We are the 99%

PROTESTERS TAKE TO THE STREETS IN PORTLAND’S OWN OCCUPY MOVEMENT STORY ON PAGE 6.

Also inside:

SEE WHAT KIND OF BUSINESSES SUCCEED IN THIS ECONOMY. PAGE 10

SHIA MUSLIMS PROTEST UNDER A SUNNI GOVERNMENT. PAGE 14

SHOULD STUDENTS BE ALLOWED TO CARRY WEAPONS ON CAMPUS? PAGE 16
The Portland Spectator serves the student body by providing fact-based and well-researched conservative arguments alongside in-depth news coverage of issues important to the student community. We encourage and co-facilitate a diverse marketplace of ideas filled with thought-provoking discussions.

The Portland Spectator is published by the Student Publications Board of Portland State University. It is funded through incidental student fees, advertisement revenue, and private donations. All essays and commentaries herein represent the opinions of the writer and not necessarily the opinions of the staff. We reserve the right to edit material we find obscene, libelous, inappropriate or lengthy. We are not obliged to print anything to which we do not consent. Unsolicited material will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Submission constitutes testimony as to the accuracy. Copyright ©2011 The Portland Spectator. All rights reserved.

In its October issue, the Portland Spectator made a couple of errors. First, in the article, “Oregon GOP removes anti-gay language from party platform”:

[...] “That was really powerful for me,” said Raymond. “Anyone in a legally binding relationship deserves the rights afforded them by law, including partnership and adoption,” said Raymond. “To be against people who were born a certain way is kind of like being against women or black people.”

These quotes, attributed to Jeff Raymond, were really said by Xander Almeida. This is how the passage should have read:

[...] “That was really powerful for me,” said Almeida. “Anyone in a legally binding relationship deserves the rights afforded them by law, including partnership and adoption,” he said. “To be against people who were born a certain way is kind of like being against women or black people.”

Please note that this error was made during the editing process and was in no way the fault of the article’s author, Mike Munkvold. Our second mistake was not attributing the photos of the articles “You should major in engineering” and “PSU Spotlight: Sustainability’s still kickin’” to Dan Steiner. These blunders were made due to the October issue being on such a quick schedule, given that we only had the first week of the term to produce the magazine. In the future, more care will be given to these kinds of things, and we will never again sacrifice editing time for the sake of a quicker release. We apologize for any problems or confusion this may have caused. As always, thank you for reading the Spectator.

Sasha Chedygov
Editor-in-Chief
Staff Retention

ASPSU has always suffered from high turnover. It is an inevitable casualty of an office staffed entirely by overtaxed, underpaid and sleep deprived college students. Thus far, the senate has lost a handful of members, several of which dropped out before the first meeting and have yet to be replaced. The executive branch, which last year was constantly hounded by rapid turnover, has yet to lose a single member—a noticeable improvement in the 2011-2012 school year. The judicial board is still missing a member, but a listing has been put up on the ASPSU website, and office staff claim that the posting has already generated interest.

Student Outreach

As an area that has always been an Achilles’ heel for ASPSU, the organization is taking incredible steps to focus more attention and energy into student outreach than ever before. Daily tabling in the park blocks, improved online presence, as well as “class-raps” and “dorm-storming” have all amounted to a substantial increase in campus awareness. ASPSU’s Facebook and Twitter pages have also been revamped to keep students up-to-date. During the “Get out the Vote” campaign, ASPSU registered 478 students; though shy of their 750 student goal, they made up for it with their Oregon Student Association issue-choosing survey. The survey, which asked students which issues they would like the OSA to focus on in the coming months, was filled out by 3,320 students far greater than ASPSU’s goal of 3000 returned surveys (or 10% of the PSU population).

