

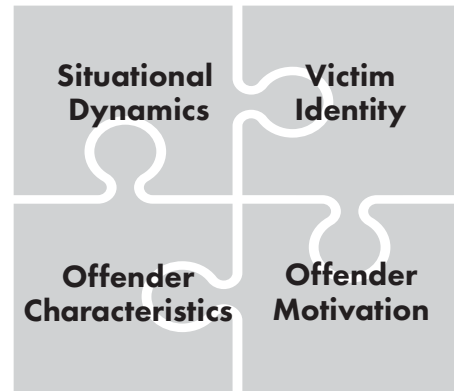
Violent Hate Crime Offenders

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The **Bias Incidents and Actors Study (BIAS)** is a multi-method project that examines the characteristics, motivations, and behaviors of a sample of individuals who committed hate crimes in the United States from 1990-2018. The project includes a dataset of 689 violent and 277 non-violent bias crime offenders who were motivated by bias based on (1) race, ethnicity, and nationality, (2) religion, (3) sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity, (4) age, or (5) disability. Individuals were selected at random for inclusion in the dataset from a pool of potential subjects that are reviewed according to the project's inclusion criteria and minimum information requirements. Hate crime charges or hate crime sentencing enhancements were not requirements for individuals to be included in the database. The BIAS dataset was coded entirely from open-source materials and contains more than 100 variable fields with information on hate crime events, victim characteristics, and offender motivations, demographics, and personal histories.

RISK INDICATORS FOR VIOLENCE

The BIAS dataset can be used to identify the risk characteristics that distinguish violent hate crime offenders from those who engage in non-violent crimes, such as property vandalism and bias intimidation. Risk indicators of violence generally fall into one of four categories: the situational dynamics of the crimes, the identities of the victims, the motivations for offending, and the demographic and personal characteristics of the offenders.



SITUATIONAL DYNAMICS



2x

Offenders who committed **spontaneous crimes, acted in public spaces, or offended alongside peer accomplices**, were, on average, 1.5 to 2 times more likely to commit acts of violence than offenders who acted alone or in private settings.

