**Critical Hate Studies: A new perspective**

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This paper sets out a critical perspective that cohesively explains why hate happens in late modernity and its impact on the lived experience of victims. The paper challenges existing theoretical accounts of hate by presenting a psycho-social approach to subjectivity which acknowledges the impact of neoliberal capitalism on the lived experience. By doing so, the paper is able to account for the extremities of hate in society and its apparent normalcy. In conclusion, the paper argues that an interrogation of the extent of the harms of hate should be framed within a positive discourse wherein the human need to flourish, rather than survive, is recognised.

*Introduction*

In 1959 Wright Mills referred to the 'deadly unspecified malaise' (p.11) that people might experience if they lack values while simultaneously experiencing a sense of threat in society. This paper endeavours to engage with the contemporary realisation of this malaise that manifests as *hate*. Hate studies have researched bias-motivated behaviours that range from crimes through to micro-aggressions. This paper aims to theoretically place the range of those behaviours and their impacts within the context of a wider appreciation of harm in society. The premise of critical hate studies is simple: for an actual appreciation of bias-motivated harms to occur, it is necessary to routinely consider the contemporary neo-liberal capitalist[1] *context* within which they arise and that has shaped the *subjective* lived experience of hate victims and perpetrators. In this paper, we set out the genesis for this work and our proposal for a critical hate studies perspective to provide a framework within which critical thinkers can inform and develop hate studies as part of criminological endeavour.

Hate studies have developed over recent decades as an explicit attempt to challenge offending behaviour that is motivated by some sort of prejudice toward an individual's identity[2]. The notion of 'hate' itself is problematic as it constitutes discussion of emotions or affects that are bodily experienced (Pardy, 2011), whilst subjectively generated (Winlow, 2014), and politically imbued (Szanto and Slaby, 2020). Hate studies have focused their attention on an applied appreciation of bias-motivated actions and their consequences while retaining the moniker of 'hate', in part as

recognition of the consequences of such emotionally driven actions and in part as a powerful slogan to elicit attention within competitive academic and policy environments. Originally having grown out of the civil rights movement in the USA, studies of bias motivated offending, hate incidents and speech have burgeoned more recently in the UK and Europe. Beyond Europe hate studies have also expanded as evidenced by the breadth of papers presented at the International Network for Hate Studies conferences 2018 and 2020. Official categories of hate victims based on perceived identities, have expanded to include legally protected characteristics and officially recognised police categories of disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender identity (Sherry, 2010; James, 2015; McBride, 2018). In addition, empirical research in this area has encompassed other communities such as the homeless, goths and sex workers (Wachholz, 2005; Garland, 2010; Ellison and Smith, 2017), as well as noting the intersectional nature of identities and hate offending (Meyer, 2014). Numerous examples of hate behaviours have attained media attention and induced scholarly condemnation as evidence of a polarising western society (van Noorloos, 2014) such as the hate motivated shooting that took place in the Orlando LGBT Pulse nightclub on a Latinx night in 2016 (Stonehem, 2016). Brudholm and Johansen (2018) note how hate fuelled the terror and extremism that followed the UK vote to exit the European Union and the election of Donald Trump in the USA in the same year. Such events have engendered critique of the capacity for multiculturalism to succeed in contemporary society and a nihilistic approach towards social change, growth and development. We would argue however, that social theory has failed to explain effectively how hate has manifested in contemporary society and thus a positive discourse for change has been negated both within the academy and within wider social dialogue[3]. Theoretical discussion in hate studies has often focused on a critique of the notion of hate itself (Jacobs and Potter, 1998). This is despite the fact that the majority of scholars in the area have carried out empirical work that has evidenced hate as part of the victim and perpetrator experience of bias-motivated harms (see for example, Chakraborti, Garland and Hardy, 2014). Further, policy is now commonly framed using hate as a core concept (Home Office, 2016). Therefore, however bias-motivated harms are termed, they are part of

contemporary discussion and have attained political traction as an area for concern. As such, it is necessary to develop a more nuanced critical account of how and why hate happens in order to actualise positive mechanisms for change.

In the first instance this paper will set out existing theoretical perspectives in hate studies, specifically focusing on Barbara Perry's work (2001, 2006) as having provided the critical backbone of theory in this area in recent decades (Hall, 2015). By scrutinising existing theory, we are then able to identify the two key areas of concern that hate scholars have been largely unable to explain using current critical theory: patterns of hate offending and perpetrator motivations. Hate scholars have utilised multiple theories to attempt an explanation of these concerns, Walters (2011) has suggested that by combining critical thinking with control theory and strain theory a more complex explanation of hate interactions is possible. Similarly, Chakraborti and Garland (2012) have combined theoretical perspectives to present the notion of vulnerability as a comprehensive tool to appreciating why hate victimisation occurs. We argue that, while laudable attempts, these theoretical frameworks are insufficient to explain the contemporary milieu. This article therefore then sets out how analysis of hate is best facilitated by a critical hate studies perspective that is informed by ultra-realist criminology (Hall and Winlow, 2015) despite suggestions that this would not be possible (Wood, 2019). In doing so, the article discusses how the neo-liberal capitalist environment frames contemporary experience that is typified by rampant individualism and competition, which only serves the interests of wealthy elites. Within such, individual subjectivity develops without a sense of order in the social world (what Wright Mills might have referred to as 'cherished values' (1959:11), other than the appeasing environment of consumer culture, which fails to truly satiate the human need for meaning in life or provide opportunities for humans to flourish. Having established how the social environment informs individual subjectivity, we are then able to provide a critical framework for analysis of hate in society. We therefore suggest that the complex and conflicting patterns of hate discourse and behaviour in society are best understood as the

manifested harms of neo-liberal norms wherein individuals are denied recognition of their needs for respect, esteem and love (Yar, 2012; Honneth, 1996).