Campaign Promises

While running for office, Rahmlow promised increased voice in student issues, increased communication with administration and increased outreach on campus. In order to foster a greater relationship with the administrative bigwigs, Rahmlow has been regularly meeting with President Wiewel and making sure that the needs of student groups are being met. His plan to increase outreach has significantly reshaped the image of ASPSU. Most importantly, however, this year’s cabinet collected more OSA issue surveys than any other school in Oregon. In addition, during the OSA brainstorming meeting in Newport, Portland State proved to be the only school that pre-poll their student body, making sure that before issues were even voted on, PSU had at least a general idea of the desires of its student body to present to the OSA.
Students have a busy schedule. They don't get too much time for themselves, and when they do, it's usually spent doing laundry or studying for that midterm rather than going to see a favorite band.

That's where Live At Lunch, a concert series hosted by Portland State Professional Sound, comes in. It's an hour of live music, taking place every Tuesday and Thursday from noon until 1:00. Here's the kicker: it takes place right here on campus, in your own backyard.

"It exemplifies Portland," said Javan Villegas, sound coordinator at PSPS. "The city of Portland is known for music, and we get to bring that right into the heart of PSU. It helps build an on-campus community... it's a place where people can just chill out, and we get some really good bands in."

Though PSPS has had some student and local bands play, larger acts are not uncommon. PSPS prides itself in its ability to not only book incredible bands, but to support them with a high-quality sound system as well. From nationally-known acts like Sleeper Agent and Morning Teleportation to local favorites like All the Apparatus, the Live At Lunch concert series has seen them all hit the campus stage in the park blocks.

"We hope to get more people out, and we hope to keep getting bigger and bigger bands each year," explained Villegas. "I think most people don't know how awesome all of these bands are. PSPS has been growing, and we've been honing our skills. We're getting to the point where we can really put on major productions."

"You might come and find your favorite band," said Justin Cate, programming coordinator at PSPS, who is in charge of booking the bands. "Portland has a definite sound, and I think a lot of that is reflected in this concert series. You can definitely catch a great band."

He said that he sympathizes with the student body—they're busy, their time constantly being consumed by academic goals or other requirements. The reason this concert series is so great is the fact that it fits into that lunch-block perfectly, when all you have to do is focus on eating your food and enjoying the music.

One of the acts set to hit the stage in the near future is And And And—and a band voted the best in Portland this year. Others include Brain Storm, Dirty Mittens, and Smiley, Get Dressed.

"The Live At Lunch series is all about bringing the music to you," said Villegas. "Most of the time, you have to go out and see music. But PSPS brings the music to you."

Whether you're the avid music goer-type, the casual fan, or just someone eating your sandwich in the park blocks at noon, there will always be music for you every Tuesday and Thursday.

And who knows? Maybe you'll find your next favorite band—and you won't have to trek across the city to do it.
Occupy Portland takes to the streets

"THE 99% ARE MAD AS HELL, AND THEY’RE NOT GOING TO TAKE IT ANYMORE.

Michael Munkvold
Photos by Melodee Dudley
On October 6, the Occupy Wall Street protest movement came to downtown Portland, marching through the area surrounding Tom McCall Waterfront Park in a show of solidarity with Occupy movements worldwide protesting economic inequality. In taking up the Occupy banner, from the anti-Wall Street protests to the pro-choice demonstrations, the movement’s signature battle cry is “We are the 99%,” in voice their frustration over corporate greed and financial insecurity during the worst economy since the Great Depression.

“America is here — bus drivers, teachers, retired people,” said protester Shannon Estabrook, a student at Portland Community College. “I teach on the picket line to my grand daughter to say ‘I am here, and so is Portland.’”

One of the many offshoots of the “Occupy Wall Street” movement that began in New York City and San Francisco, Occupy Portland’s rally on Saturday defined a protest against economic inequality in America, with protesters calling themselves “the 9%” in contrast to the front of everyman and everywoman struggling hard to make a living while the “hyper-rich” 1% — rich people in general that are the problem, but not rich people in general that are the problem, are taxed less and are rewarded with federal bailouts for making reckless, even illegal, business decisions.

“If I set up a scam to steal millions, I get put in jail; when corporate America does it, they get a pat on the back and a ‘try again,’” said Kyle Carboni, a student at Willamette University.

Along with friends Ryne Smith and Sean Hough, Carboni showed up at the protest wearing long cloaks and Guy Fawkes masks in homage to the main character of V for Vendetta, a film also arising from the fold of a totalitarian government. Protesters said that such a (nonviolent) revolutionary spirit is needed to “take back” the United States from “corporate pirates.”

