

Hate Crime Maps

By Facebook Data for Good

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Opportunity

The past year has been tough in many respects, including the global Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis in many sectors. However, this was also a year of general awakening to the deeply problematic issues impairing the social fabric of the United States.

One of the most prominent issues is hate - hate against different races, sexual orientations, genders, religions or other grounds. The United States, like many other countries in the world, is unfortunately still characterized by hate against what is different - which is nearly an oxymoron, considering how the US is one of the most diverse countries in the world.


I am a Data Scientist at Facebook Data for Good, the team at the heart of Facebook's mission to use data to address some of the world's greatest social and humanitarian issues. Hate crimes in the United States are characterized by major underreporting both by victims and witnesses and by a significant lack of tracking, and therefore data, at the administrative level. Also, as we noticed in the past year, individuals now tend to share and report instances of hate crime on social media - representing a huge behavioral shift with respect to the past. This presents a compelling opportunity for a big tech firm like Facebook which - even in an unstructured way - collects way more data than the police on hate crimes.

To identify areas of impact that Facebook could provide in dealing with hate crimes, it is useful to segment the lifecycle of hate crime in phases:

- Before | Preventative measures
 - Launch education campaigns
 - Create a safe space for potential victims, both online and offline
- During | De-escalation Measures and Reporting
 - Launch trainings on de-escalation measures
 - Encourage hate crime reporting by both victims and witnesses
 - Identify the perpetrator of the hate crime
- After | Victing and Community Healing measures
 - Find the crime's perpetrator, if not caught
 - Interview victims and witnesses
 - Heal the victim and the community
 - Provide mental health resources

Facebook already plays a relevant role in a few nodes of this process, like providing the forum for sharing instances of hate crime. However, the hate crime content that we can currently find on Facebook is very unstructured and not really actionable for first responders.

In the wake of the [passing of the AAPI Bill](#) and mindful of the greatly positive impact already created by the [Disaster Maps](#), I have decided to put forward a new idea to the management



team: the creation of *Hate Crime Maps* to identify trends in hate crimes and to support first responders in the appropriate resource allocation to fight hate crimes.

Impact Hypothesis

By adopting a combination of text/image recognition and NLP we will be able to identify posts and stories as a report of hate crime. This will allow the creation of *Hate Crime Maps*, the new Facebook product that will boost transparency on hate crimes and will provide more information to police and other organizations involved in fighting hate crimes. By characterizing and differentiating hate crimes by neighbourhoods, these maps will allow first responders to allocate the appropriate resources to each neighbourhood. Finally, since the information will be shared by users in real time, my hypothesis is that *Hate Crime Maps* will shorten the first responders' reaction time.

Data

In 2020 hate crimes have increased at a national scale, [mostly in NYC and LA](#).

LAPD data is quite unstructured. So, despite the lack of data surrounding hate crimes, I will use [data provided by the NYPD](#):

1. Geo Scope: hate crimes in New York City
2. Time Scope: 2017 to 2021, knowing that data in the 2017-2019 period is way less detailed than the data collected in the last year

Tools

I will use Google Sheets for data cleaning and preliminary exploration.

I will use Tableau for data visualization.

MVP Goal

As a MVP, I am planning to present a few relevant visualizations about hate crimes in NYC.