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Jury rejects self-defense claim, convicts man of shooting his roommate in the neck

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that a jury convicted 26-year-old Alexander Tomas Harrison of unlawfully and intentionally shooting his roommate in the neck.

The jury heard testimony over the course of four days last week and returned its verdict late Friday afternoon.

The jury convicted Harrison of one count of assault in the first degree and one count of unlawful use of a weapon. By doing so, the jury rejected Harrison's claim of self-defense.

At trial, the state presented evidence to show that on April 4, 2019, Portland Police responded to the 12400 block of Southeast Powell Boulevard after emergency dispatchers received a 9-1-1 call from a person who said that he shot his roommate in the neck.

As police were responding, a second 9-1-1 call came in from the roommate who confirmed he had been shot but was still conscious.

When police got on scene, Harrison flagged them down and told them he was the shooter.

Law enforcement learned that Harrison and the victim had recently moved in together. On April 4, 2019, the two got into an argument.

A neighbor testified shortly after she heard what sounded like a gun being fired, someone knocked on her door for help. It was the victim who was covered in blood.

At the hospital, doctors determined the bullet had entered the victim's chin, went through his neck and caused a cervical spine fracture. The bullet remains in the victim's neck and will not be removed because of the risks associated with surgery, according to the victim's doctor who testified.

Harrison told detectives that prior to the fight, he and his roommate were drinking. The argument unfolded upon returning to the apartment. According to Harrison's account to police, his roommate was "raging" – throwing things around the apartment, breaking things and had pushed him into a wall.

Police searched the apartment and found it relatively clean and orderly. The officers did not observe any obvious signs of damage or any evidence of a fight. During the search, police found a fully loaded Ruger Security Six .357 Magnum revolver under a couch cushion.

While police were on scene investigating they learned about a social media post the victim made shortly after the shooting wherein he described being shot by Harrison. The video was shown to the jury.

Oregon's self-defense laws are, in part, defined under ORS 161.209 and ORS 161.219.

Sentencing in this matter is scheduled for December 12, 2019.

This case was prosecuted by Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Todd Jackson.

Like in all criminal and civil matters, electronic copies of court documents, which are not subject to a protective order, are available to the public through the Oregon eCourt Information (OEI) system.

No additional information can be released by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office at this time pursuant to the Oregon Rules of Professional Conduct.

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