over neighbors - to even spy on them - in order to inquire about their business as a way of guarding against moral impropriety. Any and all impropriety - drinking, illicit sex, lack of religious worship, and so forth - was seen as an abomination against God.

Please read the following article:

"*The New England Way*"

Erickson's historical archival work allowed him to document identifiable outbreaks of witch hunts - citizens engaging in abominations against god in surges - in Massachusetts Bay Colony. Erickson found that the Puritains experienced three identifiable "crime waves" in their first six decades of settlement, including:

- the Antinomian controversy in 1636
- the Quaker persecutions of the late 1650s
- the Witchraft Hysteria of 1690

"Crime Waves" in the Massachussetts Bay Colony (17th Century)

For Erikson, "a crime wave refers to a rash of publicity, a moment of excitement and alarm, a feeling that something needs to be done. It may or may not mean an actual increase in the volume of deviation" (1966:69). That is, when the community turned on "witches" (that is, folks violating the rules of the religious community), it was not random.
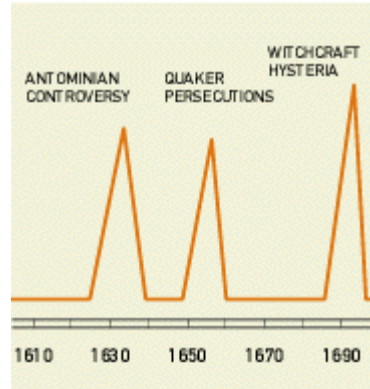
Once he documented these patterns, he began to question why witch hunts occurred when they did. Why did they reveal themselves as cyclical patterns? What explains these patterns?

By documenting changes in the community at the time just preceding any given outburst of witch hunts, Erickson related the appearance of witch hunts to social disruption within the Puritan community. According to Erikson: "No other form of crime in history has been a better index to social disruption and change, for outbreaks of witchcraft mania have generally taken place in societies which are experiencing a shift of religious focus - societies confronting a relocation of boundaries."

For him, the once unified followers of the "New England Way" had become divided by quarreling factions, land disputes, personal feuds, greed, jealousy, and mass litigation and counter litigation. At the time of the three "crime waves" Erikson documents, most of the familiar landmarks of the New England Way had become blurred by changes in the historical climate that threatened the established moral order.

Indeed, convicted witches were mainly peasant and lower-class women who opposed the existing authority structure and thus represented a political, religious, and sexual threat to the dominant class, particularly to men. But why did the community turn on its weakest - that is, least powerful - members?

Watch this short film that will serve to situate the Salem witchcraft hysteria in its historical context.

Click VIDEO before proceeding to the next screen

Exercise

Visit Salem Witchcraft Hysteria. Click on the link that says "click to continue." Read the brief passage in the pop-up box, then choose the "prologue" option. Read that text, then choose "experience the trials." Follow the links provided within the site until the "experience" concludes.

Do not rush through the "experience." Take your time, get acquainted with the individuals described in the short linked biographies, and so on. Consider repeating the exercise before moving on to the Forum discussion.

Critical Thinking

In the course of the exercise that you just completed, you found yourself pointed out as a source of evil, imprisoned in a dungeon, repeatedly interrogated, and ultimately executed. What was a nice person like you doing in a situation like that?

What it was like to "experience the trials"? How did it make you feel? How familiar or unfamiliar was the experience to you? What aspect of the exercise was most affecting? How did you feel about specific players in the experience? How do you suppose they felt?

To participate in the discussion, select OUTLINE from the TOOLS menu. Once you are back at the OUTLINE, select the appropriate FORUM from this lecture.

Erikson observed that "Each time the community moves to censure some act of deviation, it sharpens the authority of the violated norm and restates where the boundaries of the group were violated." In addition to reasserting and reestablishing moral boundaries, the nature of the acts declared to be deviant - the practice of witchery and the presence of witches - is reflective of the dominant values of society at a particular time. It was, at bottom, a way to reassert a dominant morality - in this case, a religious order.

Click on the READING links before proceeding to the next screen.

Please read the following articles:

"Goody Nurse"

"George Burroughs"

For the Puritans, a constant concern with heresy and witchcraft revealed not only the "shape of the devil," but the shape of the community's focal values as well. Erikson documented this by noting that the specific content of the Puritan crimes varied with changes in the nature of the threats to the community's religious purity. As he noted: "It is not surprising that deviant behavior should appear in a community at exactly those points were it is most feared. Men who fear witches soon find themselves surrounded by them; men who become jealous of private property soon encounter eager thieves."

