

Definitions of Hate and Extremism

Anti-Defamation League

Hate Group: An organization whose goals and activities are primarily or substantially based on a shared antipathy towards people of one or more other different races, religions, ethnicities/nationalities/national origins, genders, and/or sexual identities. The mere presence of bigoted members in a group or organization is typically not enough to qualify it as a hate group; the group itself must have some hate-based orientation/purpose. [Link](#).

Extremism: A concept used to describe religious, social or political belief systems that exist substantially outside of belief systems more broadly accepted in society (i.e., “mainstream” beliefs). Extreme ideologies often seek radical changes in the nature of government, religion or society. Extremism can also be used to refer to the radical wings of broader movements, such as the anti-abortion movement or the environmental movement. Not every extremist movement is “bad”—the abolitionist movement is one example of an extreme movement that had admirable goals—but most extremist movements exist outside of the mainstream because many of their views or tactics are objectionable. [Link](#).

Southern Poverty Law Center

Hate group: A hate group is an organization that—based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities—has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics. We do not list individuals as hate groups, only organizations. The organizations on the SPLC list vilify others because of their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity—prejudices that strike at the heart of our democratic values and fracture society along its most fragile fault lines. The FBI uses similar criteria in its definition of a hate crime: *[A] criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity*.

A “group” is an entity that has a process through which followers identify themselves as being part of the group, such as donating, paying membership dues or participating in activities like meetings and rallies. Individual chapters of a larger organization are each counted separately, because the number indicates reach and organizing activity. [Link](#).

American Library Association

A hate group is a social group that advocates and practices hatred, hostility, or violence towards members of a race, ethnicity, nation, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any other designated sector of society. [Link](#).

FBI

A hate crime is a traditional offense like murder, arson, or vandalism with an added element of bias. For the purposes of collecting statistics, the FBI has defined a hate crime as a “criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part

by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity." Hate itself is not a crime—and the FBI is mindful of protecting freedom of speech and other civil liberties. [Link](#).

Violent extremism is defined by the FBI as "encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals." [Link](#).

The FBI defines domestic terrorism as "Violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups to further ideological goals stemming from domestic influences, such as those of a political, religious, social, racial, or environmental nature." [Link](#).

Department of Homeland Security

Radicalizing to violence is the process wherein an individual comes to believe, for a variety of reasons, that the threat or use of unlawful violence is necessary – or even justified – to accomplish a goal. [Link](#).

Coalition of groups for recommended internet policy addressing hate (Center for American Progress, Color of Change, Free Press Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, National Hispanic Media Coalition, Southern Poverty Law Center)

Throughout these recommended policies, we use the term "hateful activities" to mean activities that incite or engage in violence, intimidation, harassment, threats, or defamation targeting an individual or group based on their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, immigration status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. [Link](#).

Anti-Defamation League and Koch Institute (from Communities Overcoming Extremism Report)

Extremism is political thought and action that intentionally employs intimidation or violence to pursue political ends. [Link](#).

Bard College Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism

Hate studies is defined as "Inquiries into the human capacity to define, and then dehumanize or demonize, an 'other,' and the processes which inform and give expression to, or can curtail, control, or combat, that capacity." [Link](#).