“Since we don’t have the monetary means to combat corporate greed, the next best thing is to show where our anger lies,” said Estabrook. Many protesters said they were worried about their own financial future in a state with 10 percent unemployment; they said they resented the implication, put forth by conserva-
As you have likely realized over the course of the last few dismal eco-

nomic years, you are hopelessly, painfully unemployable. The last shred

of hope that you’ll find a good job has suddenly faded away, whether because

of your terrible looks or lazy demeanor. But where the universe has cast

you into depression, the Portland Spectator is here to lift you back up again.

For this reason, we’ll be bringing you a series of recession-era success sto-

ries, stories of those who have overcome and even thrived as our nation’s
economy slides down the poop shoot.

So sit back, gather your useless resumes around you as a mouse might

collect bedding, and bask in the vicarious light of other people’s success.

Recession Success Story Number 1: Goodwill and the proud work-
ers of Portland’s second-hand clothing industry.

I peeled down into the large plastic crate, with its sordid array of

rejected clothing inside. A warm, homey scent rose up to my nostrils, like

grandpa’s closet. The plastic gloves that I’d been given hung limply out

of my pocket.

“No, do we really need these?” I asked.

“Who knows?” replied Maddie Gray. She moved quickly towards a fla-

roral print dress, gingerly picking it up and inspecting its label. “You hear

stories about finding pretty nasty stuff, but it’s never happened to me.”

I pulled the gloves on, and eased my hands into the piles. Gray was my liaison to the Goodwill center in Milwaukie. Its unoffi-
cial name, “The Bins,” comes from the peculiar method by which clothes

are presented to the customer at this location, i.e. stuffed randomly into

large blue bins.

We had come here in search of vintage clothing for Gray’s online busi-

ness. She’s been coming here for about a year. The allure of rock bottom

prices and the chance to find designer items draws her and many others

here every couple of weeks.

“The prices here are nuts,” she said, tossing a dress into the extra

large shopping cart and moving on to the next bin. “If you buy over 10

pounds of stuff, it gets even cheaper, something like $1.25 a pound.”

I looked around and wondered how you could possibly find 10 pounds

of wearable, let alone marketable, goods in a place like this.

“I mean, isn’t all of this basically junk?” I asked.

She looked at me and narrowed her eyebrows. “This ‘junk’ paid for my

textbooks this year.”

She isn’t the only one. According to Goodwill’s local public relations

manager, three out of four customers at The Bins are in the resale busi-

ness. She’s been coming here for about a year. The allure of rock bottom

prices and the chance to find designer items draws her and many others

here every couple of weeks.

“Those prices here are nuts,” she said, tossing a dress into the extra

large shopping cart and moving on to the next bin. “If you buy over 10

pounds of stuff, it gets even cheaper, something like $1.25 a pound.”

We had come here in search of vintage clothing for Gray’s online busi-

ness. She’s been coming here for about a year. The allure of rock bottom

prices and the chance to find designer items draws her and many others

here every couple of weeks.

“The prices here are nuts,” she said, tossing a dress into the extra

large shopping cart and moving on to the next bin. “If you buy over 10

pounds of stuff, it gets even cheaper, something like $1.25 a pound.”

I looked around and wondered how you could possibly find 10 pounds

of wearable, let alone marketable, goods in a place like this.

“I mean, isn’t all of this basically junk?” I asked.

She looked at me and narrowed her eyebrows. “This ‘junk’ paid for my

textbooks this year.”

She isn’t the only one. According to Goodwill’s local public relations

manager, three out of four customers at The Bins are in the resale busi-

ness. These are folks who, in better economic times, would probably work

a typical job, but have instead created a niche for themselves in the mul-
titude of second-hand shops found in Portland. They shop on behalf of

brick and mortar businesses, but those are just the beginning. Hundreds

of local entrepreneurs operate stores in an online community called

Etsy, which is dedicated to the trade of vintage and homemade goods. Still

more people make money at antique conventions, or on eBay and

Craigslist.

