



Hate Groups in the Library

MAINTAINING A SAFE SPACE WHILE BEING INCLUSIVE

What is a Hate Group?



SPLC
Southern Poverty
Law Center

The Southern Poverty Law Center defines a hate group as:

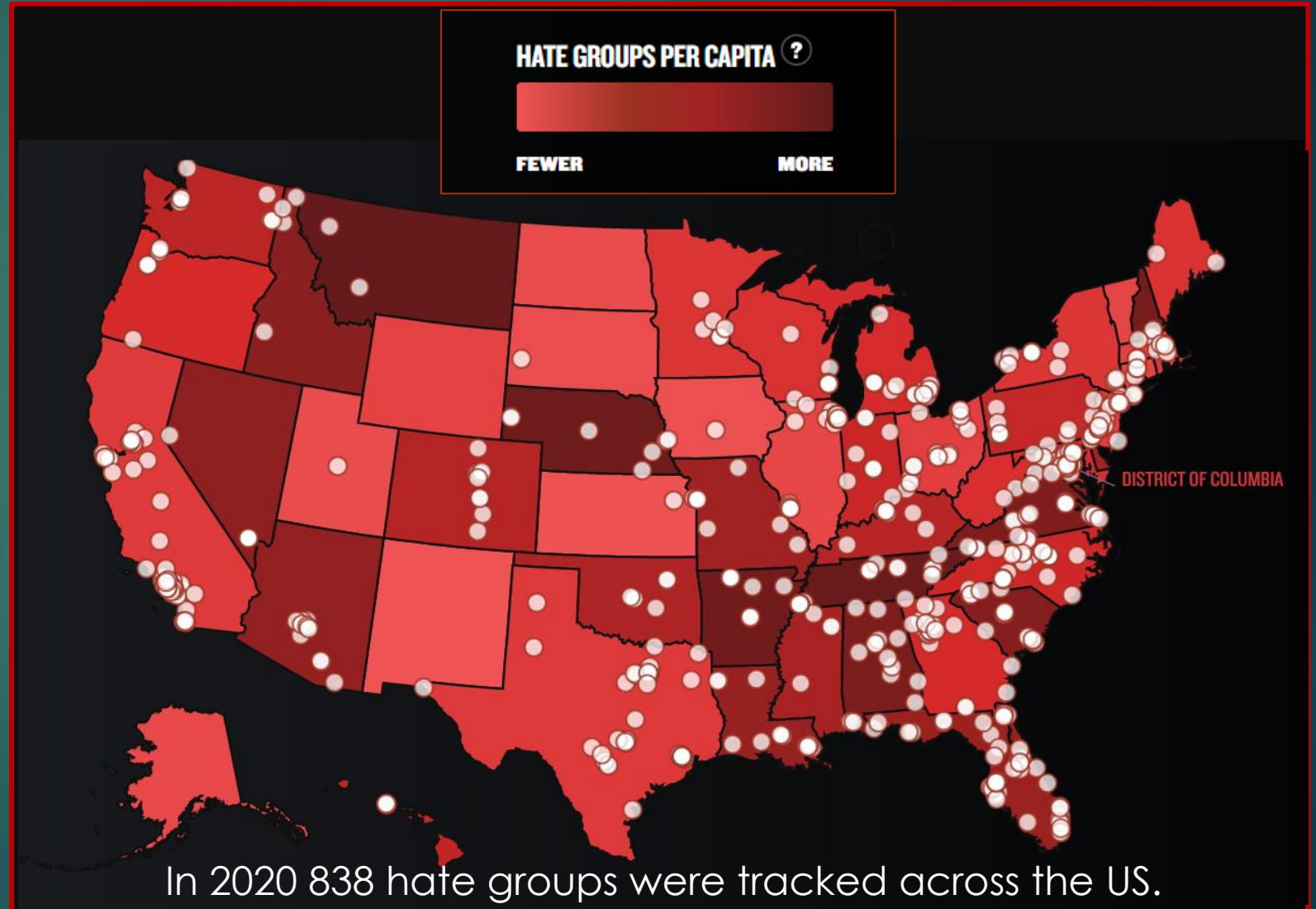
“an organization that – based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities – has beliefs or practices that attack an entire class of people, typically for immutable characteristics.”