In this case, men who encountered witches saw it as their duty to expunge the community of them. Indeed, elaborate rituals and tortures were used to do so. Erickson's work, as well as other work, suggests that displacement of frustration in the form of aggression against "others" is a universal form of scapegoating wherein "others" are targeted for social control.

Critical Thinking

How many contemporary examples of such scapegoating can you think of? How do you know a scapegoat when you see one?

Working collectively with your classmates, make a list of as many examples of contemporary witch hunts as you can. Now, suppose that you suspect the origins of each example to be, like the Salem hysteria, sociological in nature. Discuss how that might be the case. (Provocative example: The pursuit of Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, and terrorists during a difficult economic cycle.)

To participate in the discussion, select OUTLINE from the TOOLS menu. Once you are back at the OUTLINE, select the appropriate FORUM from this lecture.

In addition to tracing intergroup violence to social disruption as a feature of strain in society, many social science theories trace intergroup antagonism and violence to adverse economic conditions. In sociological theories, intergroup hostility is often attributed to another source of strain: competition for scarce material resources, the effects of which are often exacerbated during periods of economic reentrenchment. That is, adverse economic conditions are often seen as a source of social strain that leads to hate crime.

From the 1940s onward social scientists have been arguing that frustrations attributable to economic downturns produce aggressive impulses that are directed at vulnerable targets, such as minority groups, even when these groups bear no actual or perceived responsibility for economic decline. Let's take a look at a few of these studies.
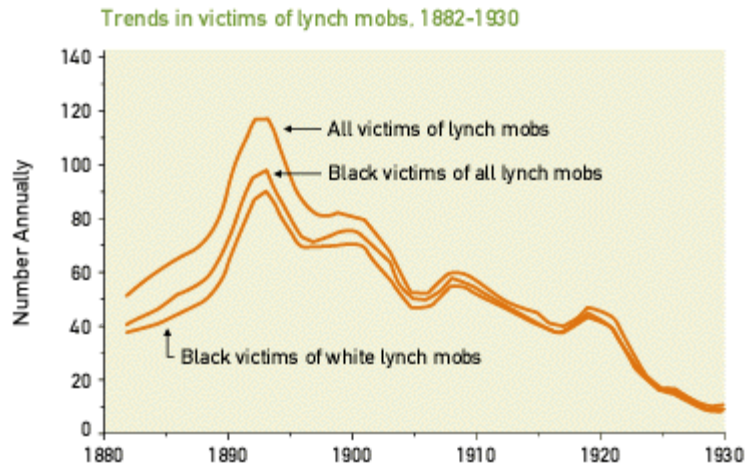
In 1940, Hovland and Sears reported a strong statistical relationship between the lynching of Blacks in the American South and economic downturns, as measured by cotton prices and economic growth from 1882 to 1930. After a series of tests of this hypothesis over the next 47 years, it became widely accepted. Indeed, by 1987, Ree, Doss, and Hulbert declared it "a thesis too good to be false."

In 1992, Stewart Tolnay and E. M. Beck published a book called *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930,* in which they examined the relationship between economic conditions in the South during this period and the occurrence of lynching. In this book, they begin with a portrait of lynching in the era under study, 1882 to 1939.

From "The Crisis" January 1935, 27

Images of lynching were commonplace during this time. Moreover, they document a pattern to this lynching, emphasizing the following: It was most commonly whites who lynched blacks.

Lynching of Rubin Stacy
Florida - 1935

Trends in victims of lynch mobs, 1882-1930

All victims of lynch mobs

Black victims of all lynch mobs

Black victims of white lynch mobs

Note: All three trends twice-smoothed statistically

There were events in which more than one person at a time was lynched.

