This May, vaccination numbers have continued to go up, with the university this year seeing a COVID-19 restriction and some aspects of Iota Vista and UCSB Santa Barbara are slowly resembling their pre-pandemic state. But back in March 2020, any hope of a return to normal life was far away. The following timeline is a chronology of events that occurred in UCSB weathered a year and two months and the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Winter Quarter 2020: No Cases in I.V.**

When the UCs and colleges around the country temporarily shut their doors in mid-March due to the pandemic, UC Santa Barbara students faced their new educational reality: remote learning.

As UCSB began its transition away from on-campus, there wasn’t a single case of COVID-19 in Santa Barbara County. Student activities and gatherings in Iota Vista quickly followed suit, changing or canceling their plans or events. Locales, like the Isla Vista Food Co-op, the Isla Vista Community Services District (IV CSD) canceled a plan for an alternative Deltopia event.

Then came the March 14 announcement from Santa Barbara County that Spring Quarter 2020 would also be remote – contradicting previous announcements that Spring Quarter 2020 would only shut the university down for a few weeks. All these changes came within a week of each other and still, the county had no cases of COVID-19. March 15 Santa Barbara County had its first case of COVID-19 in North County – still relatively far off from the Isla Vista college town. Iota Vista stayed clustered down, and it was still changing how residents in the city lived, but crowded town loved their lives. But the virus inched closer and closer, and by March 18, South Hasting had four cases, with Iota Vista’s case number still at zero.

At this point, every case in the county was news, and the Nexus reported every new case, increase – whether that be four new cases or five. But the virus was already devastating in other parts of the state like the Bay Area and Los Angeles. On March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom placed a stay-at-home order for all of California from residents, and the following day be ordered restaurants to halt dine-in operations and only provide take-out and delivery services – causing local businesses to suffer Santa’s To Go, Freiburger, S.O.S. Liquor, Sympathy Drinks and many more saw a significant decrease in their traffic and, subsequently, faced financial losses.

March 24, 2020 cases were 24 cases in Santa Barbara County, none in I.V. As COVID-19 emerged globally between December 2019 and March 2020, Iota Vista stayed clustered – until March 30, 2020.

**Spring Quarter 2020: Remote Learning Becomes Permanent**

The first case of COVID-19 in I.V. occurred on March 30, while the county’s case count was at 81. On April 5, Santa Barbara County Public Health Officer Henning Ansorg announced a “Stay Well at Home Order” for the county after residents weren’t complying with Newsom’s stay-at-home order, with at least 64 reports of statewide violations of March 30. That weekend, Deltopia – the annual, unsanctioned street party that invites parties and politics from out of town – saw less than 30 participants, with many students already out of town or following stay-at-home guidelines.

Early in the quarter, students began questioning why they were paying the same tuition as they were pre-pandemic, considering that their education was primarily online and many campus services were no longer available to them. However, the UC Office of the President, along with individual chancellors, announced they had no plans to adjust tuition. During this time, local food-based organizations Food Not Bombs, the Isla Vista Food Co-op, the A.S. Food Bank and Manos de Mapaches served meals and providing populations by providing free meals or grocery pick-up programs. I.V. CSD joined the local food-based organizations in serving vulnerable populations by distributing meals and providing food assistance.

**Fall 2020**

November 16 Santa Barbara moves into the most restrictive reopening tier, leading to the closure of on-campus operations at restaurants and other indoor businesses.

**Winter 2021**

February 2 Iota Vista reaches a pandemic peak of 1,000 total cases.

**Spring 2021**

April 23 Chancellor Yang announces that 2021 graduates will have an in-person grad walk.

Nine Greek Life Institutions Violated COVID-19 Public Health Orders

Atmika Iyer  
County News Editor

Local alumni of the Delta Tau Delta, Alpha Tau Omega, Sigma Chi, Gamma Xi, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Zeta Beta Tau and Zeta Phi fraternities and Delta Gamma, Pi Beta Phi and Alpha Phi sororities have all received warnings over the course of this academic year after being reported for violating public health orders by hosting or participating in large gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the one hand, Delta Tau Omega, Delta Tau Delta and Pi Beta Phi were repeat offenders. Alpha Tau Omega was the only offender to be sanctioned, eventually resulting in the A.S. Food Bank and Manos de Mapaches serving meals and providing food assistance.

