

Vanguards for Equality

continued ▲ from Front

present at any community meeting concerning such an incident to offer its support.

"If you are of color, the police state is a very real thing," said. "We're pretty passionate about that."

Freedom Socialists have also

Leninist ideology, which was also the orientation of the Soviet Union. Sardo admits that this has caused friction with other groups in the past, but remains unapologetic.

"We think that this system is incredibly decrepit," said Sardo, who quipped that true equality is "too radical for capitalism."

However, Helen Sherman, a

"If you improve the lives of people on the bottom you improve everyone's' lives."

-- Jordana Sardo, Portland branch organizer for the Freedom Socialist Party

been active in holding talks on the history of the civil rights struggle, and takes care to highlight the contributions of overlooked figures, like the work of African-American women.

The party has also been on the frontline of labor battles, supporting picketing and striking workers.

But make no mistake about the group's radical Marxist-

longtime community activist, said that the group is very receptive to open dialogue, and is very impressed with their educational events.

As part of America's hard-left for over a century, Freedom Socialists have quixotically fought to radically reshape modern industrial society. Although achievement of its overarching goals seems out of grasp, its mem-



Jordana Sardo, Portland branch organizer of the Freedom Socialist Party, keeps track of the party's bookstore inside the Bread & Roses Center at 819 N. Killingsworth. The store boasts a large collection of audaciously radical and unapologetic books.

PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

bers have been on the front lines of many struggles for equality in the past.

Sardo points out that the American Communist Party, although widely reviled, was one

of the first organizations to start organizing African-Americans in labor unions, and that other Socialist organizations called for integration early on.

She added that when Martin

Luther King Jr. shifted his attention from civil rights to broader issues, like the Vietnam War and workers' struggles, Socialists were there with him.

"We think MLK as a man was

certainly headed in a direction of being multi-issue. And that's what he demonstrates to us, being multi-issue," said Sardo of his legacy. "He wasn't just talking about blacks."

Deadly Rampage Stuns City

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mates, who described him and as "gloomy" and "quiet," said Whattam. He added that none of them saw this coming.

Rob Ingram, who heads the city's Office of Youth Violence Prevention, described the incident as "tragic." However, he said that the shooting falls outside of his office's purview because it doesn't appear gang related and there is no clear motive behind it.

According to Portland Police Bureau statistics 12 murders have taken place in downtown between 2003 and 2005.

The Portland Police do not know where Ayala got the weapon. Portland Police is currently waiting for the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms to hand to finish tracing the gun.

Whattam said that the police do not yet know Ayala's mental health or criminal history.

Brian Renauer, the chair of Portland State University's department of criminology and criminal justice, said that based on the present information, the incident is "unexplainable and is outside of the typical pattern of violence." He said that there was no apparent motive in the shooting.

Renauer added that this incident does not neatly parallel school shootings, like the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre, because from what he's heard this individual didn't seem to be the victim of bullying or was socially isolated.

However, he stressed that there is still relatively little information on the case making it difficult to draw any conclusions.

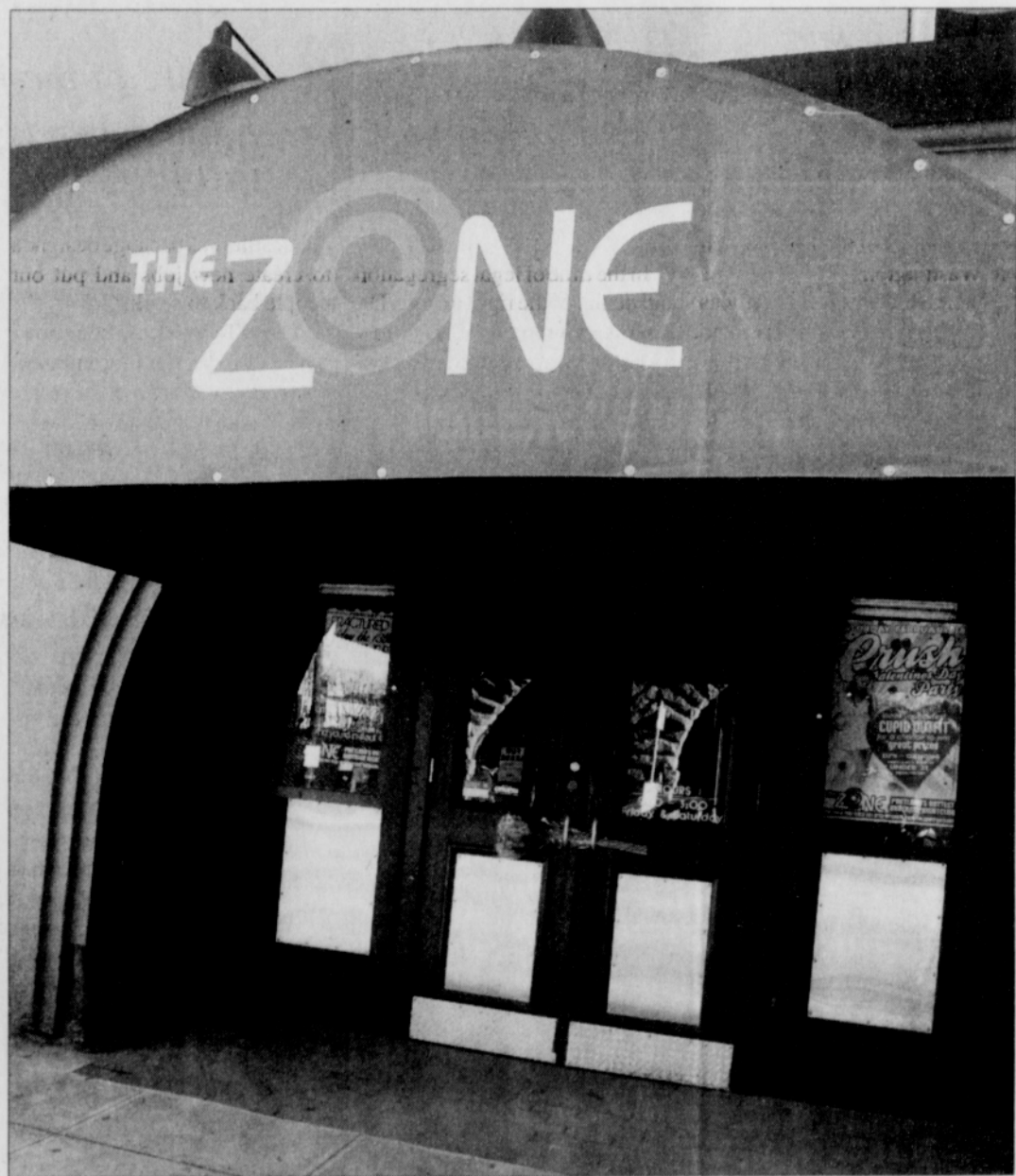


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Flowers are inserted into the doors of The Zone Monday, the under-21 nightclub on Southwest Second Avenue where a crowd of young people, waiting outside, were gunned down Saturday night in a shooting that seems to have no motive. Two teenagers died and another is in critical condition.

"It's a mystery to be solved," he said.

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