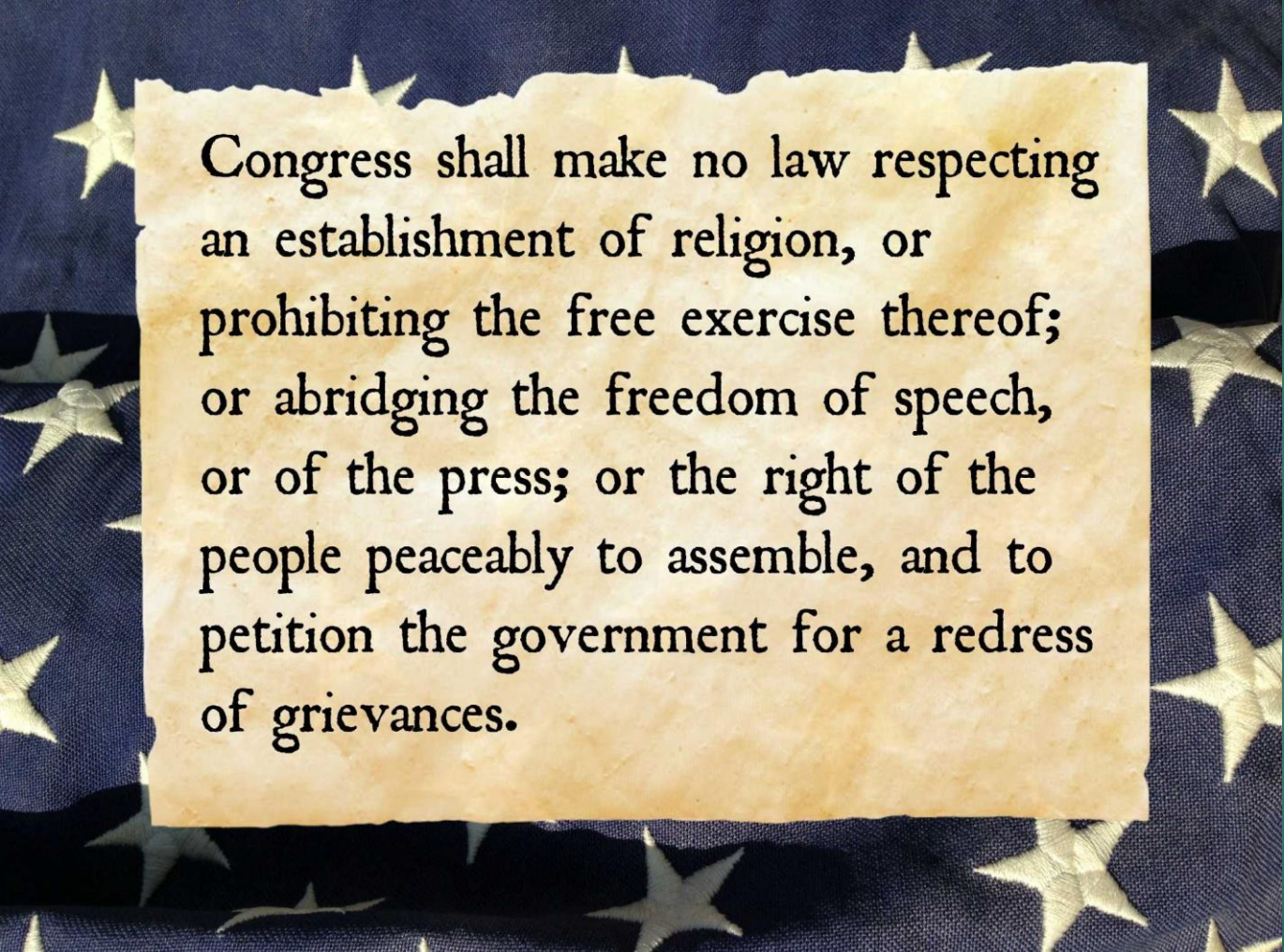


- ❖ They vilify others by race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity
- ❖ Not individuals, only organizations
- ❖ Violence is not a requirement for being listed as a hate group
- ❖ Black Lives Matter is not a Hate Group
 - ❑ the movement stands for “the simple proposition that ‘black lives also matter.’ ”
- ❖ The far-left street movement "antifa" (short for anti-fascist) is not a Hate Group, although groups can be violent; antifa groups do not promote hatred based on immutable traits

