# A Prosecutor's Stand

## *A guide for community screenings*

*by Paul Sheridan, Libby McInerny, and Michelle Gahee Kloss*

*Partners in stopping hate*

NOT IN OUR TOWN
STOP HATE. TOGETHER.

COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

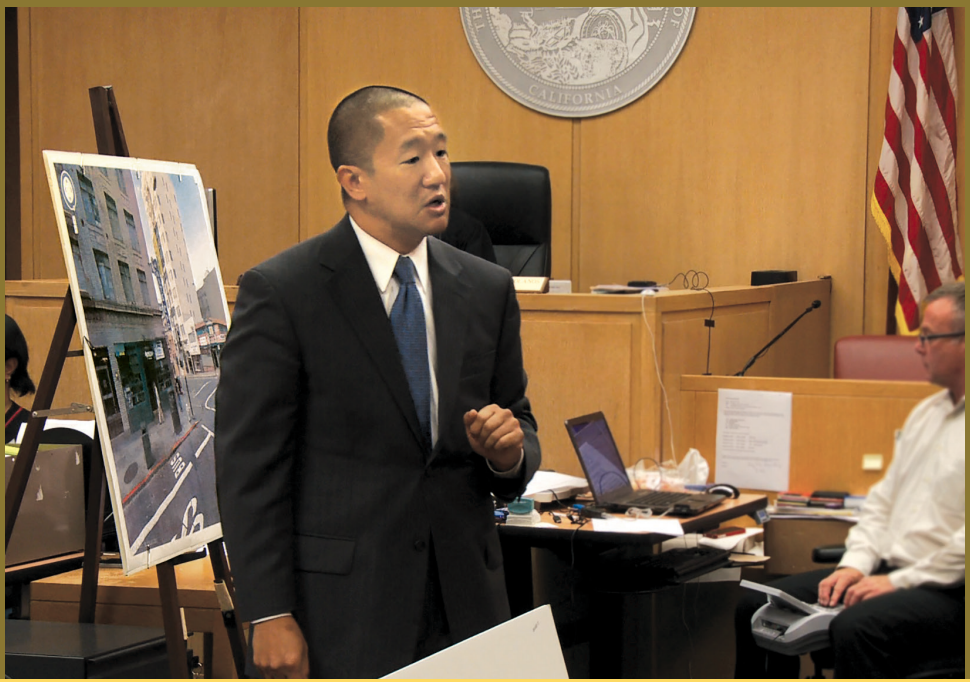


Photo credit: Ryan Anson

*San Francisco Assistant District Attorney Victor Hwang prosecuting a hate crime case at the San Francisco Criminal Court.*

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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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# Acknowledgments

Not In Our Town (NIOT) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) would like to thank the San Francisco District Attorney's Office, led by the Honorable George Gascón, for making the film *A Prosecutor's Stand* possible. Through interviews with key staff members and access to hate crime trial proceedings and community events, NIOT's production team was able to cast light on the impact of hate crimes and the role the legal system plays in fighting bigotry and hate and vindicating victims' experiences.

We are especially grateful to Assistant District Attorney and Hate Crimes Prosecutor Victor Hwang for generously sharing his expertise and insights about the challenges prosecutors face in investigating and prosecuting hate crimes and about the importance of community outreach to improve reporting and increase successful prosecutions. The urgency and commitment expressed by Hwang and Gascón to vigorously investigate and prosecute these crimes not only served as the driving force in the film but also helps guide our work with law enforcement agencies and community partners across the country.

We would also like to thank Judge Suzanne Ramos Bolanos for allowing us to film in her courtroom.

A special thank you is reserved for Alex C. and Mia Tu Mutch, the victims of the hate crime attacks featured in the film. By courageously opening up about their experiences, they provided crucial information about the unique trauma experienced by hate crime victims and the common barriers to participating in investigations and feeling safe within the community again. Through their stories and through the stories NIOT has gathered for almost two decades from other victims, law enforcement representatives, prosecutors, and victim witness liaisons, NIOT has had the opportunity to illustrate the need to differentiate hate-motivated incidents from other types of crimes.