*Existing theory*

As noted above, hate studies has grown as a global academic area of enquiry in the past few decades. Perry (2001, 2003, 2009, 2017) has comprehensively outlined the development of ideas in this area, though also noting its theoretical paucity (DeKeseredy and Perry, 2006). Other texts have set out the breadth of international research in hate studies; see for example, Hall et al (2015), and Schweppe and Walters (2016). Theoretically, hate studies have often failed to link the social conditions within which humans experience hate and the development of their subjective identity. Mischel (1968) highlighted the dependency of human behaviours upon cultural context and the dangers of ignoring social influences that can lead to oversimplified analysis of hate as psychological deviance. Further, Green et al, (2001) note that this connection is essential to a comprehensive appreciation of all aspects of hate that includes both extreme acts of violence and day-to-day hate behaviours. However, psychological accounts have tended to underpin attempts to explain hate offending as forms of extreme prejudice (Kleg, 1993; Roberts, 1995; Watts, 1996; Rieker, 1997; Wahl, 1997). Hamner (1992) for example, utilises social identity theory to illustrate how hate crimes can serve to boost offender's self-esteem.  Hamm (1994) considers the role of group norms in producing hate crimes and attempts a multi-faceted thesis that takes in to account psychological, sociological and political variables to explain hate, but again his work is applied to extreme behaviours that he refers to as 'domestic terrorism'. Goldberg (2009: 46) similarly refers to hate offences as 'crimes against humanity'. Each of these works acknowledge the significant collective impact of the harms committed by hate perpetrators and provide rationales for the extremities of violence, but they do not address the everyday nature of many hate harms. Green et al (1998) proposed an approach that suggested demographic movement of peoples could explain commonplace defensive violence, but Green et al (2001) note that this approach fails to incorporate

the politics of hate and particularly the necessity to consider the role of elites whose behaviour is closely connected to, 'the form and frequency of hate crime' (p.490).

Building from these theoretical developments, in her thesis Perry (2001) argues that hate crimes serve to reinforce the hegemonic order in society that is structured by power relations commonly based on race, class and gender. She identifies 'labor, power, sexuality and culture' as the context within which human action is determined and 'hierarchies of difference' are maintained (2001:49). Her work utilises a 'structured-action' (Messerschmidt, 1997) approach to explain the construction of individual subjectivity as an interactive process wherein human identities are formed on the basis of their alignment with, or difference from, hegemonic norms. This aspect of her work acknowledges that the social environment informs individual agency via a symbiotic process. Having established this, Perry argues that victimisation can therefore occur within multiple contexts, including within and between more or less powerful groups, as they act to remind individuals and communities of their place in society and in doing so reproduce hierarchies of oppression. In 2006, Perry put out a compelling call to hate studies scholars to engage further in critical theorising in order to challenge and address bias-motivated crime and discrimination.

Iganski (2008) challenged the capacity of critical approaches to explain the everyday experiences of hate reported by victims as well as the extremities of hate offending. Walters (2011) combines features of strain and Perry's (2001) 'doing difference' theory of hate crime to posit a more nuanced explanation of hate with the intention of addressing this breadth of victimisation. Walters' (2011) theories of hate crime acknowledge the role of the social environment in constructing ideas around acceptable and recognised identities, and in cultivating a culture of fear that targets those who are different as threats to the status quo in socio-economically austere environments. But crucially, Walters argument relies upon a psychological approach that situates expressions of hate as the result of failures of individuals to exert self-control over their natural impulses; an interpretation of human behaviour that is grounded in Freud's concept of the Ego having failed to appropriately tame

the 'pleasure' seeking raw drives of the Id (Freud, 2018). Chakraborti and Garland (2012) suggested alternately that the concept of vulnerability augments our understanding of hate victimisation by recognising that perpetrators of hate are not necessarily motivated by a particular prejudice, but by the perceived vulnerability of their victim. Thus, the identity of the victim does not solely explain their victimisation, but rather the intersection of their identity with 'other aspects of their self', their situation and context (p.507). These theories have developed under the premise that critical theorising, that relies on structural explanations for crime, are unable to explain all aspects of bias-motivated crime and discrimination. Such accounts typify conceptualisations of critical thinking and the increasing turn of theoretical development in hate studies to notions of intersectionality to explain the variable experiences of hate victims (Meyer, 2014).