The 5 worst incidents of lynchings with black victims		
Date	Location	N° of victims
December 12, 1889	Barnwell Co.South Carolina	8
October 3, 1908	Fulton Co. Kentucky	8
June 29, 1905	Oconee Co. Georgia	7[a]
August 31, 1894	Shelby Co. Tennessee	6
May 21, 1911	Columbia Co. Florida	6

a. One white was also killed by the lynch mob, for a total of eight victims in this incident

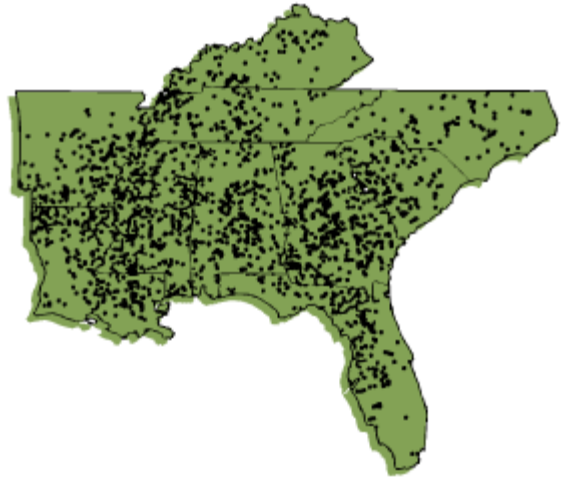The summer months were the most common time for lynching to occur.

Monthly Pattern of Black Lynching Victims in Cotton-Dominant Counties

The occurrence of lynchings spanned multiple Southern states, but was not evenly distributed.

[Black Victims of White Lynch Mobs By State, 1882-1930](#)
[Black Victims of Lynchings per 100,000 Blacks By State, 1882-1930](#)

Map of Black Victims of White Lynch Mobs in the South, 1882-1930.

Multiple reasons were given for lynching in the South in this period.

"Justifications for Lynching of Southern Blacks by White Mobs"

"The Reasons Given for Black Lynchings"

In a chapter on "The Role of King Cotton," Tolnay and Beck examine the degree to which economic conditions help explain the variation in lynching in the South. To do so, they first look at the relationship between trends in black lynching victims in the cotton South and the wholesale price of raw cotton.


Lynching of Laura Nelson

They then look at the relationship between the frequency of black lynching victims by month in cotton dominant and non-cotton dominant counties.

Frequency of black lynching victims by month in cotton-dominant and non-cotton-dominant counties
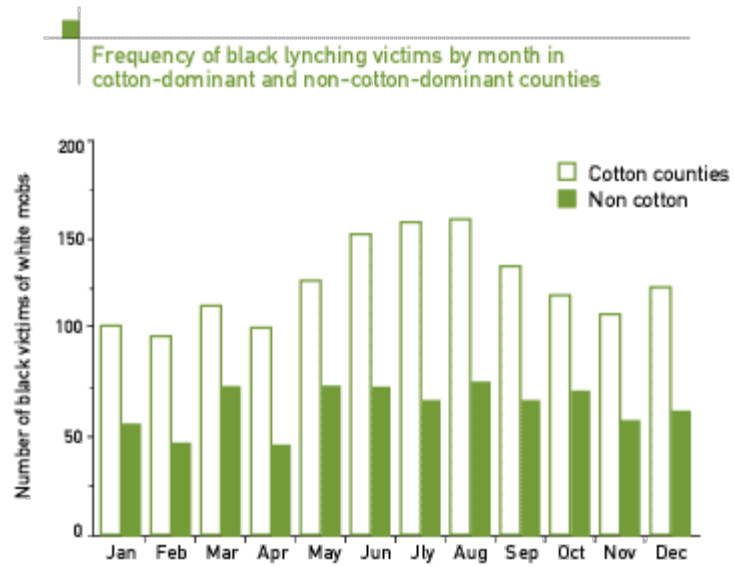
They look at seasonal patterns of black lynching in cotton dominant counties.

Monthly Pattern of Black Lynching Victims
in Cotton-Dominant Counties
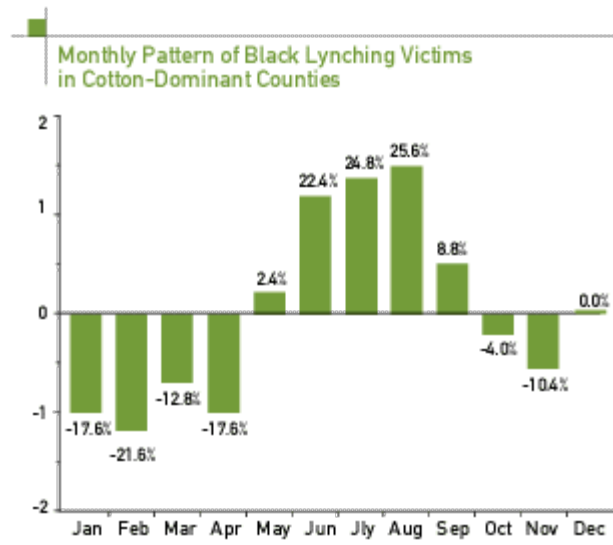
And finally, they look at trends in farm ownership.