Here’s a closer look at a few warnings that were issued over the course of the spring quarter and summer. The Nexus requested information between February 2020 and February 2021, which was not allowed for the utilization of the UC’s PRA office. The filed PRA request included information between February 2020 and February 2021.

In accordance with California’s Public Records Act (PRA), the Nexus submitted a request to UCSB’s PRA office. The filed PRA request included information between February 2020 and February 2021. All written assertions given to campus Greek Life organizations, the names of all campus Greek Life organizations that have been put on suspension status and the chapter status of all UCSB College Panhellenic Council organizations, UCSB Interfraternity Council organizations, UCSB National Panhellenic Council organizations and UCSB Sorority and Fraternity Council organizations. UCSB’s PRA office responded to the request with the names of all offending Greek organizations, the offense, the consequences of those offenses and the warning letters sent to the offenders from August onwards.

Not a single UCSB chapter president responded to the Nexus’ multiple requests for comment. In response to the fraternity letters, fraternities, Todd Shellen, the chief communication officer for the North American Interfraternity Conference, said in a statement that “overall, we believe fraternity chapters are taking public health guidelines seriously.”

While some may struggle with COVID fatigue, I fully support holding accountable any campus group alleged to be violating guidelines,” the statement continued.

Fraternities continue to be an important asset to campus during this pandemic as research finds fraternity members benefit from engagement significantly more than non-members and report higher levels of positive mental health along with lower rates of depression and anxiety.”

The first violations stretch back to August violations of March 30. That weekend, Deltopia – the annual, unsanctioned street party that invites parties and politics from out of town – saw less than 30 participants, with many students already out of town or following stay-at-home guidelines.

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I would love to live in precedented times again.
Letter From the Editors: On Diversity & Inclusion Chairs

Dear Students,

As we enter into the final stretch of this academic year, we at the Nexus recognize the importance of highlighting the hard work and dedication of our incoming leaders. EVELYN SPENCE, News Editor, and ANNIKA PEARSON, Asst. Sports Editor, are stepping into these roles, and we are excited to see what they bring to the Nexus.

For those of you who have been a part of the Nexus family, you know that change has always been a constant. As we look back at the Nexus’s history, we can see how much it has evolved over the years. The Nexus has always been a space where students can express their voices and ideas, and we are proud to say that our current student editors are building on this tradition.

As our new editors take the reins, they bring with them a wealth of experience and a desire to make a positive impact on the Nexus and the UCSB community. We cannot wait to see what they will accomplish in their time at the Nexus.

Thank you to our current and past editors, who have contributed to the Nexus’s success. We are grateful for your dedication and hard work.

Sincerely,

The Nexus Staff
UCSB To Bring Current Freshman Back to Campus for Second Year Summer Program

Initially, according to Director of Summer Sessions Leesa Beck, the program was slated to house 280 students in singles with most of the classes and activities conducted online due to COVID-19 precautions. However, since the country’s initial vaccine rollout, the program has become more ambitious. Capacity has now doubled to 460 students, students will live in doubles, with mixers and discussion sections held in person.

No decision has been announced on whether students will need to be vaccinated. The UC and UCSB systems recently announced that all students, staff and faculty must be vaccinated to access in-person spaces in the fall, pending full approval of the vaccines by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

During the program, students will also enroll in The Second Year Experience – INT 99C – a one-unit seminar course which introduces undergraduates research opportunities, campus organizations and leadership opportunities with the hope of helping students become more involved at UCSB.

"The Second Year Experience is really more geared towards helping students prepare to make the most out of their remaining time on campus," Beck said. "They’re really in a place where they’re ready to start thinking about what’s next and how they want to be successful."

Along with roommates and in-person exercises and sections, students will also each have a third-year or fourth-year mentor through the INT 99C seminar to provide advice and support for a smooth transition into their junior year. Beck explained that freshman year is characterized by students looking to meet fellow students and making friends, whereas sophomore year is a traditional manner due to increased academic responsibilities.

"We were excited to start giving students an opportunity to get to know each other … and build those friendships and all those other things that other students would have done at this point in their first year and just missed out on," Beck said.