While we would suggest that the intersectional nature of our identities is important to consider in terms of appreciating minority perspectives (Phillips and Bowling, 2008) and building empirical knowledge on hate (McBride and James, 2021), we would argue that with the reluctance to explore further the role of wider social conditions on the lived experience of victims and offenders, hate studies has theoretically faltered. Despite their suggestion that hate studies have matured, Perry and Scrivens (2017) do not note critical development of the area. What they do evidence is an area of study that has developed in terms of its scope and capacity to appreciate the harms of hate in often nuanced and complex ways. Critical theorising within hate studies however remains largely stagnant and studies of hate are disassociated from critical discussion and debate in criminology more broadly. Indeed, hate studies are commonly referred to as part of the administrative project in criminology that focuses on subjective violence in society, that are physical interpersonal acts, rather than on systemic violence suggested by Perry (2001) or, as we would suggest is necessary, the symbolic violence (Žižek, 2008) of neo-liberal capitalism. Additionally, hate studies are reduced to a manifestation of identity politics, that is dismissed by left universalist political voices as having created silos that dilute critical thinking. As Duggan (2003) argues, this is to fail to recognise the gains made by identity politics and to negate the importance and relevance of neo-liberalism that

can be best understood in relation to the complexities of power and hierarchy that are constantly shifting within its confines.

The everyday nature of hate in society (Iganski, 2008) and the apparent banality of offender motivations (Chakraborti and Garland, 2012) have been drawn out then as particular issues that discount critical theory as an explanatory tool and also that mark the present era of hate as somewhat different. The suggestion being that such day-to-day micro-aggressions (as opposed to extreme hate violence) cannot be explained as the holding up of the existing hegemonic order, that it is not conscious prejudice that evokes such behaviour and that targets of hate are not always identified by their place in power hierarchies. Therefore, more pragmatic, rational explanations have been turned to, such as Iganski's (2008) use of rational choice theory and others as noted above. To this we would argue that such explanations are not sufficient and a more nuanced and developed mode of critical thinking grounded in an ultra-realist approach (Hall and Winlow, 2015) is needed. Critical hate studies uses ultra-realism to explain all forms of targeted violence, whether extreme hate violence or the almost casual and commonplace hate speech, incidents and attitudes that constitute micro-aggressions. Our aim therefore is to facilitate an analysis of hate that is comprehensive in its capacity to examine and explain hate violence that is subjective, systemic and symbolic (Žižek, 2008).

*Critical Hate Studies*

In order to set out the critical hate studies perspective, it is necessary to initially challenge certain aspects of the existing critical analysis within hate studies. As Hall (2015) notes, Perry's work has been ubiquitous, informed and informative and as noted above we would not wish to dismiss its contribution. We would like to take two of its core assertions to task however, that we believe would benefit from re-appraisal. The first is that we would suggest that the 'structures' of power in Perry's (2001) analysis do not represent the overriding condition of late modern society that is the neo-liberal capitalist political economy. Within neo-liberal capitalism power is diffuse as liberalism

provides the conditions within which capital can flourish. That is not to say that structures such as race, class and gender are irrelevant, as they have facilitated the rampant growth of industrial capitalism and continue to order our perceptions of everyday experience, despite their failure to truly represent our identities (Appiah, 2018). But, to negate the existence of the wider neo-liberal capitalist nature of society is to fall under the pacifying blanket that neo-liberalism has relied upon to further its existence (Fisher, 2009; Hall and Winlow, 2015). The constant battles society has had, legislatively, within policy and practice, personally and inter-personally, over decades and now centuries, against the structures of power identified by Perry (2001) have seen only limited positive change (Duggan, 2003; Hindmoor, 2018). And yet, as noted above and throughout the hate studies literature, hate seems to exacerbate in contemporary society (Mason-Bish and Trickett, 2019) and people fail to flourish (Yar, 2012). Perry (2001: 52) might argue that these battles represent 'structural crisis tendencies' that serve to reinforce those power structures, whereas we would suggest that the battles fought have failed to identify the entirety of their challenge. That challenge is to acknowledge and analyse neo-liberal capitalism's global and coercive influence (Ludwig, 2016) that has created a culture of individualism, competitiveness, meritocracy and relative deprivation wherein resources are distributed upwards in the social hierarchy under the false premise that everyone will benefit from the trickle down of the wealth created. Aligned with this, neo-liberal capitalist responsibilisation, teamed with deregulation and withdrawal of the state and the explicit disapproval of those that rely on welfare as a means to existence, has resulted in an environment in which judgement and regulation of others is encouraged (Harvey, 2005, 2011; Dardot and Laval, 2017; and Davies, 2017).