- [Rates of All Farm Ownership in the Cotton and Non-Cotton South, 1880-1930](#)

- [Average Size of All Farms in the Cotton and Non-Cotton South, 1880-1930](#)

- [Rates of Farm Ownership in the Cotton South by Race, 1900-1930](#)

- [Rates of Farm Ownership in the Cotton South by Race, 1880-1930](#)

- [Relationship Between Black Lynch Victims and White Landlessness, 1900-1909 and 1920-1929](#)

Critical Thinking:

Reexamine each of the following figures with an eye toward discerning a series of findings:

- Trends in Black Lynch Victims in the Cotton South and the Wholesale Price of Raw Cotton, 1882-1930
- Frequency of Black Lynching Victims by Month in Cotton-Dominant and Non-Cotton-Dominant Counties
- Monthly Pattern of Black Lynching Victims in Cotton-Dominant Counties
- Rates of All Farm Ownership in the Cotton and Non-Cotton South, 1880-1930
- Average Size of All Farms in the Cotton and Non-Cotton South, 1880-1930
- Rates of Farm Ownership in the Cotton South by Race, 1900-1930
- Average Size of Farms in the Cotton South by Race, 1900-1930
- Rates of Farm Ownership in the Cotton South by Race, 1880-1930
- Relationship Between Black Lynch Victims and White Landlessness, 1900-1909 and 1920-1929

Tolnay and Beck explain this relationship via a possible linkage between the cotton culture of the South and racial violence in the South. Tolnay and Beck argue that this lynching served four functions within Southern society:

1. To eradicate specific persons accused of crimes against the white community;
2. As a mechanism of state-sanctioned terrorism designed to maintain a degree of leverage over the African-American community;
3. To eliminate or neutralize African-American competitors for social, economic, or political rewards; and
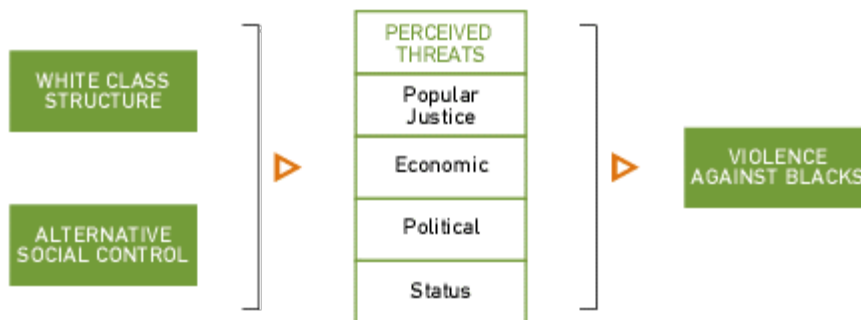4. To symbolize the unity of white supremacy in the South.
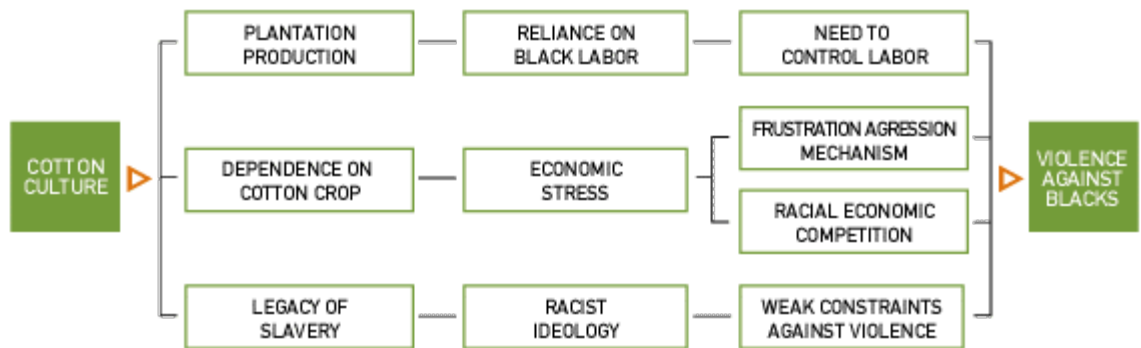
They go further to argue that "lynchings were more likely to occur where and when Southern whites felt threatened in some way by their African-American neighbors." They illustrate this threat as follows:

"This figure depicts mob violence as an immediate function of the level of threat perceived by the white population in all of its dimensions. In addition, this conceptual model portrays the level and type of perceived threat as a product of alternative sources of social control that may or may not reduce the level of threat. For example, they considered the relationship between lynching and legally sanctioned executions."