"It is important for students to feel they have been short-changed on important first-year college experiences," first-year biophysics major Rashmi Prasad said. "One of my biggest challenges has been to teach masked all day, projecting my voice over the whir of the air purifier. Due to social distancing, it is difficult for students to collaborate on projects and support each other in small groups."

"Transition has been successful in all things considered. Students were eager to return and most did," Beck continued.

Looking forward to the fall of the 2021-22 school year, the district has a clear plan of action and plans to employ a full-day schedule. Most general education classes will be delivered by classroom teachers in an in-person format, although some science classes will continue with virtual options. Virtual Academy and FLEX Programs will not be recertifying state funding next year, but GUSD plans to continue offering independent study remote-learning options for students with special needs, according to Mayor.

Social distancing and mask wearing will continue to be required when returning to in-person learning. In addition, all parents will be expected to screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms prior to bringing them to school.

"The district will also add approximately 13 more teachers in order to reduce average class sizes down to 18 students, hire permanent substitutes and implement professional development programs for teachers and staff, according to Mayor. In addition, Mayor said that GUSD plans to implement district-wide after-school programs in response to family requests. One such program in the Expanded Learning After School Program on all nine GUSD sites, which will run five days a week. Mayor added that GUSD is also coordinating with the Isla Vista Youth Projects to run another program, After School Education and Safety. This program, which is designed to provide a safe and supportive environment at the high schools for students after school ends.

In-person summer programs and additional academic and psychological support will also be offered at each school for small group and individual assistance. "We are looking forward to a return to a normal more life in the spirit of the students and everyone in the [summer camp] program," Walsh said. "My heartfelt thanks go to the teachers, staff administrators, students and families who have made this possible."
Moving forward, UCSB will also be offering weekly vaccination clinics on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on May 26, June 2, June 9, and June 16, 2021. Students can sign up for the clinics, which will offer the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines, on the student health portal.

An upcoming May 22 mobile vaccination clinic, hosted in partnership with the I.V. Center, will administer both Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines at walk-in clinics. Students are encouraged to stop by for their second dose.

Community members are also invited to participate in the vaccination efforts. Community organizations including the Goleta Valley Community Center, the Santa Barbara County Department of Public Health, and the Goleta Valley Community Center have hosted clinics in the past, and more are planned in the future.

On May 13, UCSB announced that it will be hosting a mobile clinic for UCSB students, with the goal of vaccinating 150 people. The clinic will be held on May 28 at 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Student Union Building. Students interested in receiving the vaccine can sign up online at https://health.ucsb.edu/vaccine.

The Inter-Greek Council has also partnered with the Isla Vista Community Support Services to host a mobile clinic for UCSB students. The council has reached out to the Inter-Greek Council with the goal of vaccinating 1,000 people. The clinic will be held on May 29 at 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Student Union Building. Students interested in receiving the vaccine can sign up online at https://health.ucsb.edu/vaccine.

The council has also partnered with the Isla Vista Community Support Services to host a mobile clinic for UCSB students. The clinic will be held on May 29 at 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Student Union Building. Students interested in receiving the vaccine can sign up online at https://health.ucsb.edu/vaccine.
County residents 16 and older became eligible to receive a vaccine during Spring Quarter on May 15, 2021.

Newcomers to down town infor management for public safety areas while businesses began reopening. On that same day, the UC Education Abroad Program suspended all study abroad programs for the fall quarter, affecting 3,313 students.

Graduation, which normally marks the end of an academic year, took place virtually, with graduates celebrating at home across the state, county and world — many separated from Isla Vista.

Summer 2020: Isla Vista Case Levels Begin To Rise

Chancellor Henry T. Yang announced to students by mid-June that fall quarter would be mostly remote and, again, tuition and fees remained the same despite students being unable to access many of the resources paid for with student tuition, like the UCSB Library and the Recreation Center.

In June, Isla Vista saw a significant increase in cases. Slowly, the college town went from being stagnant at one case to an incite of cases from individual cases and small outbreaks, including one at a saloon at a dining hall. By June 22, Isla Vista had seven cases.