The neo-liberal capitalist political economy then must be scrutinised as dictating and determining the contemporary lived experience. No longer can we rely on the Hegelian master-slave dialectic (Hegel, 1977; Yar, 2012) to analyse and understand power relations in the social world, as the technological globalised environment of late modernity has negated the need for the slave per se. As such, it might be argued that we have been freed (or are in the process of being freed) from

hierarchical power orders that facilitate hegemonic systems which place white male social elites in positions of social control. Indeed, liberalism is commonly considered a goal within left idealist social theory which presents its capacity to lift the structures of oppressive power structures from the shoulders of the oppressed. Liberalism does provide the opportunity for liberation from ordering mechanisms in society, but with that comes a lack of order: freedom to express oneself whatever one's view, freedom, surely then, to be hateful of others? Whether perceived from the left of the political spectrum or the right, the philosophical basis of liberalism is the principle of equal liberty[4]. While we are unable here to unpack this concept in full (see Milbank and Pabst, 2016, for a full discussion) our intention is to acknowledge that neo-liberalism has not addressed the conflictual nature of notions of liberty. Rather, it has embraced a capitalist economic order, wherein the provision of liberty in society is limited to our freedom to choose what we want to buy as good consumers (Raymen, 2019). As such, the power to set agendas and interpret the social world (Connell, 1995) has shifted and changed, but remains in the hands of the few: the political and economic elite. That elite has remained dominated by white, middle class men as they have retained their positions of power by virtue of their pre-existing wealth and political clout. Indeed, pre-existing structures of power have not been de-constructed within neo-liberalism, but rather have been utilised where required/useful in the service of capital. Those structures of power are, to use neo-liberal capitalist terminology, under new management. Thus, they are used to retain and perpetuate elite positions, including racial, gender, class, and sexual identities, as well as, and informed by biological determinism and the colonial project (see for example, Bowling and Phillips, 2012). However, these elite positions are no longer exclusive as neo-liberalism rewards those with the sharpest elbows, individuals prepared to push themselves to the top of society no matter whom they harm on the way and in spite of the fissures of race, gender, class and sexuality. Within contemporary society, individuals are evaluated and evaluate themselves and each other according to neo-liberal norms, which are, flexibility, self-management, efficiency and responsibleness. Thus, success is based on an individual's capacity to risk-manage in an increasingly precarious work and

home environment where we are 'free' to be as successful as we choose to be as individuals. And so, we experience a warped sense of individual freedom in late modernity that places other individuals as separate from us and in competition with us, as 'a potential real threat to anyone else's livelihood, status and identity' (Hall and Winlow, 2015:114; see also, Hall et al, 2008).

Our second point of concern with Perry's analytic framework is her reliance on the structured-action approach to explain the construction of the self and by consequence the other in relation to the hegemonic order[5]. By taking a Lacanian approach to psychosocial development we would follow a transcendental materialist approach[6] as set out by Johnston (2008) based in the work of Žižek (2006) which essentially suggests that the self is formed via interaction within the social world and is indeed reliant on that environment for its formation, as per Perry's analysis. However, our contention is that the central feature of human subjectivity is a lack or void that is experienced as a perpetual anxiety, a need for wholeness, for the aching sense of a lack to be filled. The human self is infinitely malleable and as such is in search of an ordering mechanism that can direct and provide capacity for its complex range of emotions and instincts that manifest in the neurological system (Pardy, 2011; Ellis et al, 2017). Within a neo-liberal environment that order is lacking as liberalism relies on a flexible human condition, and capitalism co-opts this flexibility and sense of unease (Wright Mills, 1959) to provide maximum opportunity to attain profit. In real terms, neoliberal capitalism actively encourages our individual anxiety through narratives of 'good citizens' being those that are adaptable. The human subject then is left wanting, lost within a quagmire of neurological triggers, lacking an effective order or set of values that give meaning to life. As such the human subject is left responsible for the satiation of its own anxiety that is objectless; a sense of fear and trepidation 'with no rational and consensually recognised object' (Hall and Winlow, 2015: 112) due to the lack of any effective symbolic order in life, rather than due to imposed orders as Perry's analysis would suggest.

We attain our identities in relation to each other and normative values and morals inform our appreciation of who we may be as our identities develop in light of how others see us. However, the over-riding cultural expectations of neo-liberal capitalism of hyper-individualism and competitiveness subvert any particular identity moulds that we might fit in to in late modernity. We are not 'doing difference' as Perry (2001) suggests, but rather we are doing whatever it takes to survive in a society that values wealth and consumption and wherein morals are dismissed on the basis of individuals utilising their 'special liberty' (Hall and Winlow, 2015:120) to attain that wealth, no matter the harms they cause others.

Within hate studies, the general acceptance of Perry's theoretical perspective has meant that critiques of her work have not challenged the underpinning logic of the psychological approach she uses to underpin her sociological work. Instead, discussion has focused on the inability of a critical approach, based on analyses of power relations, to explain all hate behaviours and scholars have turned to other criminological theoretical frameworks for answers that commonly assume rational action of perpetrators of bias-motivated behaviours. While comprehensive critiques of rational actor theories are available in criminology (Raymen, 2015), the classical tropes of enlightenment theorising continue to inform theoretical conceptualisations of offender motivations, despite the importance of psychological work to the discipline (Garland, 1988). Within hate studies specifically, the notion of rationality in perpetrator motivations has developed firmly, for example, Chakraborti and Garland (2012) suggest that perpetrator perceptions of victims as vulnerable determines their response to the victims' perceived difference. As such then, the perpetrator uses their agency and their own sense of rationality to decide to victimise that person on the basis of their identity and their perceived vulnerability.  Likewise, Iganski (2008) refers to rational actor theories by emphasising the choices made by perpetrators to victimise others on the basis of their perceived difference as part of everyday life. Such theorising fails to acknowledge and engage with the symbiotic nature of human subjectivity and environment that Perry recognised, but which requires revision. By utilising the work of Lacan (1977), a transcendental materialist view enables a

psychosocial approach to human development and social interaction. We have agency, we have the ability to make choices, but we are deprived by neo-liberal capitalism of the symbolic context in which those choices mean anything at all.