Etsy, which is dedicated to the trade of vintage and homemade goods. Still

more people make money at antique conventions, or on eBay and

Craigslist.

A heavy door slid open somewhere behind me. An employee carted in

a fresh bin, filled with yet unperused items. A dozen or so people lined up

where they anticipated the bin to be placed. Even in this modest environ-

ment, order was established.

I walked up to ask a few questions. A weathered looking woman told

me she’s on the hunt for Levi’s and Pendleton jackets, guaranteed to resell

with a tenfold markup. The intercom blared out that the store is about to

close. Maddie Gray paid her bill—$6—and we headed home.

Thanks to their low prices, Goodwill has done quite well as of late.

Nationally, retail revenue has jumped by 15% since last year, with 88% of

each sale going towards free job training programs for the public. The Goodwill

network in Northwest Oregon and Southwest Washing-

ton reports $104 million in sales for Fiscal Year 2010. Donations, having

dropped earlier in the recession, are back up by 19% a year as more and more

people downsize their estates. Business is good at Goodwill.

As you’d expect, Goodwill doesn’t make this kind of money just by sell-
ing to hesitant hoarders. The Bins is just one appendage of the Goodwill

network. When a donation arrives at one of Goodwill’s ubiquitous drop off cen-
ters, it is transported to a sorting depot. Here, at the confluence of sofas,

old magazines and laptops, high end items are pulled out and directed

either to Goodwill’s online auction site or to its downtown storefronts,

which are lovingly called “boutiques”—that’s where old iPhones and your

grandma’s pearl necklace go. Here, prices routinely reach the triple dig-

its. Everything else is sent to normal Goodwill centers. As the months

drag on, items filter down into the bins where their price tags are torn

off, and bulk pricing is established in order to get this stuff out the door.

This radical devaluation supports Portland’s second hand boom. In

order for local entrepeneurs to add value to their purchases, they draw

upon local photographers, stylists, seamstresses, models and cleaners

(the key to getting that grandpa smell out of everything), who turn items

from The Bins into $30 fashion statements. Each shop acts as an incuba-
tor for entrepreneurship, and puts Portland’s creative class to work. Once

this economy picks up, these folks will be uniquely prepared for proper

jobs in the workforce—though after enjoying the flexible hours and rela-
tive ease of the resale business, not everyone is eager to leave.

One such worker is Christine, a mother of three, native Idahoan and

owner of one of Portland’s most prodigious Etsy shops, Coral Vintage. She

specializes in high-end dresses from the 80’s, 90’s and 60’s. Last year she

bought them in bulk from the estate of a recently deceased Hollywood

baron with a thing of women’s clothing. After cleaning them up and scru-
pulsiously recording their dimensions, she presented them to the vintage

hungry online populace last fall. Since then, her dresses have routinely

told for $100 each. This month marked her 200th sale.

Portlanders, while certainly not immune to the strains of a stagnant

economy, have weathered the recession in their own particular style.

We’re fortunate that the nation’s taste for vintage aesthetic neatly aligns

with the Portland creative class’ ability to produce. The influx of cash

keeps people eating, while the money earned by small business owners

and Goodwill alike generate further job training. Perhaps most impor-
tant, our great city’s indie cache grows with each passing day.

Next time you spy a worker from Portland’s second-hand industry,

make sure to shake his hand and thank him for the great service he’s

done for the city.
October: A month of Filipino-American empowerment

PORTLAND STATE’S FILIPINO-AMERICAN GROUP
KAIBIGAN CELEBRATED FILIPINO-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH BY BRINGING STUDENTS TOGETHER.

Max Bordman
Photos by Mark Tupaz of Kaibigan

With October in the rear view and your Halloween hangovers still in the front of your mind (literally speaking), it is easy for the usual suspects of studying, projects and midterms to claim responsibility for your lack of knowledge about the important cultural events and celebrations going on around campus this last month. Between your first big papers, exams and the annual excuse to get tipsy with attractive guys and girls in costume, it is understandably easy to find excuses for why you have been kept in the dark about the important cultural celebration that took place in October. If you are at all familiar with Filipino culture you will know exactly what this is referencing, but just in case you are not and you happen to have missed out, this October marked Filipino-American History Month across the U.S., and Portland State University’s Kaibigan was there every step of the way. They held celebratory events all month long, including their biggest event of the term: the annual Kaibigan Showkase.