By the end of June, Isla Vista reached double digits in COVID-19 cases for the first time, with a total case count of 14.

Come July, a surge of COVID-19 cases across the state prompted Newsom to shut down indoor operations for restaurants, wineries and movie theaters in counties that were on the state watch list, including Santa Barbara County. To prevent a further rise in cases, the county shut down the Downtown area and planned to resume in-person classes at this time.

Fall Quarter 2020: Parties and Punishment

Fourth quarter began Oct. 1, and I.V. had 239 total cases.

By early October, it was clear that householdization was increasing in Isla Vista as a result of the pandemic. In January 2020, there were 69 household residents in I.V. By June, there were 131. Late September, I.V. CSD Board President Spencer Brant said the increase of householdization was one of the main reasons for the increase in long-term household residents.

As a result of canceled housing, fall quarter, student assistant (RADs) faced unemployment and housing insecurity. To respond, RADs formed a coalition in early September to demand the benefits lost as a result of their current work contracts.

Oct. 9, more than six months into the pandemic, I.V. had the third-highest amount of new cases in Santa Barbara County. The site at the I.V. Theater. The site would later become a permanent site for vaccine and testing for residents not able to leave the county. Within the next few weeks, I.V. resided in the purple-tier after more than 100 cases in one week.

To prevent the rate of pairing and other large gatherings both in I.V. and across the county, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance on Oct. 20 allowing peace officers and public works employees to enforce public orders with fines. At this time, I.V. had 35 active cases — the highest in the county. Van Do-Reynoso, director of the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCHP), said that the SBCHP had found a spike in COVID-19 cases at five different Greek housing sites in I.V. on Oct. 21.

Oct. 26, UCSB began offering free weekly testing on campus for all students following the dramatic increase in cases.

As of July 4, I.V. had almost 400 total cases.

On Nov. 16, Santa Barbara County joined a majority of other counties in the state by moving back into the purple tier, the most restrictive tier under Newsom’s reopening guidelines. Despite the rise in tiers, UCSB offered limited on-campus housing and a slight increase of in-person classes a day after moving into the purpler tier. Newsom later announced that counties in the purple tier would have to adhere to a curfew, prohibiting nonessential behavior outside one’s home between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

By December, I.V. CSD proposed, passed and placed two temporary “pallet homes” that can collectively house up to 10 students. The homes were seen as an attempt to house homeless population in towns continues to increase. Though temporary housing residents were housed, permanent housing opportunities remained multiple taken away. Arroyo/O’Hara, Park, Camino Corto, Open Space, Sisu, Orchard and Del Sol Vernal Pool Reserves were closed to house residents, leaving only one other park for encampment: People’s Park.

The county marked a turning point for the county. The first shipment of vaccines arrived. More good news followed on Jan. 11, 2021, when UC President Michael Drake announced that the UC system planned to vaccinate students two pieces of news: Oprah Winfrey will be their commencement speaker, and they will have an in-person graduation ceremony. The weekend of Jan. 16, I.V. sent out a news release announcing that graduates can invite up to two people to the event.

The county has thus far continued its downward trend of case metrics. On April 22, Ammons said that the county’s case rate declined over two-thirds of the last two weeks.

Soon, vaccination efforts targeted at students and Isla Vista residents ramped up. UCSB hosted its first mobile clinic and vaccination effort for students on May 6, and I.V. CSD is planning a mobile vaccination clinic in I.V. this month.

One week and two months into the pandemic, the county and the university began easing restrictions and increasing in-person events. According to current plans, Spring Quarter 2021 will be the last remote quarter of the pandemic.
Being able to go on campus has allowed me to see new faces and feel more a part of the community.

ELIZA HOWARD, FIRST-YEAR SPANISH MAJOR

Because the Rec Cen usually accommodates physical activity in both indoor and outdoor settings, stringent health and safety standards were required and plans for reopening were constantly changing, Garcia said.

Opening in spring quarter was the best plan because opening any earlier in the year would have likely resulted in an immediate shutdown.

"Things were literally being updated on a weekly basis. I'd put together a final plan and then people would tell me, 'You just missed the press conference, all those things have changed!'" Garcia said. "But even if we were to open [earlier], we would have experienced what some of our colleagues at other UCs experienced, which was opening and then immediately getting shut down two days later, if not a couple weeks later.