This guide was shaped by important feedback from law enforcement professionals, including Officer Braden Schrag, assigned to the Southern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center as a member of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Terrorism Liaison Officer Program.

# Introduction

From time to time, an extraordinarily heinous hate crime captures national attention and puts the topic of hate crimes in the public eye for a brief moment. However, few people realize that more than 200,000 hate crimes are committed every year. The vast majority are never reported.

*A Prosecutor's Stand* examines three hate crime cases in San Francisco, California, exploring the nature of these crimes; the unique trauma faced by hate crime victims; and common challenges in reporting, investigating, and prosecuting the crimes. The 24-minute documentary profiles Hate Crimes Prosecutor and Assistant District Attorney Victor Hwang as he fights to bring perpetrators to justice in a San Francisco courtroom. It features exclusive trial footage and testimony of victims and law enforcement professionals as they seek justice.

Hwang's highly charged cases including the following:

- Two Latino immigrants are severely beaten in San Francisco's Tenderloin district by a group of skinheads. The case reveals a white supremacist network operating in the city.
- A transgender woman is attacked at a transit station, and witnesses confirm the bigoted slurs of the perpetrators at the scene. A judge rejects hate crime charges, but the district attorney's office refiles, insisting that the hate motivation be recognized.
- A homeless African-American man is slashed with a knife in a community square. Investigators find the perpetrator and connect his hate-based views to the attack.

*A Prosecutor's Stand* can be screened as part of a community event or workshop to help

- address current tensions within the community and establish a plan to resolve them;
- develop or enhance law enforcement-community partnerships to build trust and increase hate crime reporting;
- show support for hate crime victims and targeted groups;
- promote safe, inclusive communities.

To request a free DVD copy of *A Prosecutor's Stand* and to download supplemental resources, please visit http://www.niot.org/cops/aprosecutorsstand.

The *A Prosecutor's Stand* film and guide were produced as part of the Not In Our Town: Working Together for Safe, Inclusive Communities collaboration between Not In Our Town and the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office).[1]

1. All project resources and tools are available through the online project hub at http://www.niot.org/COPS.

Photos credit: Ryan Anson

*Mia Tu Mutch and Alex C. talk about the importance of recognizing and reporting hate crimes.*

# How to Host a Screening and Discussion

Creating dialogue among the diverse organizations, agencies, and community members in your city is an important tool in combating hate. Event organizers should allot at least 30 to 60 minutes for discussion after the film screening. This brief guide is designed as a tool to help address key issues in the film and facilitate meaningful dialogue. It contains sample discussion questions for event leaders and important background information about hate crimes. Additional film resources are available for free download at niot.org/cops/aprosecutorsstand.

For any audience, consider organizing attendees into breakout groups for part of the discussion. Especially in a large group, difficult or open-ended questions might make some people feel uncomfortable or shy about speaking out; these individuals might share more openly in a smaller group. One person from each group can be responsible for reporting to the larger audience about the experiences, perceived challenges, proposed strategies, or other issues raised in the breakout session.

In a theater setting where breakout sessions are logistically difficult, pose a discussion question and encourage attendees to hold a five-minute conversation with the person in the next seat. You could conclude the segment by asking three or four pairs to share their findings with the larger audience. Taking about 10–15 minutes for this exercise may serve as a useful warm up for those who are reluctant to speak in groups.

In public discussions, questions should focus on the experience of the community members as much as possible. Honest criticism can be a very important and constructive part of the discussion; however, verbal attacks should be discouraged. An experienced facilitator, particularly someone who has credibility with the community at large, can be a great benefit, especially with larger groups or in groups where tensions are known. Keep in mind that the goal is participatory conversation, and the opportunity for people to engage can be as important as anything in particular that might be said.

The film and accompanying guide are provided free of charge for local screenings. To help us understand and better serve our audience, Not In Our Town requests that you copy and distribute the evaluation survey for this film provided at the end of this guide. Completed surveys can be returned to our office address, included on the survey. Thank you!