The first recorded Filipino presence on American soil was in 1587, 189 years before the United States of America was declared as such by English settlers on the Atlantic coast. The first Filipinos were documented in and around the Philippines to Acapulco in New Spain (Mexico). Filipino culture has been heavily influenced by foreign powers since the 16th century, and with the U.S. currently embodying the largest Filipino population outside of the Philippines itself, it is easy to understand how vital it is to celebrate the history of a culture whose roots in America date back to before the establishment of the Union.

In recognition and celebration of Filipino-American heritage, PSU’s Kaibigan, a northwest Filipino-American student alliance group, kicked off October’s Filipino-American History Month with one of their biggest annual events, the Kaibigan Showkase, on the 12th. The word Kaibigan translates to “friend” in the Filipino native language Tagalog. For those unfamiliar with the club at PSU, Kaibigan was founded by a group of Filipino-American students at PSU in 2002 with the goal of uniting and empowering Filipino-American students. One of the group’s adopted slogans is “Kaibigan heard of me through NWFASA, a Filipino student organization all across the nation,” explained Espiritu. “I’m here because the vice president of Kaibigan asked me to perform. I do a lot of song writing and performing where I’m from, so I’m here playing some originals and covers. This event features singers, dancers, musicians, and basic entertainers; it’s a very diverse group.”

Kaibigan, like its fellow northwestern Filipino organization, strives in its goals to promote the empowerment of Filipino-American students. “Our goal is to empower and unite Filipino Americans,” said vice president Niki De Leon of PSU Kaibigan. “A lot of our effort is focused on the political, social, cultural and educational sides.”

The Kaibigan Showkase is one of three major events held by the group over the course of the year, in conjunction with the winter formal and the cultural night during spring term. PSU Kaibigan works hard to spread its ideology through the empowerment of fellow Filipino-American students, but also through the support of their allies.

Every Tuesday, Kaibigan holds a weekly meeting or workshop in which its members, Filipinos and non-Filipinos alike, meet and partake in team-building exercises and stimulating cultural discussions, and work to build lasting relationships between each other in a light-hearted, friendly atmosphere. In addition to the Showkase, Kaibigan held four different workshops this past October: the Kaibigan social; the People Power Revolt, a workshop highlighting the political turmoil of the Philippines in the 1980s; Kaibigan history, a history of PSU Kaibigan; and the Pinoy Scavenger Hunt, an active team-building hunt around downtown.

“There are some limitations that we have because of funding. We can’t always do what we want, but we always try to do the best we can,” said Kenneth Crebillo, this year’s PSU Kaibigan president. “Diversity [on campus] helps a lot. A lot of people that go [to Kaibigan] aren’t Filipino. I go to other groups, pretty much just learning from one another, finding a common ground.”

He explained that “[w]e try to organize things that bring people together. Every week are the workshops that meet on Tuesday. They really drive the momentum of the group.”

Crebillo stressed that the weekly workshops really brought the group together and helped the momentum of the movement by creating a very tight-knit network of close relationships between people who hope to spread the empowerment of Filipino-Americans. “PSU has a lot of different multicultural groups; we try to bring Filipino-ness [to PSU’s atmosphere], Filipino is still kind of invisible to America. We let people hear our story to try to unite and empower everyone.”

With a clear message of acceptance and a successful Showkase and Filipino-American History Month under its belt, Kaibigan is preparing for the rest of the year’s major events. On the horizon this November are at least four more different workshops put on every Tuesday by the group. All are welcome, and if you have any interest in learning about Filipino heritage, getting more exposure to a unique culture or just making new, long-lasting friends, contact Kaibigan by going to their office (DT02 in SMSU) or the Multicultural Center on any Tuesday this November.
Shia Muslims protest for equal rights

THE SHIA POPULATION OF BAHRAIN, A GOVERNMENT OPERATED BY SUNNI MUSLIMS, PROTESTS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

Fatima Jaber

Looks like it is that time of the year when different parts of the Middle East are finally standing up for their rights. The spotlight is now shining on a tiny island located in the Persian Gulf known as Bahrain.