The Southern Poverty Law Center Hate Map

- ▶ In 2000 Oregon had **5 Hate Groups**
- ▶ In 2016 that jumped to **11 groups**
- ▶ Over the next 4 years: **18** in 2017, **15** in 2018 & 2019, and **11** in 2020





Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

- ▶ Hate speech is protected under the First Amendment; this is because we do not have specific verbiage against hate speech.
 - ❖ **Canada**: citizens are not allowed to incite or promote hatred or advocate genocide against specified groups
 - ❖ **Sweden**: have criminalized hate speech directed at many identified groups and does *not* contain a provision exempting religious hate speech
 - ❖ **Russia, Austria, & Germany** have very strict hate speech laws
 - ❖ **Denmark** prohibits hate speech, and defines it as "publicly making statements by which a group is threatened, insulted, or degraded"
 - ❖ **France & Germany** have introduced anti-hate speech laws specific to social media

ALA Bill of Rights

V. A person's right to use a library should not be **denied or abridged** because of origin, age, background, or **views**.

III. Libraries should **challenge censorship** in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

The Library is Racist?

- ▶ Public libraries were often ground zero for the Civil Rights Movement
- ▶ "locally unwanted land-uses" --highways, landfills, incinerators, bus depots, etc that cause pollution and harm health
- ▶ Libraries started by Black communities were shut down and integrated into local system, replacing staff, and ensuring control

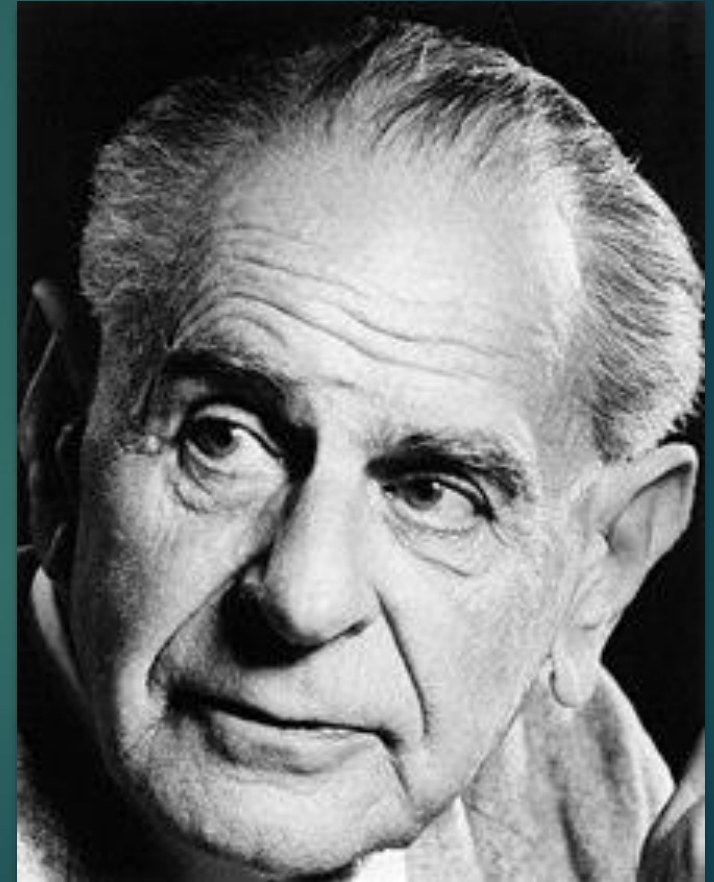


The Paradox of Tolerance

-Karl Popper

“Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them.—In this formulation, I do not imply, for instance, that we should always suppress the utterance of intolerant philosophies; as long as we can counter them by rational argument and keep them in check by public opinion, suppression would certainly be unwise. But **we should claim the right to suppress them if necessary even by force; for it may easily turn out that they are not prepared to meet us on the level of rational argument, but begin by denouncing all argument; they may forbid their followers to listen to rational argument, because it is deceptive, and teach them to answer arguments by the use of their fists or pistols. **We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant.**”**

