

cannot do that, and they save lives.”

Katherine is referencing the violence during the Unite the Right protest in Charlottesville, in which several of the alt-right demonstrators struck counter-protesters with flag poles and other improvised weaponry.

Alexandre Baretich, the creator of the Cascadia flag, says, “I don’t think it’s about the media at all; it’s about security culture.”

His flag — blue, white and green horizontal stripes with a Douglas fir — has been co-opted by a local racist organization, True Cascadia, the mission of which is to “promote a White ethnic consciousness in the Pacific Northwest and prevent, as well as reverse, the increasingly discriminatory policies enacted in opposition to Whites in our own homelands,” according to its website.

Baretich opposes this use of the Cascadia flag.

“It’s a lot of fear of being doxed and being tapped by the fascists themselves,” he says. “I think people are afraid that these hate groups are going to target individuals.”

While Baretich uses that name publicly, there aren’t any photos of him online. “I don’t want my picture on Facebook,” he says.

Joe Lowndes is a UO political science professor who studies right-wing politics in the United States. He says, “I think that the threats posed by fascists right now are quite real.” He cites increased violence towards immigrants, people of color, Muslims and Jews as proof of that threat.

“You have to have your head in the sand to say that there has not been quite an upsurge in white racist violence in the streets and white racist organizing with the central government institutions in the United States.”

Antifascist organizing has grown dramatically to meet that threat, Lowndes says. “People flocked to antifa organizations in the thousands.”

And he says antifa tactics are effective. “White nationalists will sometimes say that the places where they are able to grow their movements are the places where there is the least resistance.” Antifascist organizing on college campuses has made the work of racist groups more difficult, Lowndes adds.

The media often defines antifa as street militants, he says, but these groups also do education and community organizing. And he says antifa is one of the few clear responses to the frightening threat of fascist organizing. “Many liberals are turned off by it but a lot of people are drawn to it,” Lowndes says.

‘Since it is here, it is our responsibility. It’s our problem. Specifically, it is the problem of white liberals in Eugene. People of color and LGBTQ people are the victims of this and they’re also the ones who have to stand up against it.’

— **RHEUBEN BUNDY**, LANE COMMUNITY DEFENSE NETWORK

Antifa and Violence

Some antifascist organizers also resent that the media focuses on street protests and defines the ideology by that violence. The violent Berkeley protest in August garnered considerable media attention, but organizers say violence is not representative of antifa in general.

“Antifa is about defense,” Baretich says. “There are individuals who can be violent in society in general, but generally speaking antifa is a defense stance.”

“If someone walks in your house and is threatening to kill you, does knocking the gun out of that person’s hand count as violence? You take it out of context and it looks like violence,” Baretich says.

Others say antifa does plenty of work that doesn’t garner media attention, but still works against fascism. M, who uses an initial to protect his identity for safety reasons, is a member of Neighborhood Anarchist Collective. M says



antifa is “trying to silence the voices of fascists in their community. They’re doing so in the name of promoting safer communities for groups of people that those fascists might be targeting.”

But violence isn’t the only way of going about that.

Lane Community Defense Network (LCDN) is a “community support group that can provide resources for the communities,” according to Ariel Powell-Córdova, who works with the network. LCDN provides support during protests and marches, and pulls down fascist propaganda in Eugene and Springfield.

“A lot of it has been around campus, but there’s also plenty of it in the Whiteaker, west Eugene, south Eugene; it’s everywhere,” she says.

Powell-Córdova says fascists put up propaganda to signal that they control an area and that people of color and

other vulnerable communities are not welcome in those areas. “The intent there is to cultivate an area in which it is safe to be a fascist, safe to be a white supremacist, safe to be a neo-Nazi,” she says. “That cultivated environment always precedes an uptick in hate crimes, always precedes black and brown death.”

She points to a May incident in which a black student was stabbed on the University of Maryland campus shortly before graduation. “Around that time University of Maryland had been experiencing an uptick in white supremacist propaganda,” she says. “That follows the arc of history pretty well.”

Powell-Córdova says LCDN is a non-violent, antifascist organization. But, she says, “the reality is that antifascist organizing is inherently violent. The police are violent, the imperial military state is violent, white supremacists are violent. There is no way to escape violence in this work because that’s what you’re living with.”

Charlie Landeros, a military veteran and UO-based activist, considers the propaganda in town to be a direct threat to the safety of local people of color. “It’s not just a graffiti problem. It’s a declaration by neo-Nazis of taking spaces,” he says.

“I believe that there is going to be a high likelihood of a violent hate crime on this campus from the alt-right,” Landeros says.

Landeros says he doesn’t identify himself as antifa because of the connotation of “street brawls with Nazis.” Instead, he says, “I am antifascist.”

Political Context

Landeros considers Donald Trump a fascist, and points out that the federal government acts against antifa.

“Antifa is labeled a terrorist group [by the Department of Homeland Security under President Obama]. That’s a clear sign of the rise of fascism in this country,” he says. “The federal government is more aggressive and more harsh towards people who are against fascists than people who are Nazis.”

Jen McKinney, chair of Eugene DSA, says, “we’re fighting on two fronts anyway. We’re fighting white supremacist organizations, but our government has engaged in suppressing left behavior.”

McKinney says the DSA is antifascist, though it organizes on other issues as well. She says Trump fits “every single characteristic” of fascism.

Antifascist organizing should start at a small scale, McKinney says. She says everyone should speak up when they hear racism — that businesses should put up signs welcoming people of all races, ethnicities, gender identities and religions. “If you’re able to effect change on that small scale, you’d be able to drive them out,” she says.

Addressing white supremacy in society is key for stamping out fascism, McKinney says. “If you don’t feel comfortable being called a white supremacist, look at why you’re being called that,” she adds. “Don’t automatically get defensive about it. Really, really look and think about why the system is that way.”

Antifascist organizers span a wide range of political beliefs, including anarchists, socialists, self-identified revolutionaries and libertarians.

UO student Alice says she was radicalized after the election of Donald Trump. “I was a pretty active protester before Trump was elected, but I didn’t really consider myself antifa until Trump was elected. Like a lot of people.”

There has been a notable rise in alt-right organizing since the beginning of Donald Trump’s campaign, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center. “The number of hate groups operating in 2016 rose to 917 — up from 892 in 2015,” according to the SPLC website. It also documented 867 bias-related incidents in the first 10 days after Trump’s election.

Though most see growth in the violent rallies that periodically appear on the nightly news, those same groups are gathering support and recruiting locally. LCDN’s Reuben Bundy says the most common fascist groups that organize locally are Identity Evropa, Vanguard America, American Front, True Cascadia and North Western Front.

Each of these groups has its own specific blend of nationalism, racism and anti-Semitism. North Western Front calls itself a “political organization of Aryan men and women” seeking a white nation state in the Pacific Northwest. True Cascadia has similar goals, while American Front is a skinhead/neo-Nazi organization. Identity Evropa is a white supremacist organization, as is Vanguard America.

“Since it is here, it is our responsibility. It’s our problem,” Bundy says. “Specifically, it is the problem of white liberals in Eugene. People of color and LGBTQ people are the victims of this and they’re also the ones who have to stand up against it.”

Doxing the Right

Doxing is an online tactic utilized by angry people all over the internet to harm those they oppose. When a person is doxed, their real name is revealed to a group of people that disagrees with them and potentially wishes them harm,