



***Matthew A. Bills***

Dissertation Defense  
College of Criminal Justice  
Department of Criminal Justice  
and Criminology  
Ph.D. in Criminal Justice

**An Analysis of State Hate Crime Legislation: Do  
Legislative History Documents Hold the Key to  
Hate Crime Law Reform?**

Hate crime legislation in the United States is a relatively recent phenomenon, with California passing the first hate crime law in the country in 1978. Since, nearly every state has adopted some form of hate crime legislation. Prior work has yet to examine legislative history documents to determine their potential usefulness for adding to our understanding of states' hate crime law adoption processes. This dissertation provides a content analysis of legislative history documents accompanying hate crime laws in nine states and Washington, DC. A general approach emerged for the states in the sample. Much can continue to be learned from legislative history documents accompanying states' hate crime laws. Advocacy efforts and states themselves should focus their attention on how other states adopted their hate crime laws when looking to expand their own legislation.

Event Information

Friday, October 29  
11:00 AM  
Friel Room, George Beto  
Criminal Justice Building

Committee Members

Chair: Erin A. Orrick, Ph.D.  
Michael Vaughn, Ph.D.  
John C. Navarro, Ph.D.  
Brittany E. Hayes, Ph.D.



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