

# SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT

## HATE CRIMES AGAINST LGBT PEOPLES IN CHICAGO

### PAUL SCHEWE



*Associate Professor,  
Center for Research in  
Law & Justice, UIC*

Bio: <http://bit.ly/Mw1qA8>

### PHOENIX MATTHEWS



*Associate Professor,  
College of Nursing, UIC*

Bio: <http://bit.ly/1dOI6U7>

#### IRPP:

- *funds research*
- *trains scholars to join policy discussions*
- *collaborates on social justice projects with community organizations*
- *hosts events*

#### Introduction

How are acts of violence against transgender women of color classified by police?

Across the U.S., transwomen have been the target of increasing violence. Transgender hate crimes differ in nature and severity from anti-LGB hate crimes, leaving the ethnic minority transgender community especially vulnerable to acts of violence; however, acts of violence against transgender women of color are rarely identified as based on race or gender. Instead they are misclassified as crimes associated with sexual orientation. Why is this important? Because under- or mis-reporting serves to hide the needs of populations at increased risk for bias motivated violence.

#### Methods

Using data from the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and the Anti-Violence Project, Paul Schewe and Phoenix Matthews study police classification of crimes against LGBT persons in Chicago. A significant aspect of their project is that Schewe and Matthews met regularly with community groups that do not normally work together to discuss hate crime incidents, policies related to data collection, early identification, prevention, and victim services. Such groups include the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, the Center on Halsted, the Anti-Defamation League, and the CPD.

#### Findings

- *CPD Data* Generally speaking, hate crime was most often motivated by racial or sexual orientation bias. Victims were most often aged 19-30, Black or Caucasian, and biologically male. Simple assault or criminal defacement was the most common crime against LGBT persons.
- *Anti-Violence Project Data* Anti-LGBTQ bias was the most common motive for hate crimes. The most common crimes committed against the community were assault without a weapon, verbal harassment, intimidation, sexual assault, and domestic violence – the most prevalent crime overall. Most incidents were not reported to the police or were reported with no arrest.

#### Recommendations

More community awareness, outreach, and prevention/treatment services are needed. Within the LGBT community, domestic violence is an increasing concern. For transwomen, it is even more difficult to access services because they are often barred from women's shelters. Increased collaboration among key stakeholders including police, anti-hate groups, universities, state agencies, domestic violence advocates, and LGBT advocates should lead to improved prevention and intervention services.

To see Dr. Schewe & Dr. Matthews present this material visit: <http://bit.ly/1fcLw5s>