The historical separation of Sunni and Shia sects in the Islamic religion is still causing discriminating acts which have caused even more chaos in the Middle East and a large amount of bloodshed.

This tiny island has a massive population of Shia Muslims, but is being controlled by an extremist Sunni government. The Bahraini government views the Shia sector as second class, excluding them from human rights and job opportunities. The successes of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions have inspired the Shia Bahrainis to put a stop to this treatment and segregation.

“I have been to Bahrain many times and there are Shia that are selling water bottles 50 cents each and trying to make a living off of that,” says Hajaw.

The Shia claim they feel powerless and feel the only way they can fight is by continued protest. “I respect people and I do not care about religion or sect, but if this is not handled correctly, then it will go on for many years,” said the anonymous student.

Unfortunately, these protests have caused Saudi Arabia to send Sunni troops to go into Bahrain and fight the protesters, leaving many protesters beaten, raped, kidnapped or even killed.

“Nobody is trying to cause problems, the Shia just want their equal rights,” says Hajaw.

Protesting has not only widened the divide between Sunni and Shia even more, but has also lead the fundamentalist Sunni to destroy Shia mosques, claiming that the land is owned by the government and it is their duty to go into Bahrain and fight the protest.

The results of protesting led to the government getting upset and responding with violence. Ongoing protests are still occurring; however, these protests are not attempting to overthrow the Bahraini government, but to put a stop to this treatment and job opportunities. The successes of protesting led to the government getting upset and responding with violence.

The Shia population of Bahrain, a government operated by Sunni Muslims, protests for equal rights and religious freedom.
"Most liberals recoil in sheer terror at the mere mention of firearms, but one strategically-placed student with a CWP and a concealed handgun could have quickly reduced the loss of innocent life on the Virginia Tech campus."

Guns on Campus: It makes more sense than you think

THE GUN BAN ON CAMPUS HAS BEEN REPEALED. BUT THE ONGOING DEBATE IS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST HAVING GUNS ON CAMPUS.

Jesse Hansen

On the beautiful Virginian spring morning of April 16, 2007, the clock struck 7:15 a.m. as it normally does; but that day was different. Instead of bleary-eyed co-eds heading to the dining hall, a disturbed young man by the name of Seung-Hui Cho walked into the West Ambler Johnson Dormitory with a semi-automatic handgun and attacked two students in their dorms, killing them. Two hours later, he entered Norris hall where he systematically executed 30 students and faculty members and left an additional 25 wounded.

The incident, which came to be known as the Virginia Tech Massacre, was the worst campus shooting in history and reopened a debate on the national level, one vehemently argued by both sides: gun control.

Specifically, in the greater context of weapons on the grounds of higher-learning institutions, there are two main arguments. Opponents claim that an armed student body is inevitably a dangerous thing. We cannot have every jock, geek, and scholar roaming the university with guns. Proponents of guns on campus argue that accidents do happen. However, premeditated, calculated and purposeful shootings happen on campuses all across the United States as well. And they are not committed by people holding concealed carry permits.

I am sure the students at Virginia Tech that day asked each other, in a state of shock, “How could this have happened here?” Seung-Hui Cho didn’t go down to his local sheriff’s office, get fingerprinted, participate in a handgun safety course or have his photograph taken for his permit. He most likely marched into a sporting-goods store and picked out the most foreboding-looking firearms he could find. The fact that it was not Portland State students asking each other “how could this have happened here?” is simply a matter of dumb luck, as Virginia Tech maintained the same gun policy as we do here in the OUS; the fact is, it could happen anywhere. Students who follow the proper channels of obtaining the concealed carry permit are now being viewed as criminals, and we, as an university, are creating a defenseless campus.