Like the library, the Recreation Center (Rec Cen) opened on April 12, but prior to its reopening, went through a rigorous process to gain approval, according to Jarrell Garcia, assistant director for operations at the Department of Recreation.

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Local Businesses in Isla Vista Speak on the Effects of COVID-19

Asumi Shuda
Asst. News Editor

From Woodstock’s Pizza to Bagel Café, Isla Vista food favorites faced declines in staffing, financial losses and customer retention issues during the COVID-19 pandemic. Though Santa Barbara County is in the orange tier of the state’s reopening plan and has administered 310,055 COVID-19 vaccines, local restaurants have seen progress in their recovery since March 2020 – the beginning of the pandemic – to the present.

At Woodstock’s Pizza, the initial declaration of the pandemic and the resulting quarantine required major changes to keep the business alive.

“We had to shift gears a lot of things when things first hit in March,” Bryan Mathewson, general manager at the I.V. Woodstock’s, said. “We were all doing a lot of research, trying to figure out what the best thing that we could do was.”

“We got our whole staff wearing masks before it was officially mandated [in the county],” he continued. “We were all taking any precautions we possibly could before we knew what was going to happen basically across the board.

Because Woodstock’s Pizza focuses on food delivery, Mathewson said that the business had an advantage during the pandemic. However, they said that Woodstock’s did lose significant dining room due to COVID-19 regulations. Employees were not able to make up for the loss of beer sales by creating a beer drink cart.

However, Mathewson said that the employee loss at the beginning of the pandemic created significant losses to the establishment, as well as to the restaurant’s sense of community.

“I think across every Woodstock’s store, there was a huge portion of the staff that left, probably about half or more,” Mathewson said. “We had a lot of people, either due to the limitations of the pandemic or due to differing feelings, no longer want to work in food service,” he said. “In I.V., there was a huge portion of the staff that left, probably about half or more.”

Mathewson said that in the fall and winter months of 2019-2020, Woodstock’s was overstaffed every week in significant numbers to prepare for the possibility of staff members feeling sick.

He added that Woodstock’s ensured that employees would stay home when feeling sick to prevent a possible COVID-19 spread. As a result, the company effectively enforced emergency paid sick leave and required workers to have proof of 10 days without COVID-19 symptoms or a negative COVID-19 test in order to come back to work.

“We didn’t want to be in a situation where workers had to choose between their money or employment,” Mathewson said. “We were very on top of getting people compensated for their time away from work.”

Like Woodstock’s, Bagel Café has primarily focused on takeout orders even before COVID-19 hit and wasn’t heavily impacted by the on-site dining closures, according to fourth-year global studies major Gigi Jackson, a server and barista at Bagel Café, so that wasn’t really a problem.”

Jackson said that Bagel Café implemented a one-party-space capacity as a safety precaution, although the measure became unnecessary at times when parties picked up to go orders while another party was ordering. “Sometimes it’s difficult because we call the orders out and put it on the counter, so a second party ordering but then another party might be coming in to get the bagels, so there’s some overlap with that,” Jackson said. “But we definitely do our best to keep that... And we’re not afraid to speak up and say, ‘one party at a time.’”

At Naan Stop, like other food establishments, COVID-19 regulations were enforced in response to the Santa Barbara Public Health Department, according to an employee at the establishment.

“The goals have been above the health department... to wear masks and [implement] social distancing,” an employee at Naan Stop while citing privacy concerns, the employee asked to remain anonymous. “So we took care of that.”

UCSB, Santa Barbara City College and other neighboring schools closing also created a loss of some business for Naan Stop.

Unlike other local businesses, the Isla Vista Food Co-op was initially met with a surge of sales last March, with swarms of customers panic buying after the announcement of the pandemic. “We were immediately inundated with panic-buying that happened basically across the grocery retail industry,” Allison Baymiller, marketing manager at the IV Food Co-op, said. “We had record amounts of food coming off of our shelves to the point that we were having a hard time keeping things stocked. It was immediate chaos.”

