

912M3 Hate Crime and Sexual Violence

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“This module will focus on issues relating to hate crime and sexual violence and the criminal justice system. The module starts by exploring the various conceptualisations of hate crime and how and why its definition has differed between jurisdictions. Focus is then given to the growing legislative responses to hate-motivated offences both in the UK and US. We will examine the extent to which the singling out of certain prejudiced motivations for enhanced sentencing (such as, racism, homophobia, anti-religion and disability) can be justified. We then move on to explore the main criminological theories that have been put forward to explain the aetiology of hate crime. Attention is also given to research that has evidenced the often heightened levels of harm that such offences cause to both victims and minority communities more broadly.

The second part of the module focuses on sexual violence. We examine the reforms made to the law and practice with regards to sexual assault and will consider remaining issues, highlighting attrition and problems of attitude. Some academics have argued that sexual violence should also be classified as hate crime. As such you will explore the arguments for and against the inclusion of sexual violence under the label of hate crime, noting both the impacts that inclusion/exclusion under the label may have on the state's responses to such crimes. We will also examine the use of alternative criminal justice measures for hate crime and sexual violence. Particular focus is given to the use of restorative justice and you will assess the potential benefits and pitfalls of using such an approach.”

Assessment: Essay 5,000 words