Effects of 2015 Oil Spill Persist, Researchers Say

A severely eroded Plains All American pipeline 15 miles northwest of the UCSB campus near Refugio State Beach ruptured one year ago today, May 19, 2015, spilling upwards of 80,000 gallons of crude oil onto the nearby coast, according to a panel of experts and environmental organizations at Bren Hall.

The aftermath of the spill spurred a number of new state and federal laws and local environmental organizations and Santa Barbara County have drafted new plans of action in the event of a future pipe leak.

A process known as tarball fingerprinting allows researchers to analyze the extent of the spill’s damage.

UC Student Regent Nominated

Paul Monge, UC Berkeley law student and UCSB alumnus, was nominated to become Student Regent beginning in July 2017.

In his last year at UCSB, Monge served as A.S. president, a position that helped earn him the Student Regent nomination. As president, Monge played a role in establishing the A.S. Food Bank in the 2010-2011 school year.

“I want to attribute a lot of my ability to serve in this role to my experience as an undergraduate at Santa Barbara,” Monge said of his nomination. “My experience there really activated me in wanting to pursue public leadership.”

If he is confirmed as a student regent, Monge said he plans to address food insecurity among students, an issue he said he has been working on since his undergraduate years. Monge and A.S. officers were able to establish the A.S. Food Bank during his senior year at UCSB.

Monge said he also hopes to address affordable housing across the UC system. According to Monge, UC students live in some of the state’s most expensive cities, so he wants to focus on implementing rent control and tenant protections.

Avi Oved, the current student regent and one of the members of the selection committee, described the nomination process as “very robust.”
DAILY NEXUS CALENDAR

Kumu Hina
Wednesday, May 25, 2016
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
@ MCC Theater

Kumu Hina is a powerful film about the struggle to maintain Pacific Islander culture and values within the Westernized society of modern day Hawai’i. It is told through the lens of an extraordinary Native Hawaiian who is both a proud and confident mahū (transgender woman) and an honored and respected kumu (teacher, cultural practitioner, and community leader). A Skype Q&A session with Hinaleimoana, the film’s main character, will follow the screening. (80 min, English, 2014)

We Want The Funk: A Rustbelt Lullaby On The One
Thursday, May 26, 2016
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM
@ Hatlen Theater

It's the early 1970s and the fourth largest auto company in the Midwest just laid off more than half its workers. Chuck is one of them, but he's not worried. Chuck is convinced that "the funk" will bring prosperity. Only thing, Chuck can't play no instrument. But somewhere in this sea of the recently unemployed and rejected—those morphine addicted Vietnam vets—those ex militants turned public servants—gear heads, burnouts, labor activists, Motown woulda coulda beens, and hustlers—somewhere in all that is Chuck's band. This psychedelic rhythmic verse drama follows one ordinary man's pursuit of a new working class frontier.

Dr. Michael Gerber, “Fifty Shades of Grey: Decision-Making in Classrooms”
Wednesday, May 25, 2016
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM
@ Education Building – Room 1213
FREE EVENT

You’re invited to celebrate the career of Professor Michael Gerber under the presenting at UCSB Santa Barbara’s former Community Chest’s Emeritus. Michael Gerber is a Professor of Education, and contributing faculty in the Special Education, Disabilities, and Risk and the Policy, Leadership, and Research Methods research focus areas. From 2005-2009 he was the chair of the Department of Education. Gerber has been the director of the Center for Advanced Studies of Individual Differences in the Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research (ISBER). He is also a founding member of UCSB’s Interdisciplinary Graduate Emphasis in Cognitive Science. He has been president of the Division for Learning Disabilities in the Council for Exceptional Children. He is also the chair of the steering committee for a UC-wide Center for Research on Special Education, Disabilities, and Developmental Risk. In 2015 an anonymous donor gave a $2 million estate gift to the Gevirtz School to establish The Michael M. Gerber C
Students Talk Life in UCSB’s Smallest College

UCSB’s College of Creative Studies is home to a unique academic program that focuses less on letter grades and more on undergraduate research opportunities

Annie Golay
Reporter

Tucked away near the main entrance of the Santa Rosa residence hall lies a small yet quirkily building. A bright mustard yellow, this one-story structure houses the elusive College of Creative Studies (CCS).

With about 350 students in the entire college, CCS reflects a very small but unique percentage of UCSB undergraduates.

Though one of only three colleges here at UCSB, CCS is the most abstract in terms of research and academics. Students within this program only need eight general education (GE) requirements for their major, can drop a class up until the day before a final and do not receive grades for classes taken within the College of Creative Studies.

CCS students typically enroll in both CCS and College of Letters & Sciences (L&S) courses each quarter, but Ezra Kovsiner, first-year chemistry/biochemistry CCS major, said he appreciates the more relaxed feel of a CCS class.

“Because you know you’re not taking it for a grade, you’re generally interested in the class,” Kovsiner said. “There’s no great benefit to you other than to learn.”

Students are awarded units based on their academic performance, ranging from zero to six units depending on the quality of their assignments, participation and attendance.

Although CCS students rely on L&S courses to create their GPA, CCS is a rigorous and research-oriented program. Tengiz Bibilashvili, professor and advisor for the CCS physics major, explains that the introductory class for physics contains multiple elements of upper-division classes.

He adds that many juniors take graduate-level classes and start research during their freshman and sophomore years.

“CCS classes go much deeper, are more in-depth,” Bibilashvili said. “To stay and succeed in the CCS physics program, Bibilashvili said students must be “sick with physics.”

“They must be people who love science, who love physics, who just don’t count the time they spend solving problems,” he said.

Talon Stark, second-year CCS mathematics major, agrees.

“More than anything, it lets you dedicate all of your time on your own,” Stark said. “Professors don’t care what label is on your jacket, CCS or [Letters & Science]. It doesn’t matter,” Bibilashvili said. “If you are prepared in research, they will take you.”

UCen Dining To Begin Using Cage-Free Eggs Menu

Maura Fox
Asst. News Editor

UCen Dining catering services will begin a transition to cruelty-free animal products next week by introducing cage-free eggs into their new menu.

Pairing with Farm Forward, a company that opposes animal cruelty in factory farms, UCen Dining hopes to bring ethically sourced food to cafeterias and dining services.

UCen Dining is initially offering the cage-free option at catered events and wants to eventually source all meat products from humanely treated farm animals.

According to John Lazarus, assistant director of production and catering for UCen Dining, catering services will soon begin working with Mary’s Global Animal Partnership and conduct regular assessments of how source animals are cared.

Mary’s is a free-range chicken farm that uses Controlled Atmosphere Stunning (CAS) euthanizes for a gentler slaughtering process. CAS slowly drains the oxygen from the birds’ confinement to make their death less stressful before the slaughtering operation.