Baymiller said the IV Food Co-op had to put sale limits on items such as beans, toilet paper and rice that were being bought in large quantities during the panic-buying season. Like other businesses, Baymiller said the Co-op saw significant declines of staff members, with 10 staff members leaving. This was the result of many part-time workers, many of whom were university students, leaving IV.

Despite this loss, Baymiller said the IV Food Co-op ensured that their staff members felt supported financially during the pandemic, adding an additional $2 per hour COVID-19 emergency hazard pay for all non-manager employees.

“They may have started out with hazard pay was $15 an hour,” Baymiller said. “The goal is to not remove that $2 an hour and keep it at $15 [from here on out].”

Baymiller said that after tackling health and safety protocols the next step in enforcing COVID-19 regulations was limiting the number of customers allowed in the store at one time. The establishment served almost 60 to 70 customers per hour before COVID-19 and now receives about 30 people per hour.

“With that small customer base, we have been focusing on ways to grow basket size per customer and what they spend, the value they get from the store,” Baymiller said. “That’s been a really big conversation that our interim general manager has been very much pushing.”

Baymiller stressed the plan to enforce safety against COVID-19 as “going above and beyond.”

She said that a consistent supply of gloves for all staff members was readily available at all times and dispensable masks were available for customers who entered the store without one. Another major strategy was requiring customers to sanitize their hands before shopping by placing hand sanitizer right at the door.

“We would probably catch 85% of customers coming in and talk to them, ‘make sure you sanitize your hands,’ and that seems to work out pretty well,” she said. “Prior to the pandemic, the Co-op would set up a table on campus and participate in event sponsoring to communicate directly with students. Now, the effort has shifted to an online format through their Instagram page, Facebook page and website and newsletter.

Baymiller emphasized that the bulk section of the IV Food Co-op, where customers could bring their own containers and self-serve desired items like spices and teas, has been hit the hardest by the pandemic.

“It was huge, huge part of the store’s identity,” she said. “It’s a great, great option for inexpensive grocery shopping and for zero-waste grocery shopping, all of which aligned with our own values.”

However, Baymiller noted the silver lining of the pandemic as the Jonah's IV Food Co-op learned amidst COVID-19.

“We learned that the community is still able to love us, which is amazing,” Baymiller said. “We learned how resilient we could be and how many of our staff is. The amount of comment and support came from everyone, all working together to make sure the store kept running – there’s no amount of gratitude that can repay that.”
The university community joins together to give praise and thanks to those graduates who have demonstrated excellence during their years here.

The Thomas More Storke Award for Excellence, symbolized by a bronze medal forged by Francis Minturn Sedgwick, is given to the graduating senior who has demonstrated outstanding scholarship and extraordinary service to the university, its students, and the community. This year this distinction is awarded to:

Ebelechukwu Veronica Eseka

Storke Committee Honorable Mention
Michaela Allen & Carolina Ramirez Moreno

The Jeremy D. Friedman Memorial Award
is presented in grateful recognition of outstanding leadership, scholastic excellence, and innovative contribution to student and community life at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in memory of Jeremy D. Friedman, undergraduate 1979–83. This year’s recipient is

Adalis Yamilet Rojas

Alyce Marita Whitted Memorial Award
This award, established in 1993, is presented to one non-traditional graduating senior who has demonstrated endurance, persistence, and courage in the face of extraordinary challenges while in pursuit of an academic degree. This year’s recipient is:

Amanda J May

Yonie Harris Award for Civility in Public Discourse
is presented to graduates who best exemplify the principles of free speech and respectful dialogue and who foster a campus climate of civility and open-mindedness. This year’s recipients are:

Tianna White & Essence M Wynter

Michael D. Young Engaged Scholar Award
This award recognized the legacy of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Emeritus, Michael D. Young, particularly his commitment to empowering students toward principled leadership. It is awarded to students who have skillfully integrated their scholarly knowledge and/or values into action. This year’s recipient is:

Eric Xavier Palacios

University Award of Distinction
The following seniors and graduate students have been selected as recipients of this year’s University Award of Distinction, given to students who have contributed greatly to the quality of life by giving unselfish service to others within a particular area.