Using this analysis, it becomes clear that not all structures in social life are constraining, as liberalism would essentially suggest (both economic and socio-cultural), but rather that more effective symbolic orders would allow humans to flourish by creating the conditions within which positive interpersonal relations could develop. Given this perspective, discussions of hate in society shifts from a negative discourse that only considers what we *should not* have to experience as members of society, to what we *should* experience as part of society (Raymen, 2019, Winlow and Hall, 2013). Discussion of social cohesion thus could dominate, rather than a discourse of social disruption. However, in order to attain a positive discourse, it is first necessary that we recognise how we have been impacted by the neo-liberal capitalist political economy. The difficulty with attaining such acknowledgement is that we have duped ourselves in to believing there are no other forms of effective order as even concerted left-wing political forces largely function within acceptance of the neo-liberal capitalist norm (Fisher, 2009; Hall and Winlow, 2015; Winlow et al, 2017). As we try to suppress our sense that life is meaningless, so we ignore it and embrace consumerism although it does little to assuage our gnawing sense of something lacking in our lives that is our unmet need for a coherent order. Consequently, the sense of insecurity we feel is misdirected as ire towards people that do not conform to our way of thinking, or who appear different from us (Pardy, 2011). As noted above, anyone may fill the bill of fearful other in a competitive individualist political economy. In the meantime, the disavowal of challenges to neo-liberal capitalism serve its purpose to perpetuate capital accumulation and thus protect the political and economic elite.

The purpose of a critical hate studies perspective is to allow an explanation of hate behaviours in society that range from extreme violence to day-to-day prejudice and discrimination, without abandoning a critical view. It has therefore been necessary to unpack the theoretical assumptions of

existing scholarship in hate studies and to introduce more useful ways of thinking. As soon as one acknowledges the nature by which the individual subject is informed by their relation to neo-liberal capitalism, one is able to explain both the everyday micro-aggressions against multiple and varied groups and extreme incidences of hate against more defined identities. The former is explained as human subjects' sense of objectless anxiety results in bias-motivated behaviour that occurs on multiple levels via hate speech, discrimination and physical violence meted out at all levels of the social, within and between social groups, hierarchies and communities. The competitive individualism of everyday life and an absence of an effective order in daily lives pitches people against each other, creates multiple divisions and differences and thus micro-aggressions (Sue, 2010). The latter is explained as individuals search out an effective symbolic order to make sense of their lives and their feelings of objectless anxiety, wherein they alight on a form of dogma that identifies an object, albeit a misplaced one, upon which they can focus their ire. Subsequently they commit heinous crimes against that object (be that a person, place or thing).

*The Harms of Hate*

In the previous section, we have set out the underlying theoretical principles of critical hate studies by identifying an approach to hate that acknowledges the impact of a neoliberal capitalist political economy on the subjective lived experience. Having done so we have been able to explain why hate happens in multiple and complex ways in late modernity. Having established why hate happens, we are then able to accept its ubiquitous nature and consider how hate manifests as multiple harms that are 'ultra-real' to those victimised. In other words, we are able to conceptualise how victims really experience hate in everyday life, rather than focusing on specific categories of victim or categories of crime. Again, a breadth of literature in criminology has challenged the utility of focusing on 'crime' as a distinct experience, given the variability of definitions of crime, enforcement and reporting issues, etc. (Lacey and Zedner, 2017). Within hate studies scholars have been in constant debate over the efficacy of 'protected characteristics' for victimised people as identities

intersect and hierarchies of legitimacy become entrenched (Chakraborti and Garland, 2012). We would suggest therefore that a social harm based approach to hate in late modernity provides the capacity to evidence the lived experience of hate victims.

Having established above that the human subject is not independent, but rather is dependent on social interaction to attain self-identity, so we must consider how that inter-subjectivity occurs effectively (as set out by Honneth, 1996; see Yar, 2012). In order for an individual to achieve a positive sense of self-esteem others must recognise them as valuable and those others, in turn, must be valued in order that their act of recognition is itself valuable. Returning to the notion of a positive discourse within hate studies, the theory of recognition allows us to consider how we might attain human flourishing by virtue of the human subject attaining the love, esteem and respect they need. Core to this theoretical framework is the causative nature of an absence of something, as has previously been noted above in relation to the absence of a symbolic order causing a lack of social cohesion and subsequently a sense of loss in the individual that manifests as objectless anxiety. We would suggest that the failure of mutual recognition in late modernity occurs as a consequence of the neoliberal capitalist condition (as per Yar, 2012) which results in hate harms as we will now elaborate.