“It’s cage-free, but it’s a little bit more than cage-free,” Lazarus said. “There’s a bunch of different types of certifications … People go to inspect how the hens are being treated as they’re being raised.”

The move away from factory farms will create higher costs for purchasing food, but Lazarus hopes to convince students and faculty that “it’s an investment worth making” that will lead to better living conditions for farm animals.

“Catering has the ability to absorb prices a little better than the retail units, so we’re really sensitive to not raising prices on a bowl of soup at Coral Tree Café or a sandwich at the Arbor because we know that students are already stretching their money as far as they possibly can,” Lazarus said.

According to Andrew deCoriolis, Farm Forward’s director of strategic programs and engagement, reducing portion sizes will lower the costs of higher quality food and the transition to more sustainable, vegetarian meal plan can result in less expensive animal products while also ensuring animals lived a decent life before dying.

The total cost comparison between factory farms and cage-free farms is unavailable at this time and will be released in the fall.

Lazarus said that the project was inspired by a variety of concerns, including the environmental impact and health concerns that arise from eating too much meat.

“When you have a bunch of hens raised in a factory farm, it’s incredibly efficient but it also concentrates waste and concentrates byproducts and they’re not allowed to permeate through the soil in a natural way,” Lazarus said.

A California law passed in January 2015 required an increase in space allocation for factory farm chickens. Another law, AB-1437, banned the selling of eggs from chickens raised in small, wire “battery” cages with limited space.

However, Farm Forward and UCen Dining are still concerned with the animals’ living conditions in the factory farm industry, as many factories do not give birds outdoor access, and some slaughter their animals by hanging them upside down and electrocuting them.

According to deCoriolis, over 90 percent of American poultry is raised on factory farms.

 “[The program is] led because students and employees are saying [that] ‘we want better products, we want more plants, we want fewer animals,’” deCoriolis said. “And if we are going to eat animals, we want to eat animals that are raised in really great ways.”

For the full story, see dailynexus.com
Bills Approved for Timely Bribery Investigation

After allegations arose that the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) bribed students to vote, the UCSB Audit and Advisory Department has launched an investigation into the claims.

A resolution was passed to extend current Senators’ terms until Week Nine of the Spring Quarter should the report of the investigation be released close to the summer; the creation of an election commission was also approved.

Maura Fox
Asst. News Editor

The Associated Students (A.S.) Senate has approved two bills to ensure a timely investigation into bribery allegations made against the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) during the A.S. Spring Election. The A.S. Elections Board called for a “re-vote” of the entire spring election ballot in April, alleging that the IFC “bribed” students to vote by awarding “philanthropy grants” to chapters with the highest voter turnout.

In a letter to the Nexus, IFC President Brendan Gonzalez said the IFC consulted with the Office of Student Life prior to developing the grant program. Since these claims were made, the UCSB Audit and Advisory Department has been leading an investigation into possible irregularities in the voting process.

The senate first approved a resolution to extend Senators’ terms into Week Nine of Spring Quarter in case the investigatory report is released shortly before summer. The senators-elect are usually sworn in during the Week Eight Senate meeting; however, according to current A.S President Jimmy Villarreal, this resolution will “push everything back” and give the current Senate more time to deliberate on the results if they should come in before the year ends.

Robert Tarsia, director of the Audit and Advisory Services, said the department hopes the investigation will be completed by the end of Spring Quarter. “We’ve devoted resources to doing our best,” said Tarsia. “That always depends on the availability of the people we speak with, but we’re having pretty good success.”

Senate also approved the formation of the “Villarreal Election Commission,” named after President Villarreal. The commission will consider the final investigatory report if the investigation continues into summer.

Villarreal said he hopes to appoint 10 members to the commission, seven to vote and three to act as ex-officio members. These appointed commissioners will be chosen from the judicial, legislative and executive branches of A.S. and must be nonpartisan.

According to the proposals, there is “no known timeline” for investigating the bribery allegations against IFC, making the precautionary resolutions important in completing a full investigation.

“We don’t know when this investigation is going to end,” Villarreal said. “Whenever that investigation and report comes out … someone needs to receive it.”

Villarreal proposed both resolutions at last week’s Senate meeting and submitted a co-authored letter with President-elect Austin Hechler further detailing the resolutions and each of their commitments to A.S.

“We just don’t have any guarantee that anyone is going to be around to make those decisions,” Villarreal added.

“I’m going to try to find as many people who are as removed from this election as possible, whether that means they were helping out, they were endorsing [or] they were actively running,” Villarreal said.

While A.S. Attorney General Brandon Lee is also investigating the alleged bribery, Tarsia said the Audit and Advisory Department’s investigation is not connected to Lee’s. “It’s pretty standard to make sure that you touch base with anyone else who’s doing a parallel investigation,” Tarsia said. “But we’re not in any way coordinating our efforts or sharing information.”

Villarreal will continue to release weekly updates on the investigation progress and conclusion.

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**Zika Virus Update and International Travel Safety Tips**

**DATE:** Monday 5/23/16, 11am - 12pm

**LOCATION:** Student Resource Building Auditorium

Learn about:

- The seriousness global outbreak of Zika Virus and potential risk to travelers
- Guidance for women of reproductive age and their male partners traveling to Zika-impacted areas
- Mosquito bite avoidance: proven strategies to protect yourself
- General travel medical advice while traveling and upon return home

Panelists:

- Charity Dean, M.D., Santa Barbara County Health Officer, Public Health Department
- Mary-Louise Scalzo, M.D., Infectious Disease Specialist, Sansum Clinic Travel & Tronical Medicine Center
- Elizabeth Toro, M.D., Obstetrics & Gynecology Specialist, Direct Relief Medical Advisory Board

For more information, contact UCSB Student Health at (805) 893-5339 or see our Zika and Travel resources at [studenthealth.sa.ucsb.edu](http://studenthealth.sa.ucsb.edu).

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**Are you even Metal?**

Are you little baby?

- White patches on tonsils
- Red, inflamed throat
- Streptococcus bacteria

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**Get Connected**

UC Santa Barbara

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**Ultra Metallic Baby?**
Students Grow Produce in Unlikely Places

The Edible Campus Program and the Department of Public Worms have begun turning large and unused concrete spaces into vertical, sustainable farms to combat hunger.

Natalie Overton
Staff Writer

In the battle against campus-wide food insecurity, students are creating urban orchards, vertical gardens and a campus farm to increase food production on even the campus’s most concrete-covered areas.

Nearly one in six college students at UCSB skipped meals in 2014 because they couldn’t afford them, according to the student-run Edible Campus Program (ECP).