## *Screening and workshop steps*

- Host the discussion in a neutral location where all attendees feel comfortable.
- Break the audience into small groups at tables before the screening.
- After the screening, present groups with a set of questions and a set time limit to discuss and answer questions.
- Have one member from each group report back their findings to the larger group, then facilitate a discussion about the different ideas that emerged.

## *Suggested discussion questions*

- Why are hate crimes considered "message crimes"? How does this aspect of a hate crime impact the victim, the group to which the victim belongs, or the community as a whole?
- Who is vulnerable to hate crimes in this community (which groups, cultures, races, ages, etc.)? Does local law enforcement have a positive working relationship with these groups, or is there a need for community leaders to serve as liaisons, speaking up for them and sharing information about incidents?
- What kinds of actions would you take if such an incident occurred in this community?
- What is the "hate crime reporting gap"? What organizations or groups in this community might serve as bridges between law enforcement and hate crime victims to increase reporting?
- Based on the film and this discussion, what are the next steps for this community to improve hate crime reporting and show support for victims and targeted communities?

# Recommendations for Law Enforcement and the Community

*by Victor Hwang, Hate Crimes Prosecutor, San Francisco District Attorney's Office*

## *Five actions law enforcement can take*

**1. Be proactive in community outreach.**

Affirmative outreach to communities, especially to diverse groups that historically do not trust law enforcement, will create bridges, so that if or when an incident happens, the victim will feel comfortable reaching out and reporting. To eliminate language barriers, ensure that either qualified dual-language officers or community volunteers participate in outreach to groups who do not speak English.

**2. Establish a specialized hate crimes unit.**

Establish a specialized hate crime unit that can work hand in hand with the district attorney to spot trends, to be a friendly point of contact for the agency, and to provide outreach and education to the public. However, if the agency cannot form a specialized unit, assign a point of contact in the agency who can work with the district attorney and provide outreach, education, and expertise.

**3. Form a law enforcement-community coalition.**

Form a law enforcement-community coalition to share ongoing hate crimes news, trends, prosecutions (what is appropriate to share publicly), and resources and create open forms for discussing community concerns. If necessary, ask community leaders to serve as liaisons to immigrant communities or other groups that may be fearful or distrustful of the police, to speak up for them and share information about incidents that have taken place.

**4. Form a regional hate crimes task force.**

Form a regional task force that includes local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal law enforcement; other criminal justice professionals; probation and parole; social service organizations; and other stakeholders. Many hate groups operate across county and state borders as well as in and around prisons. The regional task force can also reach out to the local or regional fusion center for data and information sharing.

**5. Work to support victims.**

Even in cases where no perpetrator is identified, make referrals to victim advocates, liaisons, and community groups to make sure the victim's needs are addressed.

## *Five actions communities can take*

**1. Conduct outreach to educate the community about hate crimes.**

Many times, particularly in immigrant communities, victims do not necessarily understand the hate crime laws, their rights, and the importance of documenting and reporting what was said during an incident. Outreach and education can also address issues of intolerance and hate within the community. Offer to serve as a liaison between law enforcement and immigrant communities or other groups that may be fearful or distrustful of the police, to speak up for them and share information about incidents that have taken place.

**2. Organize and react.**

If an incident occurs in your community, take a stand to show support for victims and send a strong message that hate will not be tolerated. Build bridges with diverse groups you might not interact with on a daily basis, and respond in the same way if they are targeted with a hate attack.

**3. Work with law enforcement.**

Reach out to law enforcement and prosecutors on cases and help supply the context for assessing why certain cases should be charged as hate crimes. Attend court hearings and work with media. Community volunteers may also be needed to serve as translators or interpreters when law enforcement officers interact with populations that do not speak English.

**4. Actively support victims.**

Victims may often not be able to remember details from an attack or may be traumatized by the incident. Be prepared to call 911, report details, and serve as a witness, if necessary.

**5. Intervene early.**

If hate crimes are the tip of the intolerance pyramid, there are many opportunities to intervene earlier to either slow the buildup of a hostile environment or to let a victim know that he or she has support. Speak out against hate speech and intolerance, organize against scapegoating, and work to create a safe environment for all.

