Scary stuff going on at UCSB

UCSB or Not to UCSB . . . That is the Question:
There's a Santa Barbara County proposal that a
suicide preventive barrier be constructed on the Cold
Spring Canyon Bridge. Garrett Glasgow, associate professor of political
science at UCSB, questions the
necessity of putting up suicide barriers on bridges in order to prevent
jumping bodies.

"First, note that there is a distinction
between preventing suicides and
preventing suicides at a particular
location," Glasgow stated in the
"esteemed" (argh) UCSB Daily Nexus.
"Numerous studies have shown
that installing a suicide prevention
barrier on a bridge deters suicides at
that location . . . However, deterring
suicides at a particular location is
not proof that we have saved lives."

That's right! If someone is going to
commit suicide anyway, why make it
difficult?

Never mind that a suicide preven-
tion barrier was installed on the
Duke Ellington Bridge in Washing-
ton, D.C., while another nearby
bridge, the Taft Bridge, remained
unprotected. After the barrier was
installed, suicide rates dropped at
Ellington and did not increase at
Taft.

Glasgow doesn't think that this
necessarily proves that lives were
saved. Good grief.

The impulse to kill oneself is
generally short-lived, and if the means
are not available at the moment that
dark spirit moves someone to die,
that simply increases the possibility
that they will get help and/or that
dark spirit will pass.

I'm not surprised that UCSB has a
representative with this odd point of
view. It would seem that UCSB, in
the form of Daily Nexus at the mini-
mum, itself promotes self-injurious
behavior. And its reputation goes far
and wide.

The Acorn's (serving Agoura Hills,
Calabasas, Oak Park and Westlake
Village) recent editorial on kids
drinking pointed out, "The
orientation issue of the
Daily Nexus, UC Santa
Barbara's student newspaper,
provided an enlighten-
ing look at the collegelizing
our teenagers face.
Mailed to incoming freshmen, the Nexus is filled
with photos and vulgar advice on sex and the best
ways to get drunk, both on and off campus . . . Many
other (colleges) have reputations as party schools."

In an August 29 Daily Nexus piece
titled "Dorms Make for Good Sex,"
Alex Shlyakhov (I'm sure his parents
are proud) wrote, "Welcome to
UCSB. The University of Casual Sex
and Beer? Definitely. What you will
find here, aside from lectures, class-
rooms, lots of overpriced books you
probably won't read and beer pong
every night of the week, is that there is
no cooler sphere of college life for
sex and shenanigans than UCSB.

"Now, as is the case when you
start a new phase in life, you
should set some lofty goals for your-
self. College just so happens to be this
kind of transition. Sure, go ahead and set
that goal to keep a 4.0, and watch
your dreams crumble in front of you.
Or, you could take my advice and
make some goals that are actually
attainable. I'll give you a few to start
your lists off: Have sex in a dorm
bunk bed . . . Try something new —
anything from anal to a sixty-nine to a
threesome . . . I'm glad I could start
you off on your scavenger hunt for
snatch, your prowl for penis."

He then sets himself up as a
source of information for sexually
curious students in addition to the
student health center.

In previous columns I have
pointed out the research on the huge
surge of psychological and emotional
problems in colleges and
universities. Supporting
drinking and casual sex
certainly doesn't help
young people in transition
feel secure, centered, truly
connected to others or
supported in their maturational
and educational
goals.

I wonder if Professor
Glasgow sees any correlation
between this vulgar,
out-of-control atmosphere
and any student crisis in
suicidal ideation, sexually transmitted
diseases, broken — if not
crushed — hearts, and so forth?

Do Good Anyway: Catherine
Sheffield wrote, "This poem reminds
me of several people I respect: my
husband, mom and dad, and in-laws,
my nephew "the Marine" and you . . .
People are unreasonable, illogical
and self-centered.
Love them anyway.
If you do good, people will accuse
you of selfish, ulterior motives.
Do good anyway.
The good you do today will be forgotten
tomorrow.
Do good anyway.
Honesty and frankness make you
vulnerable.
Be honest and frank anyway.
The biggest people with the biggest
gestures can be shot down by the
smallest people with the smallest
minds.
Think big anyway.
People favor underdogs but follow
only top dogs.
Fight for the underdog anyway.
What you spend years building
may be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.
People really need help, but may
attack you if you help them.
Help people anyway.
Give the world the best you've got
and you'll get kicked in the teeth.
Give the world the best you've got
anyway."

Anonymity is Cowardice: I've
said that before, and I'll continue
saying that. Anything really worth
hearing ought to be said with full
identity disclosure . . . unless, of
course, you're in Iran, Russia,
Hollywood's favorite: Venezuela, etc.

Interesting quote from Forbes (Oc-
tober 2007): "Initially, anonymity was
crucial to the Internet's success as a
forum. It allowed the powerless and
oppressed to discuss their problems
online without fear of reprisal. In
Zimbabwe (which does not include
Santa Barbara, Montecito, Goleta or
 Carpinteria) an anonymous blog has
allowed people to publish things that
would incur the death penalty.

"However, anonymity also allows
people to insult, harass and pursue
grudge against others. Sex offend-
ers can chat with unwilling children
thanks to it."

Now that does include Santa Bar-
bara, Montecito, Goleta and Carpin-
teria. I cannot understand why any
of America's Internet services per-
mit anonymity. Oh, yeah, greed . . .
lost my head for a moment.

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