

Hate

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between the Portland of 1988 and the Portland of 2018. In particular, comparing hate-crime data or analyzing trends over time is difficult, in part because of the nature of the data and in part because it hasn't actually been tracked in a consistent way over time.

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“There's always kind of an asterisk next to hate crime data

the hate crime data of the moment. There's no easy answer to say, 'Are they up, are they down?' There's always kind of an asterisk next to hate crime data," said Randy Blazak, a former sociology professor who in 1997 co-founded the Northwest Coalition Against Hate Crimes.

In 1988 Oregon passed laws defining a bias crime as damaging property, threatening another person or subjecting them to offensive physical contact "because of the person's perception of the other's race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability or national origin." The state also passed a law requiring law enforcement to track bias-crime incidents that appears to slightly pre-date a federal law mandating reporting.

"Investigating intent is based on the suspect's motivation," said Portland Police Bureau Detective Jeff Sharp, who serves on the bureau's bias crime team.

As OPB reported last week, because the law is focused on the suspect's intent, it creates a high burden of proof for reporting and prosecution. But different jurisdictions also report data in different ways. For example, Eugene takes reports on hate incidents that may not rise to the level of a crime.

Portland did too, once.

News stories from the immediate aftermath of Seraw's death cite hate-crime statistics using reports from two information-gathering bodies apart from the police, one local and one regional. One — the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment — is definitively defunct. The other — the Metropolitan Human Relations Coalition — appears to have been renamed, killed, shuffled from one bureaucratic home to

another and revived. In its current incarnation — the Office of Equity and Human Rights — it does not take hate-crime reports from the general public.

Also notable: in the 1980s the Portland Police Bureau's Gang Enforcement Team had an officer dedicated to tracking White supremacist gangs. Sharp confirmed the bureau no longer has such an officer, instead folding such investigations under the umbrella of intelligence gathering. That is in part because the face of hate has changed.

"Some of these White supremacy groups are not obvious," Sharp said.

The daily skinhead uniform — leather jacket, lace-up boots, shaved head, swastika badges and tattoos — is gone, White-power zines have been replaced with online forums and in-person meetings and recruitments went online. But hate still manifests in violent street confrontations.

In their daily lives, radical racists brand themselves more carefully, said Jim McElroy of the Southern Poverty Law Center.

"Tom Metzger, then and now, has been urging lone wolves. He told the skinheads, 'Grow your hair out, get a job at a bank, join the military.' And they did," McElroy said.

So tracking hate incidents and hate groups — and stopping them — needs to focus on what happens online, McElroy said. The SPLC has been in communication with social-media companies about that, but it's been a struggle, he said, noting Facebook is able to scrub 99 percent of pornography from the site, but not hate speech.

Racial-justice advocates say the city's response has been anemic.

"When threats were made against Good in the Hood last year, it was stunning to me how little the city reacted — because people had the luxury of not reacting," said Nkenge Harmon Johnson, CEO of the Urban League of Portland. "There were no police around to say, 'Hey, let's help you get a plan together,' or to say, 'You know what? We are going to come. The police unit's going to march in this parade because we're not going to stand for it. That just didn't happen. And that's not because folks don't know what to do. It's because they have the luxury of not doing it."



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

I-940 Passes

Sonia Joseph, whose son, Giovann Joseph McDade, was killed by Kent police in June 2017, hugs Athena Taylor and another supporter after they learned that I-940, the initiative that would require more de-escalation and mental health training for police officers and change the law regarding police use of deadly force had passed overwhelmingly on election night. Hundreds of I-940 supporters gathered at the Southside Commons on Nov. 6 to wait for the returns and celebrate the victory.

Seraw

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"The irony is, he was fleeing violence, and violence got him killed," said Engedow Berhanu, Seraw's uncle, who sponsored his relocation to the United States. "I can't explain the situation to my family. How could that happen in America, a so-called civilized and peaceful place?"

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Seraw's story made headlines all over the country. Local and national media were just then beginning to cover the racist skinhead movement that had started in England in the 1970s, crossed the Atlantic and bubbled up in punk scenes across the U.S. in cities, including Portland.

At the same time, a larger White supremacist movement was spreading across the country, and it was particularly pernicious in the Northwest. A gang

enforcement officer tracking skinhead gangs for the Portland Police Bureau told *The Oregonian* in February 1989 that such gangs were probably more aggressive in the Northwest, because there were fewer racial minorities in the region to begin with.

Yet for the amount of attention it received at the time — and has received in recent, national media stories like last year's CBS documentary on race relations in Portland, Seraw's story seems to have been buried.

"It almost feels intentional, to wipe out the record," said Ewnetu Tsegaw, a policy specialist for the Urban League of Portland.

For several months Tsegaw has been working to organize a conference — which will take place next week on the 30th anniversary of Seraw's death — to commemorate Seraw and to talk about ways to fight hate in an era when far-right racists are less likely to talk about "White traitors" in the federal government than to express enthusiasm for Donald Trump's ascent to the presidency.

And for the first time his life

and death will be commemorated with a physical marker at the intersection where he died. On Nov. 14 the Urban League of Portland will unveil street sign caps, written in English and Amharic, and a physical marker at Southeast 31st and Pine — the intersection nearest the apartment Seraw last lived in, and the intersection where he was attacked.

Part of a national movement

"Coming from Ethiopia, you never would think about somebody being racist. I personally never thought about such harm coming to us," said Abbinet Haile, who came to Portland from Ethiopia in 1983 to attend school and because her family was affected by the civil war. As part of a small community of Ethiopians in Portland, she knew Seraw personally, and described him as an "incredibly gentle soul, a really quiet person."

After Seraw's death, she said, Ethiopians in Portland were afraid to go out at night and made sure to travel in groups.

Read more at TheSkanner.com

Election

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Other local results of note include:

- Oregon voters approved Measure 102, allowing local bonds to finance affordable housing, 56 to 44 percent;
- Measure 103, which would have amended the state constitution to prohibit taxes on certain items, was defeated, with 57 percent voting against the measure and 43 percent voting for it;
- Voters also killed Measure 104, which would have amended the constitution to require a three-fifths majority to approve bills raising any revenue (not just taxes), by a margin of 65 to 35 percent;
- Oregonians also decisively

defeated Measure 105, which would have repealed the state's decades-old sanctuary law, 63 to 37 percent;

- They also defeated Measure 106, which would have prevented the use of state funds for abortion services, 64 to 36 percent;
- Measure 26-201, approving a tax on certain large retailers to fund clean energy and job training, passed (65 percent voted yes; 35 percent no);
- Measure 26-200, limiting candidate contributions (FOR CITY RACES?) and requiring campaigns to disclose funders, passed in a landslide (88 percent yes; 12 percent no);
- Christine Lewis was elected

as Metro Council Director, position 2 (55 percent voted for Lewis; 45 percent voted for opponent Joe Buck);

- Jennifer McGuirk was elected as Multnomah County's auditor (57 percent voted for McGuirk; 42 percent voted for opponent Scott Learn);
- Earl Blumenauer was re-elected as U.S. Representative in District 3 with 73 percent of the vote (Republican Tom Harrison got 20 percent and third-party candidates shared the other 7 percent).

Full election results, including breakdowns by precinct, are available through Multnomah County Elections Division's website at <https://multco.us>.