# Hate Crimes: Important Facts for Event Organizers and Moderators

## *Definition of a hate crime*

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines hate crimes as "criminal offenses motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity."[2] This is the definition used nationwide for the purpose of recognizing, reporting, and tracking hate crimes.

## *The importance of recognizing hate crimes*

While all crimes by their very nature are harmful, hate crimes tend to have an especially devastating effect. When a victim is attacked because of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, or gender identity, the attack is not just upon the specific person but also upon everyone who belongs to that demographic group. Hate crimes spread fear to all who recognize they could have been a target. For this reason it makes sense that hate crimes receive distinct attention from law enforcement.

## *Hate crimes are message crimes*

The message of a hate crime is that "people like you" are not welcome here and are not safe here. Even acts of vandalism or crimes against a person that involve only threats or minimal violence can send powerful shockwaves of fear through the targeted community.

## *Communities cannot thrive when some members are afraid*

Fear caused by hate crimes degrades the quality of life for people in the targeted group and drives decisions about where to live and work and how much to participate in the community. It is also important to understand the potential for hate crimes to increase community tensions. Vulnerable groups that look to law enforcement officials to protect them and to provide a sense of security can become distrustful and even hostile to law enforcement when groups do not feel safe.

## *Building trust with diverse groups in the community*

In order to serve as protectors of the entire community, it is essential for law enforcement agencies to establish relationships and build trust with all of the diverse groups living in the community. One key aspect of this is eliminating language barriers. To establish a true working relationship with the community, law enforcement must be able to communicate with all segments of the population, either with qualified dual-language officers or via interpreters recruited from community partners representing the ethnic language group.

2. *Hate Crime Data Collection Guidelines and Training Manual, Version 2.0* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015), 10, http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/hate-crime-data-collection-guidelines-and-training-manual.pdf.

It is also crucial that law enforcement agencies prioritize and invest in cultural competency and diversity training for officers. Especially as community demographics change and become more diverse, it is important to conduct trainings that increase awareness of different cultural groups. An agency can contract outside representatives to perform these trainings; another approach is to organize forums between law enforcement and different groups in the community to discuss perceptions, expectations, and questions openly. Recruiting culturally diverse officers provides different perspectives and connections to the community, and ensures that the law enforcement agency reflects the community it serves.

Community partners can play a vital role in establishing positive working relationships with different groups. In addition to providing translation services, community leaders can be asked to serve as liaisons, speaking up for other residents and sharing information about incidents that have taken place. Often, victims of hate crimes are members of minority groups with traditionally low levels of trust for the police. An immigrant community might be very private and keep to itself, or be fearful of law enforcement. In some cases, victims of hate and other vulnerable individuals may turn to community groups or faith-based organizations for support first; those organizations then serve as an interface when authorities get involved.

## *Recognizing hate crimes in your community*

Every criminal statute that addresses hate crimes includes a central element of bias motivation. As a result, law enforcement officers need to look for "sufficient objective facts to lead a reasonable and prudent person to conclude that the offender's actions were motivated, in whole or in part, by bias."[3]

A law enforcement officer should look for and note "bias indicators," facts that suggest the possibility of a bias motive. It may be the strength of one or more particular indicators, or the particular combination of indicators, that ultimately leads to the determination that an event is likely a hate crime.

Bias indicators include

- whether the perpetrator and the victim were members of different racial or ethnic groups. This alone would probably never be enough to support a conclusion that an event was a hate crime; however, under the right circumstances and coupled with other indicators, such as a complete and surprising absence of any other apparent or likely motive for a crime, this factor may become weighty;
- historical animosity between the two groups;
- comments, statements, or gestures made by the perpetrator before, during, or after the crime;
- particular drawings, markings, symbols, or graffiti associated with the crime. These various forms of expression can be direct evidence of a bias motive on the part of the perpetrator, particularly when they are present in the commission of the crime itself.