Dawit Aboye
Paul Alessio
Marcela Areyano
April Beath
Ulises Bucio
Balfred Carrillo Martinez
Kathryn Denise Casantusan
Benjamin Chocron
George D Degen
Shriya Deshpande
Andrew Fealy
Ector Flores-Garcia
Rachel Hildebrand
Luis Angel Larios
Joel Medina
Madeline Peng Miller
Kai Morquero
Allyson Randall
Caroline E. Reilly
Alla Sky Reynolds
Dillon Ruddell
Mia Jaclyn Salas
Alyssa Nicole Taniig Sanjongco
Abel Semma
Norman Justin Sween
Chinmay Manish Vaidya
Anastasia Carolyn Veal
Mary Warnhier
Andrew Yan
Wendy Zanker

University Service Award
The following seniors and graduate students have been selected as recipients of this year’s University Service Award, given in recognition of unselfish and dedicated service to the University, its students, and the community.

Zenaida Alcantar
Michaela Allen
Pamela Yafte Cardenas
Julia Rose Chin
Cheryl Nicole Chui
Natalia Diaz Amabilis
Jeremy A. Edwards
Juanita Uchechi Iheanacho
Isabella Liu
Arroz Manandhar
Dominique Mihaljevic
Kiyomi Morrison
Carolina Ramirez Moreno
Gabriel Reyes
Liseteth Santos-Solano
Jocelyn Nicole Tapia
Madison Tilner
Tania R. Torres
Lea Mojan Toubian
Francis Vergara
Erfan Zeyaei Kajbaf

Vice Chancellor’s Award for Scholarship, Leadership, and Citizenship
This award is presented annually to one or more graduating senior and graduate student who embrace the principles of scholarship, leadership, and citizenship through activities that enhance UCSB’s academic environment, contributions to a consequential project, or extraordinary service to the campus community.

Arynn Amezgua
Amiya Dutta
Jorge Jimenez Mejia
Emma Mosches
Brian Woolbin Mo
Cassidy E. Schells

Mortar Board Award
The Mortar Board Award is given each year in recognition of the graduating senior having the highest cumulative grade point average in the graduating class, combined with the fewest number of transfer units. This year’s recipient is to be announced at the ceremony.

Award winners, their families, & interested faculty & staff are invited to attend the Virtual University Awards Ceremony on Sunday, June 6, 2021 at 3:00pm.

Check out the Daily Nexus’ Podcast!
New episodes of Hot Off the Pod out on Fridays.
UCSB Wins First-Ever Big West Championship Title

UCSB Athletics

Congratulations to all UCSB athletes who played through a tumultuous year. It’s been a privilege to watch you play again.

UCSB wins Big West Championship

Congratulations to all UCSB athletes who played through a tumultuous year. It’s been a privilege to watch you play again.

UCSB's victory in the Big West Championship marks a historic moment for the Gauchos. With their win, UCSB has now claimed six conference titles in various sports, including the Big West Tournament for the first time in school history.

The Gauchos finished the regular season holding the No. 2 seed in the Big West with a 15-3 record, only losing three conference games throughout the season. UCSB continued their success into the tournament, defeating Long Beach State and UC San Diego in the first two rounds of the Big West Championship. The Gauchos then went on to lose in the championship game, 1-2, against the USF Dons.

Despite some standout defensive performances on the mound, UCSB's solid play came to a stunning halt as they lost to the USF Dons in the championship game. The Gauchos' season was ended by the Dons, who held the lead for the majority of the game. UCSB was unable to mount a comeback and lost the game 1-2.

UCSB advanced to the Big West Championship for the first time in school history, and despite the loss, it marks a significant milestone for the Gauchos.

UCSB's season was marked by impressive pitching performances by its starting rotation. Sophomore lefty pitcher Rodney Boone picked up the win in Game 1, throwing a complete game with 10 strikeouts. In Game 2, freshman Cory Lewis allowed 5 hits in 7 innings. In Game 3, sophomore Kyle Johnson allowed only 1 hit in 7 innings.

UCSB's offense was led by senior third baseman Reid Karros, who hit a home run against the USF Dons. UCSB's defense was solid throughout the season, with a strong pitching rotation and a solid infield. The Gauchos' season was marked by impressive pitching performances, with standout performances by Boone, Lewis, and Johnson.

