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Hate Speech and Violence: Ethical and Legislative Challenges

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Hate speech and violence are on the rise, with social media playing a critical role.

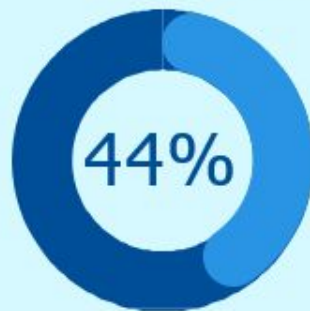Connecticut hate crime laws have been implemented, but challenges persist in enforcement.

Introduction
Why is this important?

Connecticut Statistics

Primary bias motivations (2023)

44% Race/Ethnicity

29% Religion

24% Sexual Orientation

What is the Role of Technology in Hate Speech?

- Social media amplify false narratives (which fuel hate crimes) to drive engagement, as false narratives fuel hate crimes.
- Should tech firms be held accountable for hate speech on their platforms?
  - EU vs. U.S. Approach: The EU enforces stricter regulations, while U.S. platforms lean toward free speech.
- What about AI?
  - AI can detect hate speech but struggles with context, sarcasm, and bias. Over-reliance on AI risks censorship and suppression of legitimate speech.

What are Connecticut's Legislative Efforts?

State Hate Crime Laws

- There are penalties for crimes motivated by race, religion, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
- Civil penalties up to $2,500 per offense.
- Proposed reforms (2025) aim to strengthen prosecutorial effectiveness.
- Early Anti-Hate Legislation (1917 Law): Imposed fines for advertisements ridiculing people based on race or religion. Modern Challenges: The law lacks focus on online hate
- speech and digital harassment.

Call to Action

Solutions & Policy Recommendations

1. Improving AI-Based Moderation
   - Combining AI & Human Oversight with more context-aware detection models for evolving hate speech.

2. Platform Accountability
   - Holding tech companies responsible for harmful algorithmic amplification and encouraging transparency in content moderation policies.

3. Legal & Educational Reforms
   - Updating CT laws to address digital hate speech & cyber harassment.

Resources

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