The Associated Students Food Bank works to ensure students have access to healthy food, and, consistent with UC Santa Barbara’s sustainability goals, the ECP and Department of Public Worms (DPW) have launched what they hope will eventually become a “closed loop cycle” of sustainable food production and waste management on campus.

The two potted orange trees in Storke Plaza are some of the first installments of the Urban Orchard, a sustainability project run by ECP. Urban Orchard was launched in cooperation with singer Jack Johnson and his wife Kim Johnson in 2015.

The food bank has already harvested some of the trees’ first fruits, and production is expected to increase with the addition of four more trees this spring.

“We work to reimagine certain spaces on our campus that aren’t being used or that are underutilized into areas of sustainable food production,” said Maile Hartsook, fourth-year sustainability political science major and intern for ECP.

The group’s goal is to produce approximately 25,000 pounds of food each year to donate to the A.S. Food Bank.

Nearly one in six college students at UCSB skipped meals in 2014 due to financial hardship.

To further emphasize the interconnectedness of our campus’s sustainability cycle, Jake Whisenant, worm caretaker and composter at DPW, said the Daily Nexus’ use of soy-based ink in printing makes it possible to recycle nearly 150 pounds of unused papers every month.

Gesturing to a sample bin of worms nibbling on words in the shredded newspapers, Heininger added, “They’re eating ‘Justin Bieber’ right now.”

“By composting, in the short term we can make a really big difference in greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.”

- Maile Hartsook

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The group’s goal is to produce approximately 25,000 pounds of food each year to donate to the A.S. Food Bank. UCSB puts all non-compostable waste into a landfill that was built in the 1960s, but Heininger said it is predicted to be unusable in about 10 years.

Landfills are breeding grounds for methane-producing microorganisms, and UCSB’s landfill contains technology that harvests about 75 percent of the methane produced and uses it to power 3,000 Goleta households.

The methane that enters the atmosphere, however, has approximately 21 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide and stays in the atmosphere for about 100 years.

“By composting, in the short term, we can make a really big difference in greenhouse gas emissions and climate change if we all just compost more,” Heininger said.

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“By composting, in the short term we can make a really big difference in greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.”

- Maile Hartsook

The urban gardens and orchards are aiming to combat food insecurity at UCSB, as an estimated one in six UCSB students skipped meals in 2014 due to financial hardship.
Supriya Yelimeli
News Editor

Actor Danny DeVito met with a crowd of nearly 900 students at UCSB on Tuesday to promote Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders and speak on the importance of student activism.

DeVito and UCSB For Bernie members appeared together at The Arbor walkway at 1:30 p.m. to the resounding cheers of Sanders supporters and star-struck students. Stepping up on a bench to address the crowd, DeVito passed on using a megaphone and delivered a passionate cry of, "I feel the Bern!"

“This is a movement that has to continue no matter what,” DeVito said. “This is serious shit, man.”

DeVito, who was a college student during the Vietnam War, advocated for civil rights and marched in an anti-war protest in New York in the 1960s. Although he was not drafted into the war due to his “bad knees,” DeVito said he lost a few friends in combat, motivating his support of Sanders, who he described as “nonviolent.”

“Nonviolence is the way to do it. The movement has to continue … it’s not just about this political system we have now,” DeVito said.

While attending college at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Hollywood, DeVito also spent several weekends in Isla Vista visiting his friends at UCSB.

DeVito once dressed up as a pair of pants to attend a costume party in I.V., inspired by Italian film director Frederico Fellini.

“I will never forget that party; it was really great,” DeVito said. “We tried to make that costume work and it didn’t. I wore a motorcycle helmet and a pair of black tights … I don’t know what I was, it was kind of a weird-looking thing.”

As students milled around DeVito to hear his parting words, the actor snuck in a few more signatures and gave a short speech.

“Stand up for what you believe and … we can do it together,” DeVito said. “I’ve been to several colleges now and I feel like the energy is there, it’s in your hands … you really are the future of it all.”

UCSB For Bernie received notice of DeVito’s visit Monday afternoon from the national campaign for Sanders.

“We had no idea what it would be like,” said Riley Brann, fourth-year interdisciplinary studies major, saying although they received short notice, volunteers were able to register an estimated 100 voters during the event.

“We are so grateful to Danny DeVito. He was supposed to be here from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. He came here a little bit early … and then he stayed about an hour and a half longer than he was supposed to,” Brann said. “His manager kept saying … ‘he wants to be here, he wants to do this.’”
Cancer Patient Receives First Penis Transplant

Thomas Manning received the first penis transplant in the United States Monday after a 15-hour surgery performed at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. The surgical team said they hope to eventually extend the surgery to veterans with severe pelvic combat injuries, but said the surgery was experimental and they did not want to use veterans as “guinea pigs” because they have risked their lives in battle. Manning lost his penis to cancer and should be able to urinate normally in a few weeks and have normal sexual function in weeks to months. As many as three men worldwide have received such a transplant, including one man who fathered a child with his transplant. nytimes.com

Obama Administration Issues Guidance for Public Schools over Transgender Rights

The Obama administration issued a directive Friday telling U.S. public schools to allow students to use bathrooms matching their gender identity. The directive came in the form of a joint letter from the federal Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice, and President Obama defended the directive publically in a speech Monday. North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory condemned the action and called on Congress to address the issue. North Carolina is currently in a legal battle with the Department of Justice over an anti-transgender law that was passed earlier this month. Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick also condemned the act, calling the guidance “blackmail” and “social engineering” while LGBT groups praised the “groundbreaking” directive. csn.com

Mark Zuckerberg Meets with Conservatives over Censorship Controversy

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg met with representatives from the conservative community Wednesday in an effort to address accusations that the social networking site censored conservative voices. Specifically, the accusers claim that Facebook purposely altered its algorithms so conservative topics wouldn’t appear on its “trending” section. The Federalist called it a “textbook con job.” Mark Zuckerberg has denounced the claims, saying Facebook stands for giving everyone a voice. Among the meeting attendees was media personality Glenn Beck, former press secretary for former President George W. Bush, Dana Perino and Barry Bennett, advisor to the Donald Trump presidential campaign. nytimes.com

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First Chibok Girl Rescued

The first of the girls who were kidnapped two years ago by Boko Haram was rescued Tuesday in Nigeria while she was address a baby and a suspected member of the terrorist group. The Islamist group captured Amina Ali Nkeki with 218 other girls. The man who was accompanying her claimed to be her husband, but has been arrested and taken to Maiduguri, the regional capital. Nkeki’s mother recognized her immediately when they were reunited. Nkeki has said that all the kidnapped girls are still with Boko Haram, except for six who died. bbc.com