3. Ibid.

Particular objects can also be bias indicators. Few would mistake the significance of a cross burned in a yard (bias indicator 1) and in the yard of an African-American family (bias indicator 2). These indicators "lead a reasonable and prudent person to conclude that the offender's actions were motivated, in whole or in part, by bias." But other objects, less universally associated with hate, might also be keys to recognizing the bias motive in a particular crime.

Officers must be careful not to draw conclusions about bias motives too quickly or too simply. The analysis should always be done on a case-by-case basis.

## *How hate crimes are reported*

Two of the main sources for national hate crime data collection are the U.S. Department of Justice's FBI and Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), but these agencies have different approaches. The BJS National Crime Victimization Survey[4] (NCVS) is collected from a nationally representative sample of households that are interviewed twice a year about criminal victimization. The instrument collects data on frequency, characteristics and consequences of rape, sexual assault, assault, theft, motor vehicle theft, and household burglary. This information is based on nonfatal crimes, and it does not matter whether or not they were reported to the police.

The FBI Uniform Crime Report[5] (UCR) *Hate Crime Statistics* are reported by law enforcement directly to the FBI. This data provides the number of incidents, victims, and offenders in hate and bias-related crimes whether the crime is fully or partially motivated by the bias.

## *The hate crime reporting gap*

As Victor Hwang says in the film, "The vast majority of hate crimes are never reported to the police." Hate crimes in the United States are seriously underreported and underdocumented, hindering accurate assessment of the problem. A recent BJS report found that nearly two-thirds of hate crimes go unreported to law enforcement.[6] This is because of the unfortunate belief by many victims that law enforcement will be unable or unwilling to address the problem. Such a breakdown in trust completely undermines the ability of law enforcement agents to perform their jobs.

It is imperative that law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim advocates do everything they can to build bridges of trust in the community to facilitate victim reporting and cooperation. First, it is essential that leadership make it clear that accurate reporting is a priority for the agency. Training is an effective means for accomplishing comprehensive hate crime recognition. Reaching out to victims and to witnesses and encouraging them to report is very important. In addition, intra-agency review of reports can enhance the accuracy of reporting.

4. "Data Collection: National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)," Bureau of Justice Statistics, http://bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=245.
5. "Uniform Crime Reports," Federal Bureau of Investigation, http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr.
6. Megan Meuchel Wilson, *Hate Crime Victimization, 2004–2012 - Statistical Tables* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014), 5, http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/hcv0412st.pdf.

Photo credit: Ryan Anson

*San Francisco District Attorney George Gascón and Assistant District Attorney Victor Hwang talk about hate crimes at a press conference in San Francisco.*

## *Victims of hate crimes need support*

One of the most important features of hate crimes is the heightened vulnerability of the victims, both the individual victim and the class of victims who belong to the same demographic group. Victims of hate crimes are often members of diverse groups already coping with a degree of discrimination and separation to which a hate crime can add further fear and insecurity. FBI statistics indicate that hate crimes are most often motivated by race, with religion and sexual orientation being the second and third most common motivations.[7] Sometimes the targeted groups are in the center of social controversy and conflict, sometimes with political or religious implications. This is certainly the case for some victims featured in the documentary. These individuals are naturally going to have a more difficult time reaching out to law enforcement, and they may be distrustful and have low expectations of prosecutors.

Law enforcement, victim advocates, and prosecutors should make special efforts to reach out to hate crime victims. Their vulnerability is related to the unique trauma they suffer, beyond any physical, mental, or economic injury; it is related to the shockwaves of fear that tend to permeate the targeted community in the aftermath.

7. Ibid.

Another characteristic of many hate crimes is the extra degree of violence and cruelty not as common in, for instance, economic crimes. Even though a bias-motivated crime does not require extreme violence to cause fear within a vulnerable community, research has shown that attacks motivated by bias tend to be more violent than attacks that arise out of other circumstances. A 2013 BJS report revealed that while violent non-hate crime victimizations decreased between 2007 and 2011, the percentage of hate crimes that were violent victimizations increased.[8] For all of these reasons, the special vulnerability of hate crime victims is a feature to which law enforcement must be especially attentive.

