

# Jury convicts Redmond man of manslaughter

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Ian Mackenzie Cranston was found not guilty of second-degree murder but guilty of first-degree manslaughter in the shooting death of Barry Washington Jr., an unarmed Black man, in downtown Bend last year.

A 12-person jury in Deschutes County Circuit Court returned the verdict Wednesday, bringing an end to one of the most highly anticipated trials the county has seen in years.

The jury also found Cranston guilty on lesser charges of second-degree manslaughter, assault and the unlawful use of a weapon.

The jury of six men and six women, all of whom are white, began deliberations Tuesday afternoon and returned with its decision nearly 24 hours later.

Cranston, 28, of Redmond, said he acted in self-defense when he shot and killed Washington, 22, during a fight between them outside the Capitol Bar on Sept. 19, 2021.

The fight erupted after Washington complimented Cranston's fiancée, Allison Butler, outside the bar. Washington punched Cranston twice and his friend, Tyler Smith, once after a shouting match. Cranston then pulled out his handgun, stood for 30 seconds, took aim and fired.

The shooting sparked protests across Bend and made headlines across the country due to racial tensions surrounding the case.

When the verdict was read by Judge Beth Bagley on Wednesday, Cranston looked straight ahead, showing little emotion. Behind him, his loved ones stared straight ahead before some cried into their hands.

Washington's mother, La'Wanda Roberson, was shaking nervously as she sat in the courtroom, steeling herself for the ver-



Ilan Cranston, center, and his attorneys listen Wednesday as the verdict is read during his trial in the fatal shooting of Barry Washington Jr. in the Deschutes County Courthouse in Bend.



La'Wanda Roberson, Barry Washington Jr.'s mother, reacts Wednesday to the jury's verdict finding Ian Cranston guilty of first-degree manslaughter in Washington's death.

dict. Prayers were uttered among family members with her. When Bagley read the jury's decision, Roberson and her loved ones began to weep.

"Hopefully this is something that will bring a little bit of closure," Roberson told a crowd outside the courthouse. "I know that for the jurors, this was a hard case. I'm happy that they didn't side with the self-defense and they seen the truth. I'm just

happy to have some sort of justice for my son."

Roberson said that experiencing the trial was difficult and that she was surprised by the jury's decision.

"I just didn't have any trust in the justice system in Oregon, I'm going to be honest," she said. "But I did believe in God and I did trust him."

Kevin Sali and John Robb, Cranston's defense team, said

alone and that he had to shoot to stop his punches. Cranston said he rendered aid to Washington after the shot because he didn't want him to die.

But in a searing closing argument on Tuesday, prosecutors J. Michael Swart and Brooks McClain sought to dismantle that claim piece by piece.

They argued Cranston used disproportionate force and was being reckless for mixing guns and alcohol. Swart showed that Cranston held onto a cigarette during the entire fight outside the bar and took a drag after shooting Washington. Swart argued it was evidence that Cranston did not fear for his safety during the fight and was not legally justified in using deadly force to defend himself.

Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel told The Bulletin Wednesday that the closing arguments were pivotal to the verdict.

"His closing argument showed why I hired him," Hummel said of Swart, who declined to comment after the verdict. "I don't know if we could have won this case without Mike Swart."

Hummel said he was happy for Washington's family but had sympathy for Cranston's loved ones. In addition, he spoke to the broader implications of the verdict for the city of Bend.

"Many people said they didn't think Bend could hold Cranston accountable because Barry was Black and Ian is white," Hummel said. "Our town said: We're going to lead with the facts and the law and they delivered a verdict for justice and I couldn't feel better about it."

Cranston will be sentenced on Nov. 28. The minimum sentence for first-degree manslaughter in Oregon is 10 years.

Tillman said she was grateful that some semblance of justice was delivered for her family.

"We walked out of there, getting those 10 years and nothing less," Tillman said.

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Barry Washington Jr.'s mother, La'Wanda Roberson, center, receives hugs from family members Wednesday after a jury found Ian Cranston guilty of first-degree manslaughter in Washington's death during the trial at the Deschutes County Courthouse in Bend.

they planned to appeal the verdict but declined to comment further.

The mood outside the courthouse was somber but celebratory and led to a chant-filled march to the Capitol Bar after the verdict.

Deja Tillman, Washington's 23-year-old cousin, sat through practically the entire trial and seldom left the courtroom. On Wednesday, she took a moment at the site of her loved one's death near the Capitol Bar to share her

memories of Washington. Losing her cousin was one of the worst experiences of her life, she said.

"I've been with him since diapers," Tillman said, her voice cracking as she cried. "I've been with him in Easter baskets. I've been with him since the first day of us being able to come home together."

The trial was full of dramatic moments, including Cranston's decision to take the stand. He testified that he feared Washington wouldn't leave he and his friends

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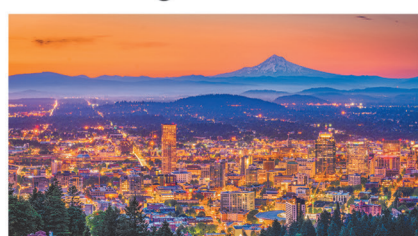
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