Stolen Columbus Letter Returned to Italy

Investigators in the U.S. have returned an original letter to Italy Wednesday after discovering it had been stolen and later sold at an auction. Authorities on both sides have commended the action. The letter, found in the Library of Congress, detailed explorer Christopher Columbus’s first impressions of the New World and was to be sent to the king and queen of Spain in 1945s. The original letter was stolen from Florence’s Biblioteca Riccardiana and replaced with a forgery that went unnoticed until U.S. authorities received a tip in 2012. The U.S. Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security are currently investigating how the letter ended up in the Library of Congress. theguardian.com

Department of Justice Opens Investigation into Russian Doping Scandal

The U.S. Department of Justice opened an investigation Tuesday into Russia’s state-sponsored athlete doping scandal that was uncovered last week. The doping scandal involved Russian officials switching out tainted urine samples of athletes with samples from months earlier during the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, according to a doctor who was involved. Russian officials have responded to the claims with defiance in an attempt to quell the discontent towards Russia before going into the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics. The Russian Sports Ministry has acknowledged that there were problems with doping during the Sochi Olympics, but has not specified what those problems were. nytimes.com

Attention All Students, Staff, and Faculty

The Campus Regulations Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students are currently under review and revision.

Open Forums for public comment will be held:

Thursday, May 26, 9-10:30am,
Multipurpose Room, Student Resource Building

Friday, May 28, 1-2:30pm,
Santa Barbara Mission Room, University Center

For a copy of the proposed revisions, please contact the Office of Student Life at (805) 893-4590.
Your Place.
Your Space.
You've Arrived.

Introducing four distinct NEW neighborhoods along the Goleta Coast with community parks, a recreation center with resort-style pool, bike paths and open space.

AVILA
Single-Family Homes
2,029 Sq. Ft. – 2,116 Sq. Ft.
Up to 4 Bedrooms
and 2.5 Baths
Mid $900,000s

VELEROS
Single-Family Homes
1,758 Sq. Ft. – 2,417 Sq. Ft.
Up to 5 Bedrooms
and 3 Baths
Mid $900,000s

BALIZA
Townhomes
1,491 Sq. Ft. – 1,569 Sq. Ft.
Up to 4 Bedrooms
and 2.5 Baths
Low $600,000s

MARISOL
Townhomes
1,218 Sq. Ft. – 1,880 Sq. Ft.
Up to 4 Bedrooms
and 3 Baths
Mid $500,000s

The Response
State-designed plans are supposed to account for cleanup operations, but environmental groups say the plans were not adequate for the specific situation.

After the Refugio spill, there was largely a lack of coordinated response between state and federal agencies, county organizers and local environmental groups, according to Linda Krop, chief counsel at the Environmental Defense Center in Santa Barbara.

“We were completely floored with the lack of on-the-ground response,” Krop said. “On the evening of the 19th, not a soul was doing cleanup; the beach was full of oil and every wave was taking oil out to sea.”

After attending state and federal briefings the morning after the spill, Krop said the state and federal regulations for spill responses were not adequate in addressing the immediate action required in the aftermath of the Refugio spill.

“We don’t really have a plan in place for when you have a spill that starts onshore and threatens to go offshore,” Driscoll said. “There does have to be some formal method of closing response efforts. A year out, you no longer need to send people to the beaches to respond to oil coming up on the shore.”

The Regents
This year, 49 people applied for the position — an increase from last year — Oved said. Applicants were interviewed for up to five months by various student body presidents, UCSA officials and the UC Board of Regents selection committee.

Oved said the committee chose to nominate Monge because of his experience as UCSB A.S. President and his background at both public and private institutions.

“I think he has a really great depth and breadth of experience serving as student-body president of Santa Barbara,” Oved said. “I think he is someone that can develop strong relationships with students and really also develop strong relationships with the Regents.”

Marcela Ramirez, who will finish her term as a non-voting member of the UC Board of Regents and start her role as UC Student Regent in July, said Monge will be spending the next year “learning the ropes” and developing his platform as a future student regent, if he is confirmed.

Ramirez also said she and Monge may be working closely together as they visit each campus throughout the school year.

“We’ll spend a lot of time cracking jokes in the car and trying to get ourselves to our next destination,” Ramirez said. “It can be a really fun time, and it’s also a lot of work.”

If he is approved, Monge said he hopes to continue serving with UCSA during his year-long term as a non-voting member of the Board of Regents.

“Don’t plan to waste a single day,” Monge said.
Durant Still the Alpha Dog in OKC, Remains Amongst NBA’s Elite

Jorge Mercado
Asst. Sports Editor

Don’t know which is worse, NBA officials not calling Thunder point guard Russell Westbrook for his travel late in the fourth quarter or his wardrobe decisions? Either way, keep the memes rollin’.

Sean White
Sports Editor

As expected with the return of Durant, Westbrook’s shot attempts in clutch time have endured a substantial decrease, which has served to his own benefit. Prior to the beginning of the NBA Playoffs, Russ concluded the season 14th in points with a 39.3 average on 32.1 per cent from the field and an abysmal 0.87 from beyond the three-point line.

Westbrook missed 15 games last season due to injury, which hindered OKC’s pursuit of securing the top seed. As expected with the return of Durant, Westbrook’s shot attempts in clutch time have endured a substantial decrease, which has served to his own benefit. Prior to the beginning of the NBA Playoffs, Russ concluded the season 14th in points with a 39.3 average on 32.1 per cent from the field and an abysmal 0.87 from beyond the three-point line.

While the glitz and glamour of triple-doubles can be mesmerizing, has anyone taken the time to acknowledge the expense Westbrook’s success has come with?

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As most of these conference series go, the home team usually holds the advantage in terms of winning, as the past has consistently shown. Last season, UCSB swept UCLA at home; two of wins had only one-run differences. However, two years ago when the series was at the Anteaters’ home, they swept the Gauchos in a similar fashion.

UCI will rely on its batting success to get it through this series, as it currently boasts the top batting average (280), the top on-base percentage (.363) and the second best slugging percentage (.374) in the conference.

One big factor in that is sophomore Keston Hiura, who has a .382 batting average, third best in the Big West. His home runs (seven) and RBIs (37) are also third best in the conference, while his slugging percentage (.580) is the best in the Big West.

UCSB’s success in road games usually comes down to how the young pitching staff reacts to the pressure of the large road crowds. In their 20 road games this season, the pitching staff has allowed 91 earned runs compared to only 96 earned runs at home through 20 games.

This month in particular, the inexperience and lack of depth has really shown itself, as the pitching staff has a combined 5.52 ERA, 54 earned runs and has allowed six home runs through 10 games. In the month of April, the throwing rotation had a 3.38 ERA, 53 earned runs and only four home runs allowed in 16 games.