## *The importance of prosecuting hate crimes as hate crimes*

When hate crimes occur, it is important that they be recognized for what they are. This is why crimes motivated by bias should always be reported as hate crimes and why prosecution for hate crimes should be pursued wherever possible. When law enforcement and public officials recognize such an act for what it is, and when they name it and treat it as what it is, they acknowledge and validate the experience of the victim and affirm the status of the victim as a full member of the community.

## *Working with your community*

Law enforcement-community relations are especially important when it comes to hate crimes. Because victims of hate crimes are often more vulnerable members of society, they are sometimes reluctant to contact law enforcement and report that they have been the victim of a crime. However, because law enforcement officials need community cooperation to effectively carry out their responsibilities, encouraging and achieving this cooperation is an important part of their work. Good community relations

- increase the likelihood that hate crimes will be reported by victims to law enforcement;
- increase cooperation by witnesses;
- increase the support for law enforcement officials as they perform their jobs.

Law enforcement agencies should be working to establish good community relations well before they need to rely on them in a particular criminal investigation. It is important to consistently maintain and strengthen law enforcement-community relations.

Because hate crimes grow out of a social climate that breeds or abides intolerance, the real key to preventing hate crime lies not only with law enforcement but also with the larger community. Members of the community, including educators, faith leaders, civic leaders, labor groups, media, and citizens of every age, are in a position to contribute much more to the prevention of hate crimes than mere cooperation with law enforcement. Communities that actively work to include all groups in community issues and activities and work to build social bridges to otherwise isolated groups are less vulnerable to those who would sow fear and division through committing hate crimes. Law enforcement can play an important role in calling forth this positive involvement from the community.

8. Nathan Sandholtz, Lynn Langton, and Michael Planty, *Hate Crime Victimization, 2003–2011*, Special Report (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013), http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/hcv0311.pdf.

Photo credit: Ryan Anson

*Victim-witness advocate Omar Reyes with hate crime victim Alex C.*

# Additional Not In Our Town Resources

Not In Our Town (NIOT) is a national campaign that guides, supports, and inspires individuals and communities to work together to stop hate and build safe, inclusive environments for all. For more information or for assistance organizing a screening in your area, please contact info@niot.org or 510-268-9675.

Additional film and print resources are available on the Not In Our Town website at: www.niot.org. Selected highlights include the following:

## *Guides*

### Building Stronger, Safer Communities: A Guide for Law Enforcement and Community Partners to Prevent and Respond to Hate Crimes

http://ric-zai-inc.com/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P270

This guide produced by the COPS Office and Not In Our Town offers leadership strategies and actionable tactics to help law enforcement agencies work with community partners. Real-life examples documented by the Not In Our Town movement against hate and intolerance illustrate how agencies can work with community stakeholders to create an atmosphere where hate is not tolerated and take positive steps in the aftermath of a hate crime. The guide also provides multiple lists of resources to promote action, engagement, and empowerment for the community and law enforcement.

### Not In Our Town Quick Start Guide

https://www.niot.org/guide/quickstart

The ideas in this guide came from people in communities who wanted to do something about hate and intolerance. Their successful efforts have been a shining light for the Not In Our Town movement.

### Ten Ideas for Sparking Action in Your Town

https://www.niot.org/guide/10actionideas

Whether responding to a hate incident or working to prevent divisions, community leaders can use this guide to inspire their towns to stand up to intolerance and create a diverse environment where everyone is safe, accepted and included.

## *Videos*

### Waking in Oak Creek

https://www.niot.org/cops/wakinginoakcreek

Presented in conjunction with the COPS Office, this 30-minute film reveals the powerful and inspiring community response to intolerance after deadly hate crime shootings at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin. In the year following the attack, the mayor, police department and community members are awakened and transformed by the Sikh Spirit of Chardi Kala, or relentless optimism.

### A Bowling Green Legacy

https://www.niot.org/cops/bowlinggreenlegacy

Presented in conjunction with the COPS Office, this 13-minute film follows the actions of students working with administrators, law enforcement and community members to forge new bonds after racially charged actions shake their community. When racist tweets and "white power" graffiti leave students feeling threatened and unsafe, the campus and community of Bowling Green unite to take a stand against hate and join the national Not In Our Town movement.