Hate studies has focused attention on hate as subjective violence (Žižek, 2008) that is direct interpersonal violence, and subsequent attempts to ameliorate these hate harms have been based in providing people with legal protections. By recognising the human need for political and legal rights, the work carried out by hate crime lobbyists and activists affords *respect* to individuals and communities that are hate victimised. However, the silo'd nature of contemporary identity politics that has occurred as a result of essentialising processes, competitiveness and what might be described as collusion with the neoliberal capitalist project (Fraser, 2017), has resulted in hierarchies of legitimacy within and between communities and thus thwarted full recognition of all those in need of such respect. As with critical race theory, we would argue that essentialism serves to

perpetuate stereotypes and further marginalisation. In turn, provision of legal and political rights to marginalised communities do not function if they simply represent interest-convergence (Bell, 1980). However, moving beyond critical race theory we would argue that it is not simply the interests of particular racial groups that are stymied within a neoliberal capitalist political economy, but rather the interests of all marginalised communities fail to be respected as they are placed within a precariat, a space wherein those groups lives are defined by precariousness and insecurity (Standing, 2014). As such, existing approaches providing respect to hate victims feed in to negative discourses that both define people in terms of their victim status and on the basis of what people should not have to experience in their lives, rather than recognition of what they need to attain human integrity and well-being and thus flourish.

Some attempts have been made in theoretical work to identify the commonality of experiences of exclusion and the capacity of political economy to impact on the workings of regulatory mechanisms (for example, Kempa and Singh, 2008). Such analyses tend to view neoliberal capitalism as an aspect of contemporary power structures that inform experience (Duggan, 2003) whereas we propose that neoliberal capitalism over-rides other structures of power and serves not only to diffuse them, but also to negate them where the interests of capital are served. By taking this theoretical turn we are able to appreciate why attempts to organise beyond boundaries of culture, race and gender (theoretically and/or practically) fail as competitive individualism and the pursuit of personal interest wins out. An example of this might be the failure of strategic essentialism as a theoretical paradigm. Spivak (2008) argued that cultural and political commonalities should be embraced, while essential group identities acknowledged in order to further the interests of all and challenge global pressures to flatten cultural difference. However, its protagonist has abandoned the term, as others contradictorily used it as an argument for essentialism. The disavowal of neoliberal capitalism as defining our lived experience personally and politically has meant that building common ground, any forms of resistance or alternative is crushed by our failure to identify the common foe. Instead, we fight amongst ourselves for an imaginary pot of gold, becoming increasingly fearful and

consequently more hateful, fighting over limited resources as our notion of the good citizen is reduced to a fantasy of the hard-working individual who can survive the harms that are established within neoliberal capitalism as the norm (Hall and Winlow, 2015; James and Smith, 2017). In these conditions there has been a resultant lack of solidarity within and between groups that are victimised on the basis of their identity, and recognition of the human need for *esteem* has failed to be borne out.

Transcendental materialism allows us to appreciate that all human subjects are fearful and anxious, and within the contemporary political economy the meaning of our lives is defined as monetary-value: assigned according to what one has, rather than who one is (Hayward and Smith, 2017). Transcendental materialism allows us to move away from pathological or determinist analyses of action and experience, to begin to scrutinise the impact of hate as systemic and symbolic violence (Žižek, 2008). Systemic violence is that which is inherent in social systems that administer our everyday lives, whereas symbolic violence occurs within and is perpetuated through language, discourse and ideologies. A significant aspect of this mode of enquiry requires discussion of processes of abjection, absentism and redaction. The individualism under-pinning and the disavowal of the forces driving consumer society mean that we fail to address or even see many of the harms of hate that are endemic in society. An immediately obvious example of this is the case of Stephen Lawrence that has influenced much policy and practice in relation to race hate in the UK. The police investigation in to the racist murder of Stephen was identified by the Macpherson inquiry (1999) as amounting to institutional racism due to 'unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness' (Macpherson, 1999: 6.34). The very nature of the racism of police officers being unknowing, and thus systemic violence, has caused numerous and multiple discussions, papers, comments, policies and practices to be developed (as noted by Hall, 2005). Within critical race scholarship the redaction of ethnicity from historical narratives, policy development and cultural life has long been perceived as problematic (Chock, 1989, Gilroy, 1993). However, we would argue that the essentialising nature of these debates has resulted in a myopic translation of hate harms that focus on racism (and not

effectively challenged racism), and which have ultimately augmented hierarchies of deserving victims (see James, 2021 for detailed discussion of this issue in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Roma). While critical race theory and the scholarship following the Macpherson report have led to some victims attaining greater respect in society via legislation and policy that has challenged the abjection of ethnicity, as noted above, they have not provided sufficient social solidarity with others who have suffered absentism because of their identity. This constitutes a form of symbolic violence in and of itself.