Hopefully the return of two solid pitchers from injury, relief pitcher James Carter and relief senior Justin Kelly, can help the struggling rotation.

In his three appearances since his Tommy John surgery, Carter has been pitching five solid innings, allowing only five hits and no runs while striking out two batters. Kelly has also been solid in 5.1 innings pitched he has allowed one run and four hits while striking out seven batters.

This weekend will be no easy task for the Gauchos, but it certainly is necessary if they want to make a run at the postseason. They also need to get back to their winning ways so that if they make the postseason they can do more than just be one and done.

UCSB faces off against UCI at Cicerone Field on Friday, May 20 at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, May 21 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, May 22 at 6 p.m. Saturday’s game will be live-broadcasted on Fox Sports Prime Ticket while Sunday’s will be live on ESPNU.

UCSB has not won a series at UC Irvine since 1986. The series begins on Friday.

HANNA MESHELL / DAILY NEXUS

Thursday, May 19, 2016

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Christina Demarzo / Daily Nexus
Checketts’ Method: A Winning Culture Reborn

Jorge Mercado
Asst. Sports Editor

One of the most difficult things to do in college sports is to uplift a non-powerhouse program. The reason is simple: athletes don't want to go play at a university where they won't be competing for championships and garnering the exposure needed to reach the pro level.

To turn a program around requires effort, dedication and money, but most importantly it requires instilling a culture. Usually a program needs to instill a new culture to bring back a sense of attitude and a new fire to show recruits that this will become a winning program.

The UCSB baseball program is something that was looking for a culture change back in 2011 when it was looking for a new head coach after Brontsema, who is still at UCSB, began serving as the assistant athletic director.

Brontsema was a great coach as he attained the most wins in school history (483) after an illustrious 18-year career in which he also finished with the third best winning percentage (.503) in school history.

Although Brontsema was a solid coach during his tenure, it was clear that after a 10-year hiatus from reaching a NCAA regional and not having won a Big West championship during his run, it was time for a change.

At the same time, however, a young, eager assistant coach located in Oregon awaited his commission opportunity. He was renowned as one of the best pitching coaches in the entire nation as well as a great recruiter. His name is Andrew Checketts.

Checketts was no stranger to California or the Big West conference as he coached at UC Riverside for four years prior to becoming an assistant coach at Oregon. He knew about UCSB, and once he heard about the vacancy he held hope that maybe he would get that call so he could finally become a head coach for the first time in his career.

"When I heard the job become available I thought, ‘I'd love to live in Santa Barbara and coach there,’” Checketts said. “That same day I went on a walk with my wife and kids, and — I’m not kidding — I got that call at first I thought it was too good to be true so I sent it to voicemail, but when I checked it later that day it was the AD [athletic director] asking me if I was interested and, of course, I was.”

On June 22, 2011, UCSB announced that Andrew Checketts would become the ninth head coach in the program’s history.

Checketts knew the expectations of UCSB’s program and was more than ready to bring a new culture to the university’s baseball club, something he has definitely instilled in the short five years he has been here.

In his first season as the baseball coach, Checketts had 16 seniors on his squad, to help make the transition a bit easier and managed to hire the right assistant coaches in play.

"I knew the first thing any good head coach needs is a great staff. Coach Cornejo and I had a prior relationship and through our network we were able to bring together our strengths and make a staff that has been unmitigated and dedicated themselves to the program,” Checketts said. “We assembled the best staff we could and quickly started trying to figure out what we needed to do and how we wanted it done.”

During his first campaign, the former Oregon State High School Player of the Year impressed everyone as he had the most wins by a first-year head coach in school history with 28. Checketts, who also serves as the team’s pitching coach, had a historic throwing rotation that combined for a program best 451 strikeouts on the season.

Although it was yet another year that the Gauchos did not go to an NCAA regional, everyone knew the future looked bright. However, Checketts knew the future would only be bright if he brought in a great group of recruits.

Although money might have been tight at times, Checketts saw the potential UCSB had to offer young student athletes and began working his recruiting magic right away. In 2012, Checketts held the 38th best recruiting class — the best in school history — 9th in 2013 and 32nd in 2014 all according to Perfect Game.

“I think kids want to come to UCSB,” Checketts said. “It has unbelievable academics, great baseball weather and amazing location. I think this is one of the best places to go to school on the earth so it makes our job of attracting special student athletes easier.”

Since that first year in 2012, every year has been an improvement for the UCSB baseball team. The following year in 2013, the Gauchos broke their postseason curse and reached their first NCAA regional for the first time in 12 years, ending their last 22 games with a 16-6 record along with winning six consecutive series to enter the postseason with a 35-25 record.

In 2014, although Santa Barbara did not make a regional, it posted more than 30 wins for the second-straight season, making Checketts just the second head coach in program history to have back-to-back 30-plus win seasons.

Finally, last year the team achieved a landmark milestone as the impact of the 2012 and 2013 recruiting classes reached their peak, and the Gauchos had arguably the best season in school history after going 40-17-1 to set a new record in most wins against a DI schools. That season, Santa Barbara was selected to host the South region as the No. 1 seed in the 2015 NCAA Regions for the first time in program history.

Although it did not make it out of the first round last year, there is no doubt that the UCSB baseball team has the most significant piece it needs to eventually make a run at the College World Series: a head coach.

Since his arrival in 2011, Checketts has made a valuable impact as the program’s winning percentage has gone from .500 to .702. He has also played a major role in the pitching department as the program’s career ERA has made a significant drop from 4.14 in 2012 to 2.45 in 2015.

Checketts’ 137-87-1 overall record during his first four full years of coaching currently places him as the Gauchos’ leader in career overall winning percentage (.612) and career conference winning percentage (.556).

This season the UCSB baseball team is still making noise as it again already registered more than 30 wins on the season and enjoyed the success of breaking a 30-year-old school record in consecutive home wins, which is now at 17.

Even with all this success, Checketts’ humble persona reminds him constantly that he could not have done this without his predecessors. He also knows there is still much more work to be done in terms of winning both a Big West title and a National Championship.

“You know, I haven’t really looked up yet,” Checketts said. “We still haven’t won a championship and we still have a lot of work to do, so me and my staff just keep working hard to reach that goal. They deserve a bunch of credit because the continuity of this staff has certainly helped the program grow.”

"We have made a big difference in the minds of the players, too,” Checketts said. “We still haven’t won a championship and we still have a lot of hard work to do. But we are definitely making a difference.”

Coach Checketts has an overall record of 137-87-1 during his first four years as a head coach for the UCSB baseball.
In Review: Extravaganza 2016

Frank Horne
Artsweek Editor

A single tuft of cloud squatted over the distant mountains on the approach to Harder Stadium Sunday as thousands of students (and a few "students") flooded into Extravaganza 2016.

