



REAL GEOGRAPHY

EXPLORING THE GEOGRAPHY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

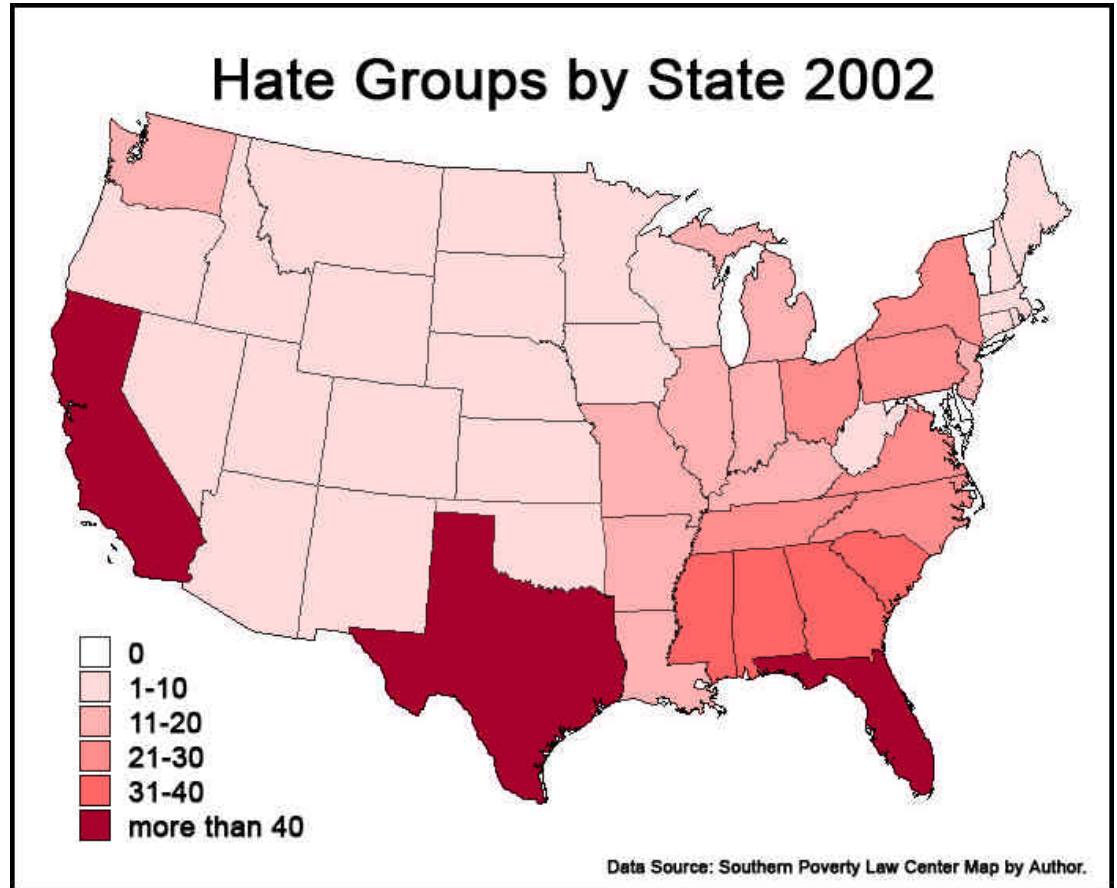
McGraw-Hill Higher Education

“The Geography of Hate” by Jon C. Malinowski, Ph.D.

Hate groups are an unfortunate centrifugal force in the United States. Hate groups can be broadly defined as groups that malign or a whole group of people, often for characteristics that the group cannot change, such as skin color or origin. Common groups in the United States include the Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazis, white supremacist groups, and black separatists.

Organizations such as the Southern Poverty Law Center track these groups to monitor their size and activities. Naturally, it is difficult to track the exact location and size of some groups because members often do not want their activities made public. But many hate groups do have a legal, public presence that allows them to be located.

Another way to map hate groups is to map hate crimes. According to the FBI, 8,832



Further Research

1. Visit the website of the Southern Poverty Law Center to learn more about the state of hate in the United States. Check out their *Intelligence Report* for current stories about hate groups in the United States.
2. What hate groups are most active in your state? What factors contribute to their prevalence?

hate crime offenses were committed in 2002. California, New York, and New Jersey recorded the most offenses.

Mapping the location of hate crimes, however, can be fraught with difficulty because many crimes committed by members of hate groups are never identi-

fied as such. Thus, if a state does a better job identifying hate crimes, it might look like it has more hate-related incidents.

To get a handle on the pattern of hate, Dr Colin Flint, a geographer at Penn State, calculated the number hate-related inci-

dents per capita in Pennsylvania to try to determine if there was a locational pattern. He found that suburban areas were hotbeds of hate crime. Flint notes that this is a change from the past, when more hate crimes took place in rural areas.

Links:

- Southern Poverty Law Center <http://www.splcenter.org/>
- Patterns of Hate <http://www.rps.psu.edu/0105/patterns.html>