As Hall and Winlow (2015:108) note, although all human subjects have an innate appreciation of the lack in their lives, 'it is known particularly well, and felt experientially, by those who are pushed in to abject positions in capitalism's social constellation'. As such, within the precariat, wherein resources are increasingly finite, welfare retracted and employment tenuous, prejudice and discrimination are an everyday experience. Denigration of people on the basis of their identity denies them self-esteem as their way of life is questioned and demeaned. We are not arguing here that hate experiences are limited to the socially excluded. Indeed, above we have suggested that hate can occur in all parts of the social spectrum. We would suggest however that the harms of hate are felt to a greater extent within communities that cannot access contemporary means of social elevation that require financial resources to buy into supposedly meaningful lives. As individualism permeates our experience, so we ignore the commonalities of hate harms in society and specifically we fail to see where those harms are felt most as we constantly look for affirmation from those we value who have more than ourselves. Studies of prejudice and discrimination identify the pervasive nature of such experiences on the everyday lives of people whose identities are perceived as problematic on the basis of multiple identity characteristics (for example, see Hollomotz, 2013; James and Smith, 2017). As criminologists it is our role to shine a light on the problems we see, rather than to ameliorate them by augmenting their invisibility. Part of the role of hate scholarship then should be to move beyond the use and analysis of official statistics on hate crimes and/or provision of legislation and policy to protect against such hate behaviour and move towards a greater focus on

identifying where prejudice and discrimination occur in society. By doing this it is possible to light up the systemic and symbolic nature of hate that has a common impact, while also recognising the rich and diverse nature of people given the opportunity to flourish. As such, a positive discourse of social solidarity between and within communities would have the opportunity to develop, that challenges mutually negative perceptions (Winlow et al, 2017).

The third form of recognition human subjects need in order to flourish is *love*. By this, we refer to the affirmation of a person's identity via interpersonal relationships that are physical, emotional and sexual. Individuals suffer the harms of hate within their interpersonal relationships when their identity is stifled, managed or negated. Within an environment that marginalises and essentialises multiple identities, harms manifest as the pressure to conform to social norms played out within interpersonal spaces. So, as our identities develop, we look to those closest to us to affirm what is expected of us and what will be valued. If the human subject exists in an essentialised environment, wherein cultural expectations are bounded by particular normativities based on gender, race and sexuality for example (Warner, 2000) so divergence from them is vilified. Families, partners, close community members may supress, deny or fail to recognise their loved-ones' identity in an effort to protect them from renunciation by cultural convention, but which actually serves to stymie their self-confidence. Such internal hate harms are rarely explored within hate studies as scholars are fearful of impinging on already beleaguered communities. However, exploration of the symbolic violence that such hate harms represent is necessary to appreciate the actual lived experience of hate victims, otherwise we simply serve to further essentialise and potentially exoticise, rather than represent reality. Queer and intersectional theories have made significant attempts to move beyond the essentialising nature of contemporary identity politics (Butler, 1990) and some theorists have developed the project of interrogating intersectionality within a framework that appreciates how power metes out to dictate and determine identity in a post-colonial, capitalist environment (Cuneen, 2011; Henne and Troshynski, 2013; Cohen, 2017). However, we would argue that two

further issues inform a true appreciation of interpersonal hate harms that constitute symbolic violence within a neoliberal capitalist political economy.

In the first instance, it is necessary to note how consumerism has appropriated culture and consequently the market has subsumed identities and identity politics (Richardson, 2005). In an excellent example of the extremity of this process, Bliss (2013) notes the role of the market in determining racial identity via private companies that provide ancestry estimation using genomics. In doing so the individualism of contemporary neoliberal capitalism is exacerbated and any sense of unity in experience or associated social action is negated as, 'a pharmaceuticalized citizenship takes hold wherein health rights and political participation become primarily envisioned in personal biological terms' (Bliss, 2013:1021) that the human subject can only access if they have sufficient wealth. Thus, the traditional critique of essentialism as failing to represent the diversity of humanity is turned on its' head as the representation of our apparently unique individualism becomes a tool to capital growth. We must secondly return then to the notion of liberalism as problematic. Essentialism has created bounded notions of identity that can result in hate harms, but to deconstruct any sort of social cohesion can be even more harmful: as we are individualised, so we are responsibilised, accountable only to ourselves and yet subject to the vagaries of the market within neoliberal capitalism whose responsibility is disavowed, as noted above. In such conditions, the human subject flails, unprotected by even the closest to us and misrecognised by those at a distance. We would suggest then that postmodern analyses of identity fail to resolve the tensions caused by essentialism and existing categorisation of individuals based on race, class, gender and sexuality serve to reify identity groups (Philips and Bowling, 2008) and are blinded by cultural privilege (Nicholson, 2010). In real terms, recognition within interpersonal relationships will not occur via the commodification of identities, nor via the deconstruction of identities. Rather, it is more likely an outcome of mutual recognition between social groups as set out above wherein esteem is given, respect attained and love facilitated.

We have only briefly been able to set out the harms of hate within the theory of recognition here (for applied examples, see McBride (2018) and James (2019). However, even this simple outline provides a greater capacity for hate studies to appreciate how hate impinges on all aspects of our lives and limits our capacity to flourish.