The field adorned itself as festively as the assembled audience, all adding up to a tilt-shift facsimile of the Coachella aesthetic. The Sremm Bros. came out determined. Students (and a few "students") flooded into the distant mountains on the approach to exhaustion. A half-hearted spectacle, the Free yeas made on tap subdued for the $10 beers cupped in hands on polo fields all over campus, and the colorful decor was complete with a pair of 20-foot insect sculptures constructed by Bamboo DNA, a collective of veterans to the festival circuit. Natalie Koe, Festivals Coordinator of UCSD's A.S. Concerts & Events, said she "LOVED the art and decor aspect of the festival. That's something that is hard to find at other college festivals because students often don't put much effort into the art side since they are so focused on the music side," though she also congratulated Program Board on booking such an exemplary lineup.

As the music started up a bit after 1 p.m., the crowd remained relatively sparse. Opening acts Emancipator and Zella Day played amicably to the assorted audience, though each had to share stage space with the other's (and Anderson .Paak's) equipment. "It was a bit odd to see Emancipator, Zella Day and Anderson .Paak not given the full stage since there were other production pieces still on stage," noted Koe.

A delightfully ripe grab for the Extravaganza lineup, .Paak is prime to join the ranks of 2013's Kendrick and 2010's Drake as hip-hop legends who played here before their blow-ups into full-fledged legendary status. The Oxnard native oozed star power, some signature circle shades, and a Prince tee, which he quickly tossed to the already impressive set. His brother danced with dreadfully on-the-nose imagery like emojis (eggplant included) or a "Netflix & Chill" slogan. Despite their youth, they still couldn't avoid the corniness that comes with co-opting all things viral, though the goofiness of it all lent to their devil-may-care demeanor.

After blasting through a seemingly inexhaustible list of SremmLife hits like "No Type," "No Flex Zone," "Throw Sum Mo" and the unquestionable banger that is "Unlock the Swag," the rappers played "Look Alive," the first single off their upcoming, aptly-titled SremmLife 2.

Carson Capps, bassist for local band The Free Nationals, centered the stage with the studded list of performances, and the relatively smooth run—"Despite the outpour of crowd reaction for anthems like "Say My Name" and their remix of Zhu's "Faded" they deserved a spot on the lineup, their role as the ultimate act was a bit of a cooldown. Said second-year KCSB host Elena Bernick, "ODESZA was cool, but their live show wasn’t as exciting as I heard it would be, and they weren’t even close to matching the energy of Rae Stemmurd or .Paak. It would’ve been better if one of them had closed the show."

ASPB certainly outdid their already esteemed selves with the studied list of performers, and the relatively smooth run—save for the aforementioned line drama and some slight technical issues with the LED displays — of 2016’s Extravaganza makes it one for the books.
Togapalooza Rocks I.V.

Thomas Mannell & Maximiliano Ochoa Reporters

The sound of the waves against the bluffs in tandem with the crash of cymbals and the whisper of bed sheets folded around the bodies of hundreds of college students on Sabado served as reminder that it was indeed Saturday, May 14, the chosen date for the fourth annual Togapalooza, a yearly event that serves to assemble the most notable bands of I.V. for an all-day music festival from 12 a.m. to 12 p.m. Second-year Jack Tannenbaum, the organizer, looking a little harried, said that he decided to keep the tradition going because “music brings the community together.” Togapalooza was definitely primarily about the music, so here’s a little rundown of what went down.

Feral Vida
Feral Vida — an I.V. classic — slayed. Their strokes-inspired sound was almost nostalgic, the vocals raspy and affecting. Their beachy rock vibe appealed to the audience. The crowd never stopped dancing during the performance, grooving to the music until the set ended. The band mates seemed to hold real love for each other and that translated into a kickass performance. After the show, lead singer and fourth-year Max Schultz said that “the band members were sticking around I.V. after graduation” to continue making music, so stay tuned.

Posterchild
Their performance was wild. The lead singer, one of only three women to perform at Togapalooza, had a super eclectic, jazzy vibe. The crowd couldn’t help but meld together in an intense fit of dance when they began their rendition of “Hotline Bling.” The mood engendered by the band was positive and the instrumentals and vocals working together articulated a sound unlike any of the other bands that performed at Togapalooza.

Cooler Hats
Cooler Hats is definitely one of the most up-and-coming groups in the I.V. music scene, especially after this weekend’s show. Having just done away with their previous, less self-assured name (The Openers), the group has been in a state of flux, constantly redefining and refining their sound and identity. Graced with the addition of their new lead singer, second-year Isziah Egan, they killed their set at Toga, easily giving their best performance yet. We caught up with the group after the show and they left us with the following: “Big thanks to Jack Tannenbaum for organizing Toga and to Savage Henry, especially John, for helping us get on our feet. Look forward to even more jams from us this summer.”

Hypno Rings
The most bona fide jam-seshers of the day, Hypno Rings, revitalized a tiring, boozed out crowd with their unique, jazzy style. The group may lack a singer, but it fills the void by implementing the smoothest sax you’ve heard since your mom found her old Kenny G collection. Whereas many I.V. concerts draw crowds with free booze and blink-182 covers, Hypno Rings popularizes itself using raw technical skill and manages to be one of the only notable I.V. bands to succeed in doing so. Whether it’s downtown at Velvet Jones or at your friend of a friend’s backyard, Hypno Rings are a breath of fresh air from the sometimes stale realm of live I.V. music.

Savage Henry
The most savage festival in the most savage town could end in no other way than with the most savage band there is: Savage Henry. The west stage headliners once again attracted a dense, animated crowd. The energy sent out by the band was picked up and amplified by the mosh pit, which grew so large that it began sucking in the whole front half of the audience. With each power chord, the guitarist — who looked as though he’d been pulled right out of a Vietnam War protest — strummed, a visible wave propagated through the crowd, building with intensity each time. All in all, the image of Savage Henry going completely savage in front of a toga-clad audience as one of the most beautiful women I’ve ever seen crowdsurfed above it all will live on as a quintessential Isla Vista moment that I will remember for many years to come.

Togapalooza was a smashing success. Over a thousand people came out to support the bands of Isla Vista, and the vibes were there to match. If you weren’t having a good time, it was probably your fault. Though the event was epic, it’s important to note the homogeneity of I.V. bands overall. The performers were predominantly white, and there was relatively sparse female presence. Second-year Hannah Houk, who has a history of public policy, backed this up. “It was enjoyable, yet I would have loved to see more female artists in I.V. … If anyone’s down to form a girl band, hit me up.” While all the talent on display certainly exhibited a lot to be proud of, the Isla Vista music scene can only benefit from more variation in its look, its influences and its sound.
A Hidden Gem Just Fifty Miles North

Staff Writer
Cori Sainte Marie

As college students, our options for eating out are often limited. This is especially true in college towns such as Isla Vista, where we are given a few solid eateries and that is all we need. On rare occasions, though, we leave the comfort of our college town and are forced to venture out to try something new.