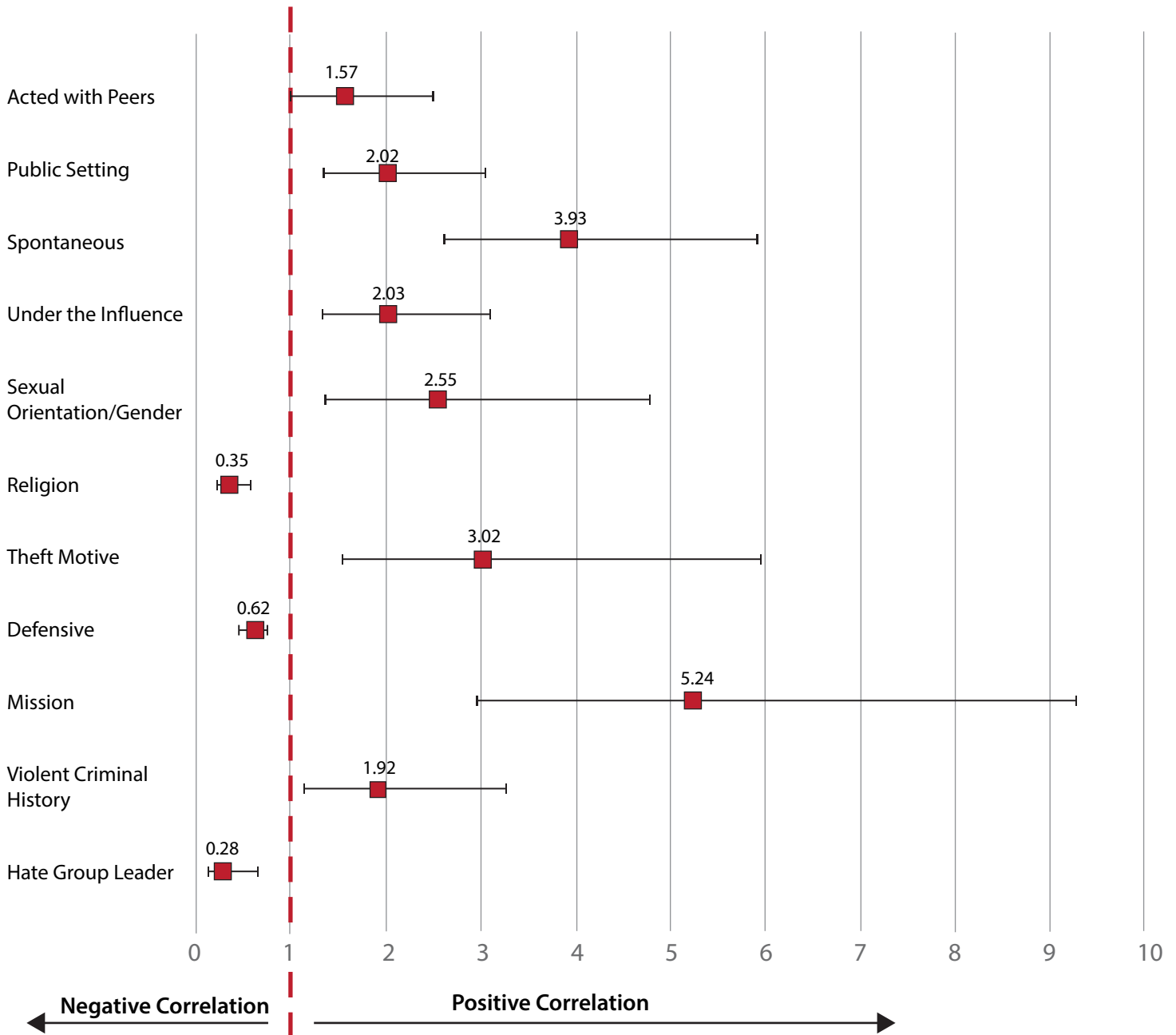
2x

Offenders who were **under the influence of drugs or alcohol** at the time of their crimes were, on average, twice as likely to commit acts of violence.

3.9x

Offenders who **acted spontaneously**, often in response to **precipitating non-bias altercations**, such as traffic accidents, were 3.9 times more likely to commit violent crimes than individuals who premeditated their acts.

CORRELATES OF VIOLENT OUTCOMES AMONG U.S. HATE CRIME OFFENDERS



Note: The chart above displays odds ratios from a multivariate logistic regression analysis of violent and non-violent hate crime offenders in the BIAS dataset. All variables are significant at $p \leq .05$. Values above 1 represent a positive risk factor for violence, while those below 1 indicate a negative association with violence.

IDENTITIES OF THE VICTIMS

Offenders in the BIAS data who selected their victims on the basis of sexual orientation/gender identity were the most likely to commit violent crimes. On average, these offenders were 2.55 times more likely to commit an act of violence than offenders who were motivated by other hate beliefs. By comparison, offenders who selected their targets on the basis of religion were 65 percent less likely to commit violent crimes.



Offenders were

2.55

times more likely to commit violent crimes against targets they selected on the basis of **sexual orientation or gender identity**.

Offenders were

65

percent less likely to commit violent crimes against targets they selected on the basis of religion.



MOTIVATIONS FOR OFFENDING



**3x
more**

Individuals in the BIAS dataset who had **mixed criminal motives** for offending were, on average, 3 times **more likely to be violent** than offenders who were motivated by hate beliefs alone. Most often, these offenders were motivated by a mix of hate beliefs and non-bias financial goals, such as robbery.



**5.2x
more**

Individuals who can be described as **"mission" offenders** (i.e., those who showed some evidence of a deep commitment to an ideology of hate, such as producing large amounts of detailed ideological propaganda) were 5.2 times **more likely to engage in acts of violence** than offenders who did not show the same degree of adherence to hate beliefs.



**38%
less**

Finally, individuals who had **"defensive" motivations** for committing their crimes (i.e., those who described themselves as defending their communities from perceived or real social or demographic changes) were **less likely to engage in acts of violence**. More often these offenders engaged in acts of bias intimidation or property destruction in attempts to instill fear in victim groups and force them from their communities.

OFFENDER CHARACTERISTICS

Offenders in the database with non-bias criminal records that included violent crimes were 1.73 times more likely to commit violent hate crimes than offenders without criminal records.

Moreover, individuals who maintained leadership positions in organized hate groups were, on average, 72 percent less likely to engage in acts of violence than individuals who were not members of hate organizations. While hate group leaders are often instrumental in propagating hate views, they often delegate the task of carrying out violent crimes to lower-level group members.



Hate group leaders were 72 percent less likely to commit violent crimes.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BIAS

The subjects in BIAS were identified through a review of more than 35,000 news articles on hate crimes in the U.S. since 1990, as well as searches of crime databases and other publicly available information. To be included in the dataset, individuals must meet the following inclusion criteria:

1. The subject was arrested or indicted for committing a criminal offense in the United States from 1990-2018;
2. The subject was 18 years of age or older at the time of engaging in the criminal act;
3. The subject was residing in the United States at the time of engaging in the criminal act;
4. There is substantial evidence that the subject committed or escalated the criminal act because of bias against the victim or target's real or perceived identity characteristics (e.g., race, nationality, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, etc.);
5. There is enough information about the subject in open-source materials to code the relevant details of their crimes and, at a minimum, the majority of their demographic traits.

Given the nature of source deterioration over time and news coverage, the BIAS data over-represent cases from the second decade of the 2000s and high-publicity attacks, which are often cases that are violent and involve the most explicit expressions of prejudice. BIAS was not designed as a comprehensive accounting of all hate crime activity in the United States. Users interested in aggregate hate crime trends should consult data sources that are designed to capture such metrics, like those generated by the FBI's Hate Crime Statistics Program.

www.start.umd.edu/bias

PROJECT TEAM

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