### A Hate Crime Detective's Message to High School Students

https://www.niot.org/cops/media/hate-crime-detectives-message-high-school-students

Monmouth County, New Jersey, Prosecutor's Office bias crimes investigator Detective David D'Amico regularly visits schools to talk frankly and powerfully to the group responsible for the majority of these crimes—young people. His presentation includes cautionary advice not only about how derogatory words used online are hurtful but also about how they can make the user a target for recruitment by hate groups.

### Community Responses to Hate Groups

https://www.niot.org/niot-video/responsestohategroups

This collection of short videos highlights communities around the country taking a stand against hate and intolerance.

# Film Evaluation Survey

***Note:*** *To download a printer-friendly version of this two-page survey, please visit http://ric-zai-inc.com/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-W0759.*

Surveys should be returned to:
The Working Group / Not In Our Town
PO Box 70232
Oakland, CA 94612

*Partners in stopping hate*

NOT IN OUR TOWN — STOP HATE TOGETHER.

COPS — Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice

## Film Evaluation of *A Prosecutor's Stand*

**Instructions:** Please answer the following questions based on your recent viewing of *A Prosecutor's Stand*. Surveys should be returned to **The Working Group / Not In Our Town, PO Box 70232, Oakland, CA 94612**. Thank you for your participation.

**1. Screening location:** _____

**2. How would you rate the following in reference to this film?**

| Item | Excellent | Good | Okay | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Handling of topic presented | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| b. Overall impact of film | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| c. Effectiveness of group discussion (if applicable) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**3. Please check the response that is most accurate for you.**

| Results of viewing this film | Yes, very much | Yes, somewhat | No, didn't make a difference | Not applicable |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. I have more information or tools I can use in my work. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| b. I better understand the need to support hate crime victims. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| c. I better understand why hate crimes need to be reported, investigated, and prosecuted. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| d. I will seek ways to improve relationships with at-risk communities and organizations that serve them. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| e. I am more likely to take action to address hate and intolerance in my community. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**4. What opportunities or challenges do you anticipate in showing this film to your community or law enforcement agency?**

# About the COPS Office

**The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territory, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.

Rather than simply responding to crimes once they have been committed, community policing concentrates on preventing crime and eliminating the atmosphere of fear it creates. Earning the trust of the community and making those individuals stakeholders in their own safety enables law enforcement to better understand and address both the needs of the community and the factors that contribute to crime.

The COPS Office awards grants to state, local, territory, and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing professionals, acquire and deploy cutting-edge crime fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders and all levels of law enforcement. The COPS Office has produced and compiled a broad range of information resources that can help law enforcement better address specific crime and operational issues, and help community leaders better understand how to work cooperatively with their law enforcement agency to reduce crime.

- Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than $14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing.
- To date, the COPS Office has funded approximately 125,000 additional officers to more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country in small and large jurisdictions alike.
- Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than 8.57 million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs.

COPS Office resources, covering a wide breadth of community policing topics—from school and campus safety to gang violence—are available, at no cost, through its online Resource Center at www.cops.usdoj.gov. This easy-to-navigate website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.

This guide is designed to help law enforcement representatives facilitate discussions and training sessions in conjunction with screenings of the 24-minute Not In Our Town film *A Prosecutor's Stand*. Produced in collaboration with the COPS Office, the film examines recent hate crimes in San Francisco, California, and explores the nature of these crimes, trauma faced by victims, and common challenges in investigating and prosecuting these cases. Interviews with prosecutors, the district attorney, victims, victim liaisons, and others demonstrate the important interplay between hate crime victims, law enforcement, and the greater community. The guide provides discussion questions for use in internal agency trainings and community screenings, as well as a hate crimes fact sheet and a list of supplemental resources. Used together, the film and guide can help agencies work to prevent hate crimes, improve hate crime reporting, enhance investigations and prosecutions, and support victims.

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS Office programs,
call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at **www.cops.usdoj.gov.**

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