This past weekend, my mother and I took a mini vacation up to San Luis Obispo. By the time we were barely past Solvang, I was already feeling hungry. This led us to pull off at a random exit and into the very small town that is Los Alamos. It is the type of town where there are only about two restaurants, one post office and a few antique shops. From the outside it doesn’t appear to be much, but the history of it is very interesting. What once was a popular stagecoach stop in the 1880s, now has a population of about 1800. The town still holds some remaining buildings and culture from the past; it is a relic to behold.

We ended up finding a place called Bob’s Well Bread Bakery. I was pretty shocked we were able to find a restaurant so quickly given how obscure and tiny the town was! When we entered the small eatery, I was immediately amazed by the cute decor. Everything was trendy, new and something that you would find located in The Funk Zone in Santa Barbara.

This bakery specializes in bread, which they make fresh daily in the cafe. In addition, all of their ingredients are local and you won’t find any preservatives in any of their delicious treats. As soon as I saw bacon on the list of ingredients, I was sold. In addition, I also ordered a glass of freshly squeezed lemonade. This in total cost me $10.50.

As I got it, the bacon added a nice, tasty crunch to the mix. With every bite, I got to taste the myriad of flavors in it and it just kept getting better. In addition, the fresh lemonade I got with it (which was in an adorable mason jar) went with the meal perfectly. As I got up to leave this cafe, I thought about my experience. I was happy with the meal, service and style of the shop. This whole experience deserved a big thumbs up.

So the next time you find yourself travelling north on the 101, pull off into a small town called Los Alamos. You’ll be able to find my new favorite cafe: Bob’s Well Bread Bakery.

On The Menu

Light and Fresh Potato Pizza

Marisa Ratchford
On The Menu Editor

Sometimes in life all you want is a goddamn piece of pizza, but you know that all that pepperoni, oil and cheese is just no good for you. So, for those conflicting cravings, I have a perfect pizza recipe to satiate the pizza gremlin within each and every one of you. Of course, in order for you to eat this pizza guilt-free, you have to remove some of the traditional aspects from the image of pizza you hold near and dear. This pizza combines potatoes, onions and sour cream into a delightful combination that’ll give you something to feel filled with supremacy above all your friends who have given in to the sinful cravings of a glutinous gooey slice at Gio’s. Be sure to take an insta pic and caption it #detoxtoretox.

6 small red potatoes
½ yellow onion
Thyme
1 cup sour cream
1 cup mozzarella cheese
3 cups flour
Salt to taste (about a tsp)
1 tsp sugar
1 package active dry yeast
1 cup warm water
4 tbsp olive oil

1. Combine the flour, sugar, salt and yeast in a large bowl. Add the warm water and 2 tbsp of olive oil to the mixture and combine thoroughly. Knead the dough and then roll out into a rectangular shape. Use the remaining olive oil to spread along a baking sheet and place the dough on top. Place in a preheated 400°F oven for about 5 minutes or until it begins to brown.
2. Thinly slice the potatoes and onions. Spoon half of the sour cream onto the top of the browned dough. Layer the potatoes and onions and cheese on top and sprinkle with thyme.
3. Place in oven at 425°F for 15-20 minutes until potatoes are cooked and cheese is melted.
4. Serve warm with a dollop from the remaining chilled sour cream. Enjoy!
Researchers Disclose ‘Unknown Territories’

A Tuesday morning KCSB radio show is steadily chipping away at the many mysteries and miscommunications of science and the science community.

“Unknown Territories,” aptly named for its coverage of scientific topics, is breaking down the false but commonly accepted dichotomy between scientists and the rest of the world. Hosted by a power couple of two prominent researchers, Katja Seltmann and Yon Visell, “Unknown Territories” combines science and music to provide the first treatments for a simulated tumor-homing sequence that could be exploited in drug delivery.

The show covers trending scientific topics, such as the Zika virus and uses current scientific literature and research to combat the sensationalist and reactionary headlines the media often presents.

Visell is an assistant engineering professor whose research focuses on haptic engineering, or the science behind touch. He said there is oftentimes a lack of communication within and across the scientific community, and the morning show attempts to bridge the gap between scientists and the rest of the community.

“A lot of the time as scientists, our explicit training doesn’t involve communication, but it is something that we absolutely have to pick up along the way because, at some point, it’s necessary for everybody to communicate,” Visell said. “All the exciting work that is being done belongs to the public. It’s not only our interest, but somehow an essential part of our mission to be able to communicate the value in it.”

According to Visell, the radio show discusses science in ways that are accessible to the public, but does not lose the true scientificity of the issues.

“When it comes to the way that science is communicated to the public, it doesn’t really reflect the richness of what is happening today,” Visell said. “Often, we simplify it to an extent that it loses some of the complexity, but somehow is something that we can pick up along the way because, in some cases, it’s necessary.”

One of the goals of “Unknown Territories” is to hold community members to a higher standard of understanding and interest about scientific topics.

“It’s fun, but it’s also a service,” said Seltmann, an entomologist and the director of the Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration. “We see it as a service to us, too, because as a researcher, a lot of times you forget to look at what is hot in the science news. The idea was basically for us to keep up with the literature that is going on.”

“Unknown Territories,” while a relatively new and unique addition to Santa Barbara’s airwaves, is the latest in a lifetime of performances for both Seltmann and Visell.

Seltmann, or Irene Moon, her performance alter-ego, began her career as a “science-based performance art” in her undergraduate career with a series titled, “Scientifically Speaking with Irene Moon,” and presented lectures on entomology that incorporated music, education, and elements of drag.

Visell’s interest in radio began during his undergraduate career at Wesleyan University where he was involved with WESU Middletown, one of the first free-form radio stations.

Seltmann said the structure of the show, bringing music together with science, works to break down stereotypes of the rigidity of science and scientists.

“More women are going into the science field, but they do not stay in the field after graduation,” Visell said. “Often, we simplify it to a point that it loses some of the complexity, but somehow that change is really important.”

Cancer Research To Improve Pregnancy Medication

A UCSB professor is working with researchers internationally to create a drug that will assist in pregnancy placenta complications; the drug’s similarities to drugs used as cancer medication are surprisingly comparable.

In the last 20 years, only three new drugs have been licensed to use for pregnancies, two of which are used post-delivery. In terms of healthcare and medication, pregnant women are still at high risk, as a drug’s focus must be on the placenta and avoid interaction with maternal and fetal tissue to be considered relatively safe.