(The Open Society and its Enemies, 1945)



TERFs in the Library & the WoLF Talk event

- ▶ Women's Liberation Front
—"TERF" Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist
- ▶ **Toronto Library**— Meghan Murphy
 - ▶ Murphy was not charged with or convicted of hate speech in Canada
- ▶ **Seattle Public Library**— "Fighting the New Misogyny: A Feminist Critique of Gender Identity"
 - ▶ "a critical analysis of gender identity" that will "make powerful arguments for sex-based women's rights"
 - ▶ WoLF believes that "men are male, and women are female...a man who says he is a woman is still a man" -Kara Dansk
- ▶ "Elayne Wylie, "There's also room to be brave and to take risks," she said. "And it doesn't appear that it was the city's time for that."



Drag Queen Story Time Seattle Public & King County Libraries

- ▶ What is it?
 - ▶ Drag queens dress in sparkly costumes read to kids and their parents
- ▶ Harassment at both events from MassResistance Washington
- ▶ “Activist Mommy” Elizabeth Johnston instructed her 640,000 Facebook followers to harass branch staff via phone
- ▶ Proud Boys attended Issaquah meeting for public comment
- ▶ They video and photos of those who commented in support, and photos of each sign-up sheet at public commentary meeting in Issaquah



Memorial at the Library

- ▶ A memorial for Barbara Kulaszka, a lawyer of Holocaust deniers and white supremacists, at the Toronto Library, July 2017
- ▶ Kulaszka represented many Holocaust-deniers, including Ernst Zundel and Marc Lemire, leader of the Heritage Front — a white supremacist group
- ▶ "We preserve our democratic society by making it available to people with a wide range of ideas and viewpoints including those which some consider unacceptable," -Vickery Bowles head librarian
- ▶ Kulaszka was largely responsible for no law against false news and no human-rights ban on internet hate speech in Canada, and no Nazi being convicted in Canada of war crimes.
- ▶ 5 months later the Toronto Public Library board voted in favour of changing its rental policy



Vocational Awe

"the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians have about themselves and the profession that result in beliefs that libraries as institutions are inherently good and sacred, and therefore beyond critique."

-Fobazi Ettarh

- ▶ We are an extension of the state
- ▶ "In the face of grand missions of literacy and freedom, advocating for your full lunch break feels petty."
- ▶ "study participants said they are forced to regulate their emotions in their work and that they often feel an incongruity between the emotions they have to show and what they really feel."
- ▶ when marginalized librarians speak out (those most effected by Hate Groups) they are discounted or erased

White Supremecy is in our Structure

-Kenneth Jones & Tema Okun

- ▶ Perfectionism
- ▶ Sense of Urgency
- ▶ Defensiveness
- ▶ Quantity Over Quality
- ▶ Worship of the Written Word
- ▶ Paternalism
- ▶ Either/Or Thinking
- ▶ Power Hoarding
- ▶ Fear of Open Conflict
- ▶ Individualism
- ▶ Progress is Bigger, More
- ▶ Objectivity
- ▶ Right to Comfort

So, what do we do???

CHANGE!

But how???

You decide!

Try this...

- ▶ Fight to eliminate the White Supremistic structure and the negative effect Vocational Awe has on your work environment and foster a positive work culture
- ▶ Change your internal policies
 - ▶ How do you protect your staff from violence? Physical and mental!
 - ▶ Revise meeting room policies--define what constitutes "safe" or "respectful"
- ▶ Give library workers more agency in staffing models, how to enforce policies, etc.
- ▶ If you have police in your library, consider the impact positive and negative
 - ▶ Hire a social worker to work with vulnerable populations
 - ▶ Teach and employ other methods to avoid calling police



Thank you! :)

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