On September 28, 2011, a three judge panel in the Oregon Court of Appeals overturned the Oregon University System ban on concealed carry weapons on campus. The ruling, OAR580-022-0040(3), which unequivocally forbade weapons on campus, was considered to be a gross overreaching of the Oregon University System’s power. In an interview with KVAL news, OUS Chancellor George Pernsteiner said of the ban’s repeal, “Whether accidental or intentional, firearms violence continues to hurt dorms, killing them. Two hours later, he entered Norris hall where he systematically executed 30 students and faculty members and left an additional 25 wounded.

The incident, which came to be known as the Virginia Tech Massacre, was the worst campus shooting in history and reopened a debate on the national level, one vehemently argued by both sides: gun control.

Specifically, in the greater context of weapons on the grounds of higher-learning institutions, there are two main arguments. Opponents claim that an armed student body is inevitably a dangerous thing. We cannot have every jock, geek, and scholar roaming the university with guns. Proponents of guns on campus argue that accidents do happen. However, premeditated, calculated and purposeful shootings happen on campuses all across the United States as well. And they are not committed by people holding concealed carry permits.

I am sure the students at Virginia Tech that day asked each other, in a state of shock, “How could this have happened here?” Seung-Hui Cho didn’t go down to his local sheriff’s office, get fingerprinted, participate in a handgun safety course or have his photograph taken for his permit. He most likely marched into a sporting-goods store and picked out the most foreboding-looking firearms he could find. The fact that it was not Portland State students asking each other “how could this have happened here?” is simply a matter of dumb luck, as Virginia Tech maintained the same gun policy as we do here in the OUS; the fact is, it could happen anywhere. Students who follow the proper channels of obtaining the concealed carry permit are now being viewed as criminals, and we, as an university, are creating a defenseless campus.

On September 28, 2011, a three judge panel in the Oregon Court of Appeals overturned the Oregon University System ban on concealed carry weapons on campus. The ruling, OAR580-022-0040(3), which unequivocally forbade weapons on campus, was considered to be a gross overreaching of the Oregon University System’s power. In an interview with KVAL news, OUS Chancellor George Pernsteiner said of the ban’s repeal, “Whether accidental or intentional, firearms violence continues to hurt campus. The Ongoing debate is about more than just having guns on campus.

On the Monmouth police station, where he was booked and cited, the Polk county District Attorney determined that no crime was committed; concealed carry is federally permitted in all buildings with the exception of courtrooms and federal property. Still, Maxwell was suspended by a student judicial panel and was told he must complete a mental health exam as well as write a ten-page paper on the impact of weapons on campus.

To put this issue in perspective, let us take the argument to its logical end and substitute the Second Amendment for, let us say, the First Amendment—an equally combustible and embattled right. In our hypothetical scenario, let us posit that Islamophobia has been taken to the extreme and it is no longer okay to practice the religion on campus. Our theoretical fear-stricken population feels that there is a direct link to Islam extremism and violence, based on anecdotal evidence as well as isolated incidents. Is this constitutional? Of course not.

Fortunately, this is not the case. In fact, in the basement of Portland State’s Smith Memorial Student Union, there is a room for practicing Muslims to pray. The United States Constitution guarantees, in the First Amendment, the protection of freedom of religion. Just as the Oregon University system could never ostracize pious Muslims, stifle the voice of the students or forbid women from participating in school sponsored events, they should not be permitted to outlaw a marginalized group of Americans exercising their Second Amendment rights. Opponents of concealed carry will still argue that accidents happen, and they are right; accidents do happen. However, premeditated, calculated and purposeful shootings happen on campuses all across the United States as well. And they are not committed by people holding concealed carry permits.

Early in October, in an article in the Oregonian, PSU president Wim Wiewel stated that administrative measures should be taken immediately to prevent students from carrying handguns on campus; he even suggested making students sign a waiver promising not to carry firearms at the university. Whether or not you feel comfortable with firearms on campus is beside the point. The glaring issue in my mind is the restricting of constitutionally guaranteed rights being limited on our public university campuses. If PSU, as an institution, is allowed to force students to sign waivers to prevent firearms on campus, we are ultimately giving passive consent to be dragged down a very slippery slope.