Erkki Ruoslahti, an adjunct professor at UCSB’s Center for Nanomedicine and Department of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology, is working with researchers abroad to devise a form of drug delivery similar to that used in cancer medication. The method was developed to treat tumors with chemotherapy and focus the drug interactions with only tumors.

The cancer drug targets tumors in a similar way a pregnancy drug should target the placenta.

“Our findings emphasize the similarities between placentas and tumors,” Ruoslahti said. “We envision that this technology could be clinically used to provide the first treatments for a poorly functioning placenta while simultaneously mitigating the risks associated with administration of drugs in pregnancy.”

Statistically, more than 10 percent of pregnant women develop serious complications like fetal growth restrictions or preeclampsia, a condition characterized by high blood pressure and protein in the urine. The underlying cause to these issues is not always clear, but research continues to explore the possibility of developing a drug that could cause serious health issues to the mother and baby.

Despite the seriousness of these complications, current treatments are limited to induction of labor and an early delivery, which is not only expensive for neonatal intensive care, but also puts the baby’s health at risk.

In the short term, premature babies are at a high risk of developing respiratory distress syndrome, retinopathy, cerebral palsy, and infections. Premature babies will also be more prone to elevated cardiovascular disease and type two diabetes later on in life.

Because the placenta behaves like a well-controlled tumor, we hypothesized that existing tumor-homing sequences would bind to antigens selectively expressed on the placental surface,” Ruoslahti said. “Here, we demonstrate that tumor-homing peptides can be exploited for targeted delivery of payloads to the placenta in mice and humans.”

Experimental results done on pregnant mice have been successful so far. The method not only enriched the placental growing in underdeveloped placentas, but also brought changes to healthy placentas and other organs in the body.

“The peptides did not accumulate in the vascular beds of other major organs but were excreted via the kidney,” Ruoslahti said.

Repeated administration did not adversely affect the pregnancy outcome in mice. Similar data was found when the experiment was repeated on human placental explants.

This creates opportunities for drug delivery to the placenta in pregnant women, without affecting the mother’s or baby’s health, and permits treatment of the baby pre-delivery. This allows women to avoid the costs and health complications of an induced early delivery.

“Placentas behave like well-controlled tumors,” said Lynda Harris, a pharmacology lecturer at the University of Manchester in England. “By developing this platform, we have opened up the possibility that any number of new drugs can be adapted and then used safely to treat common and serious pregnancy complications.”
That Escalated Quickly: Why You Should Do Acid

Disclaimer: All readers should prioritize the warnings of medical professionals over this tripper’s suggestions. Drop with caution.

I was a nerdy, spastic, approval-seeking kid. I probably still am, but we’re all too good at deceiving ourselves into thinking we’re perfect at the present. My sweater cuffs had holes and snout stains, my glasses were already quite thick and if I was cool, I didn’t know it. By no means was I any sort of bad boy or rebel, yet in the eighth grade I became a sort of outcast in my small, everyone-knows-each-other-and-word-about-everything-gets-around, upper-class-white, lower-class-Mexican math and tech magnet school. The catalyst: when I asked the sketchiest dude I knew where I could get some magic mushrooms.

“Mushrooms are too much for you. Do you want to just smoke some weed instead?”

I was interested in mushrooms because they grew naturally and could be ingested instead of smoked. At the time, smoking something felt awfully intense, kind of like how now snorting something feels more intense than smoking it and injection takes the cake. What did I know? I had no clue about drugs on the street.

I was chasing an experience: the mind-expanding and perception-altering trips that I first learned of while reading that online staple, Erowid.com. I read that mushrooms could make you hallucinate and all you had to do was eat them. I was in, but if weed was all I could get, weed would do.

A few days later I skipped my PE class, went to “The Ditch” — a large, open piece of land in between the local hospital and some standard Orange County suburbs — and smoked my brains out using an apple. All I remember was laughing uncontrollably, branding and being branded by a friend with a burning twig and laughing uncontrollably again at Carl’s Jr.

I was hooked.

Fast forward a couple years and I finally got a hold of some mushrooms. I think I took around five grams. At some point during the upswing of psychedelic confusion, some bastard gave me a pill and told me it would make things better. The next thing I knew I was rolling around and screaming in the back seat of a car while my friends tried to convince me to have a good time. Everything was purple.

I was in a pervverted "Looney Tunes" universe. Then I suddenly found myself in Chik-Fil-A, staring wide-eyed at the cashier, trying to understand the difference between us. I later realized the difference was gender, a concept that I lost hold of during that trip.

I’ll get to the point now. What I’ve detailed above seems typical of the experience of someone looking for psychedelics. Confusing, intense, fun and trippy. Certainly there are other more tangible, coherent aspects of psychedelic trips that serious fans can attest to: experiencing divinity, unity, bliss, synesthesia, cool visuals and whatever. But not everyone is looking for that, and if they are, always lingering behind the promise of an educational experience is the possibility of a “bad trip.” So to those with ambivalent or skeptical feelings about psychedelics, tripping remains just not worth it.

Enter microdosing. Ah, microdosing: a true game changer. The missing link. No longer do psychedelics have to be exclusively for those prepared for an intense, mind melting experience. Microdosing is exactly what it sounds like: taking a small amount of some sort of drug (for our purposes, psychedelics). You might have heard recent news about Silicon Valley techies or business/professional people microdosing LSD as a tool for focusing and enhancing their creativity. If not, you have now. When used at a nearly sub-perceptual amount, LSD can offer an experience quite different from what you’d expect out of a psychedelic, and people from unexpected places are catching onto this and trying it out.

So what’s it like? Well, there’s a feeling of buzzing, physical energy (like caffeine or maybe nicotine), improved focus and attention (like Adderall or Ritalin), an increase in creativity (like marijuana) and a lowering of social inhibitions (like, though much more appropriate than, alcohol). Here’s why that should excite you: first because a quarter tab of acid will cost you much less in terms of health and finance than a concoction of pills, coffee, cigarettes, pot and booze; second because it includes that unique spiritual touch offered by psychedelics and finally because there is a nearly impossible chance of getting out of control.

This is an opinion piece so I’ll say it plainly: If you haven’t yet, you should put this at the top of your to-do list.

Buy a tab of acid, cut it into quarters and put one under your tongue.

Am I wrong or does the zeitgeist of today contain a healthy amount of distrust for the drug regulations in our country? Maybe these regulations keep us safe, but it also looks like they help maintain a system of modern slave labor afforded by incarceration. It looks like these regulations stifle individual freedom and subversive culture. And it definitely looks like these regulations are for OUR Own Good.

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