Conceptual model of threat perspective of black lynchings

WHITE CLASS STRUCTURE

ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL CONTROL

PERCEIVED THREATS

Popular Justice

Economic

Political

Status

VIOLENCE AGAINST BLACKS

However, they found that "the intensity of lynching bore little systematic relationship to the legitimate activities of the formal justice system, at least to the extent that the number of legal executions of blacks taps those activities. Lynchings were neither particularly common nor especially rare when or where the state executioner was busy. In fact, lynching mobs appear to have been impressively insensitive to the vigor with which the state imposed the death penalty on blacks" (112).

For them, this casts doubt on the "viability of popular justice" hypothesis. It is the nature of white class structure that determines which types of perceived threats are most likely to surface.

Moving forward in time, the threat hypothesis as been applied to hate crime perpetration in the modern era in the United States. Consider, for example, the following:

A 1994 report by the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations cited recession and economic displacement among the causes of hate crime (1994:30). In its 1991 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith linked the "deteriorating American economy" to "record setting levels of anti-Jewish Acts" (1992:19). This sentiment was echoed in a report issued by North Carolinians Against Racial and Religious Violence (1992:20).

Finally, and perhaps most vividly, in their widely cited monograph on the *Rising Tide of Bigotry and Bloodshed* (now in it's second edition), Levin and McDevitt highlighted "zero-sum economic thinking" in their analysis of the factors that motivated hate crime (1993:45-54).

That same year, Pinderhughes published the article "An Anatomy of Racially Motivated Violence in New York City: A Case Study of Youth in Southern Brooklyn" in *Social Problems.* He underscores economic resentment and frustration in his account of hate crime in New York City.

Clearly, there is good reason to suspect that economic conditions affect hate crime perpetration. Let's take a look at a recent examination of this hypothesis.

Consider the findings presented in "From Lynching to Gay Bashing: The Elusive Connection Between Economic Conditions and Hate Crime," a recently published article by Donald Green, Jack Glaser, and Andrew Rich. Recognizing the limitations of continual reanalysis of the lynching data, Green and his colleagues conducted a new test of the macro-economic strain hypothesis. As they say, "Our purpose was to reassess the long purported relation between economic variables and intergroup violence and suggest more refined hypotheses about the conditions under which economic frustration and competition lead to hate crime" (1998:83).

To question whether macroeconomic downturns precipitate greater incidence of hate crime, Green and his colleagues collected monthly hate crime data in New York city over a span of nine years, from 1987-1995, for the New York City boroughs of Brooklyn, Queen, Manhattan, an the Bronx. In addition, they collected unemployment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics .

Exercise

This figure presents first the unemployment rate for this period, and then the pattern of hate crimes directed against gay men and lesbians, Jews, blacks, whites, and Asians. In preparation for the FORUM discussion on the next screen, spend a few minutes examining the figures and interpreting their content [be sure to click on each bullet point to see all figures].

Having familiarized yourself with the results of
Green's data analysis, discuss the following:

What is notable about the results? What patterns do
you see? How can we make sense of these findings?
What are the implications of these findings?

*To participate in the discussion, select OUTLINE from
the TOOLS menu. Once you are back at the OUTLINE,
select the appropriate FORUM from this lecture.*

Although it is often asserted that hate crimes are on the rise, these data suggest otherwise. There are widely varying patterns of perpetration across victim groups.

After running a variety of sophisticated statistical procedures on the data presented, Green and his colleagues concluded, "Our analysis of hate crime in New York turned up little evidence linking racial, religious, ethnic, or homophobic incidents to fluctuating economic conditions" (1998:87).

According to Green and his colleagues, "The absence of a robust relationship between changing economic conditions and hate crime warrants a reexamination of the theoretical and experimental premises on which frustration based models of hate crime are constructed" (1998:88).