*Conclusion*

This paper has set out a theoretical argument for a new approach to hate studies, informed by an ultra-realist approach in criminology. In doing so, it has attempted to address the critique of hate studies that places such scholarship within an administrative tradition that focuses only on subjective harms of hate, rather than on hate that is systemic and symbolic. We have argued here that hate studies are a relevant and important area for concern for criminologists as they reach to the heart of contemporary problems in society wherein discrimination and prejudice, as well as crime, is part of the daily lived experience of people who are victimised on the basis of their identity. The study of hate in society has burgeoned in recent years as criminologists have attempted to question, understand and tackle bias motivated victimisation. Many theorists, as noted above, have identified aspects of social structure as determinants of hate in society. However, critical thinking has faltered in its reliance on analyses of power that centre on hegemonic orders of race, class and gender. It is instead necessary to address how the neoliberal capitalist political economy informs all aspects of power, place and space in contemporary society and subsequently the role of the individual within it as a social being. By doing so, it is possible to explain the extremities of hate: the banality of hate experiences in the everyday lives of victims as well as the extreme violence meted out against them.

In order to illuminate the lived experience of victims of bias-motivated violence we have utilised a transcendental materialist psychosocial approach, based on the work of Lacan (1977), who identified the malleable nature of the human psyche that looks to order its experiences and natural desires to attain meaning and value in daily life. By acknowledging the human need for such ordering

mechanisms, we are able to consider the negative impact of liberalism on the human condition, as it promotes individualism at the expense of community. Within a capitalist consumer society, such individualism does not serve to free people, but rather enslaves them to market economies wherein their value is determined by what they can purchase. As such, those with limited resources lack power. Within this environment, the fissures of race, gender and class linger, as dominions of land and property ownership remain intact. However, they are not exclusive and unchanging as new markets emerge and capitalism flexes to retain its hold. Therefore, victims of bias-motivated behaviours may come from any walk of life as all are subject to the vagaries of competitive individualism, but are most likely to reside within the precariat, wherein competition for resources is most felt (James and Smith, 2017; Home Office, 2018).

Chakraborti (2017) has argued that praxis should be facilitated by hate studies and we would argue that this can be attained through effective critical thinking. We have therefore turned towards a positive discourse of recognition, as set out by Yar (2012), following Honneth's (1996) theory which suggests that humans need respect, esteem and love in order to flourish. We believe that praxis can be enabled by embracing an approach that considers what humans *should* experience in order to flourish, rather than what they *should not* experience in order to survive. By taking this social-harms based approach, we have identified that victims of bias-motivated violence suffer from harms in all aspects of their lives: physically, psychologically, socially and inter-personally. It is therefore necessary to identify policies and practices that serve to build positive social relations within and between social groups, rather than hierarchical essentialising practices that simply uphold, and often exacerbate, notions of the ideal victim (Christie, 1986). By doing so, policy and practice challenging hate has the opportunity to disrupt the competitive individualism of neoliberal capitalism and provide effectual symbolic orders for people to flourish within.

In summary then, this paper has set out the premise for a critical hate studies perspective that provides an opportunity for hate scholars to better interrogate how and why hate happens. The

paper recommends greater scrutiny of the perpetration of hate through acknowledgement of the

impact of neoliberal capitalism on the lived experience. Further, it suggests that for hate studies to

progress, a more cohesive approach to the actual harms of hate must be embraced that serve to

recognise the human need to flourish.

Footnotes:

1. Reference here to 'neoliberal capitalism' refers specifically to the period of time from the 1920s, and particularly adopted internationally in policy and practice since the 1970s, to the present day, during which, 'political judgement became replaced by economic evaluation' (Davies, 2017:5) as the organising principle of contemporary society. Significant works define, discuss and analyse the notion of neoliberalism, which we are unable to represent fully in this paper. Please therefore see, for example, Harvey (2005, 2011), Dardot and Laval (2017) and Davies (2017) for discussions of neoliberalism.
2. There are contested perceptions of what constitutes hate behaviours within hate studies as per Perry's (2001) outline of the study area. The parameters for the study of hate range from research on genocide to hate speech. This paper has a broad conception of behaviours that are motivated by hate as is discussed throughout and does not devolve hate behaviours to crimes unless clearly stated.
3. It should be noted that discussion of hate as an emotion or affect has gained increased attention in social psychology, see for example, Craig (2002), Pardy (2011), Brogaard (2020), Szanto and Slaby (2020).
4. The distinguishing features of the political right as economic liberalism and the left as socio-cultural liberalism are acknowledged, but their implicit alliance to protect notions of freedom and choice are the core issue here (Cremin, 2011; Lasch, 1985; Raymen, 2019).
5. Messerschmidt himself notes the need to re-consider his original thesis (see, Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).
6. For a full discussion of this approach see Žižek (2006) who uses Lacan's notion of the Real as the void from which we are born and within which our internal instincts and desires are senseless to us. We therefore exist within an imaginary, wherein we seek a symbolic order to give meaning to our subjective experience so that we can escape the sense of the real and give our subjectivity meaning.

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