For a more recent study of the relationship between economic conditions and bias motivated violence, see Lindsay Cameron's work on Community Risk Factors for Hate Crimes: Race/Ethnic and Economic Change.

One way to think about these findings is to ask the question, "Under what social conditions do economic downturns, or any undesirable social state, get translated into intergroup violence in general and hate crime in particular?"

History reveals that political elites and organizations alike play a mediating role by undertaking campaigns designed to attribute blame and fomenting public resentment toward minority groups in difficult economic or social times. For example:

- Wade (1987) has documented how the KKK successfully recruited members during the 1970s in economically depressed regions of the South.
- Olzak (1990) establishd a link between turn-of-the century wage competition and anti-African American urban violence fomented in part by labor unions.
- Foner (1974) reported that some antebellum politicians and labor and industry leaders argued that emancipated African Americans would pose overwhelming labor competition to white workers.

These examples point to the important role politics play in fomenting intergroup conflict that results in violence. Accordingly, the next lesson is devoted to a discussion of moral entrepreneurs, moral crusades, moral panics, and full-blown social movements as a key factor in hate crime perpetration. First, however, let's take a moment to think about how we can synthesize all of the hate crime theories we have discussed in this lesson and the previous lesson.

Clearly, each of the types of theoretical accounts we have looked at tell partial truths. To arrive at a comprehensive understanding requires synthesizing these perspectives such that structural and individual based theories are integrated.

One example of theoretical synthesis used to describe the causes of violence can be found in the _First World Report on Violence and Health_. This report suggests an "ecological approach" to understanding violence.

World report on violence and health

prevention
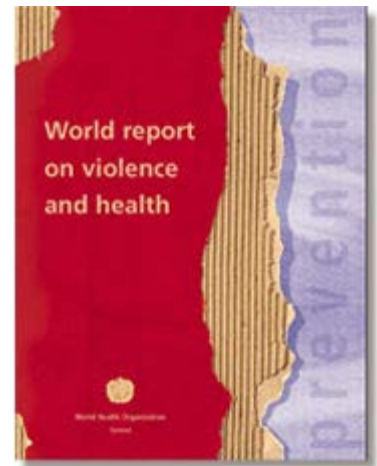
Another example, more directly related to hate crime in particular, can be found in Donald Green and his colleagues' work on "Defended Neighborhoods, Integration, and Racially Motivated Crime," which appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1998. Work such as this points to the most compelling direction for understanding the social context of hate crime in the United States.

And, an even more recent example can be found in Ryken Grattet's recently published work on the community context in which hate crime occurs in Sacramento. Read the article here.

summary

- An emphasis on political discourse characterizes historical-cultural explanations of hate crime. The idea is that political discourse and political culture, as well as propensities for hate crime, are rooted in longstanding cultural patterns and traditions. Donald Green and his coauthors suggest that "the very manner in which societies define and debate hate crime depends on their political-cultural traditions."

- Most sociological accounts of hate crime direct attention to either "an anomic outburst of socially disintegrated individuals" or "the solidaristic reaction of a threatened community or group."

- Sociological explanations of hate crime often point to changes in the features of social structure (including rapid social change, social disorganization, economic downturns, or social threats of some sort that lead to violence in general and bias-motivated violence in particular).

- Blazak's strain theory conceptualizes "red flags of strain" as the following types of threats: threats to ethnic or racial status; threats to gender status; threats to heterosexual status; and threats to economic status.

- Erickson's study of the witchcraft hysteria in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, as well as other work, suggests that displacement of frustration in the form of aggression against "others" is a universal form of scapegoating wherein "others" are targeted for social control.

- By documenting changes in the community at the time just preceding any given outburst of witch hunts, Erickson related the appearance of witch hunts to social disruption within the Puritan community.

- Many social science theories trace intergroup antagonism and violence to adverse economic conditions. In sociological theories, intergroup hostility is often attributed to another source of

strain: competition for scare material resources, the effects of which are often exacerbated during periods of economic reentrenchment.

- Adverse economic conditions are often seen as a source of social strain that leads to hate crime. From the 1940s onward social scientists have been arguing that frustrations attributable to economic downturns produce aggressive impulses that are directed at vulnerable targets, such as minority groups, even when these groups bear no actual or perceived responsibility for economic decline.

- Clearly, each of the types of theoretical accounts presented tell partial truths. To arrive at a comprehensive understanding requires synthesizing these perspectives to integrate structural and individual based theories.