UCSB Athletics

UCSB is ready to turn a page and move forward after this season. The Gauchos have set a new standard for success in the Big West, and their accomplishments are a testament to the hard work and dedication of their athletes and coaching staff.

Congratulations to all UCSB athletes who played through a tumultuous year. It’s been a privilege to watch you play again.

UCSB Athletics

UCSB Athletics
Tennis Programs Reach New Heights in 2021 Season

Tobias Hernandez
Staff Writer

For UC Santa Barbara’s tennis program, this unique year of competition mirrored the unique nature of professional sports over the course of the pandemic — and yet, both our women’s and men’s teams pulled through exceptional seasons.

Although both teams got off to less-than-ideal starts, both ended the regular season with Big West titles as well as berths in the NCAA Division I championship, along with several players from both teams earning individual accolades.

The women’s team started strong with their season opener against UC Davis, but then slipped into a three-game losing streak and had a rare suspension in play in their match against USC.

Things quickly turned around, however, as the Gauchos matched a strong 5-2 win against Colorado on March 26 and never looked back, progressing to win their next 11 matches for a total win streak of 12 matches — a number that hasn’t been paralleled since 1996.

In the midst of this historic season, the team also produced several incredible individual performances that received conference recognition. Sophomore Shakhzoda Khakmatova was recognized on two different occasions as the Big West Women’s Tennis Athlete for her dominant performances in the singles and doubles categories.

Khakmatova was also recognized as 2021 Big West Player of the Year at the end of the regular season, along with several other players who got conference recognition.

Elizaveta Volodko, a senior, was also recognized as a Big West Athlete of the Week for her outstanding match performance in early April and was also placed on the all-conference first team.

Head Coach Simon Thibodeau also received the title of Big West Coach of the Year for leading the team through this great season.

After a solid performance in the early rounds of the Big West tournament, the Gauchos pulled out a comprehensive 4-0 rout of Cal Poly in the final to take the Big West Championship, the Gauchos pulled off a comprehensive 4-0 rout of Cal Poly in the final to take the Big West Tournament, the Gauchos pulled off a dramatic overtime after losing four players temporarily due to COVID-19 protocols, but the remaining team managed to win four of these matches, just barely losing out to Cal Poly 4-3.

The Gauchos were also recognized for individual excellence, with junior Victor Krustev receiving Big West Men’s Tennis Athlete of the Week. The Gauchos also went on to win the NCAA Division I championship, along with several other nominated wins for the Gauchos.

In the Big West Tournament at the end of the regular season, the Gauchos put up strong wins in the early rounds and then pulled off a close 4-3 win against the top-seeded Cal Poly in order to secure the men’s team’s sixth straight Big West title as well as a berth in the NCAA tournament.

Although it was a difficult loss, the tournament capped off a hot streak to end the regular season with a record of 10-6, an impressive showing that secured the No. 3 seed in the Big West Tournament.

Looking Back: Sports in the Year of COVID-19

Anrika Pearson and Brandon Victor
Sports Editors

What a year.

In March, we saw the sports world come to a grinding halt when the NBA suspended play due to COVID-19. Around the same time, college basketball got its own shock when the Big West Basketball Tournament was cancelled — an anticlimactic end to incredible seasons for the UCSB Gauchos men’s and women’s teams.

No UCSB sports team would play another game for seven months.

It’s been a tumultuous year for UCSB athletics, and, as student journalists who primarily cover UCSB sports, it’s been a tumultuous year for us at the Daily Nexus sports section. We’ve come back stronger than ever. In one of the finest seasons in program history, the men’s basketball team won the Big West regular season and championship titles and came within minutes of pulling off an upset in the first round of 2021 NCAA tournament.

The women’s tennis team put together an incredible season, including a win streak in 25 years and the track and field team set four school records.

One of the most beautiful aspects of sports is the comeback, when teams and individuals show their grit, determination and composure in the face of adversity. Much as the UCSB programs have put together incredible seasons while adhering to CDC guidelines and keeping student-athletes safe, we at Daily Nexus Sports have performed a comeback of our own.

With many of our writers graduating last spring and no collegiate sports to write about, our section felt isolated, and its future seemed bleak.

Throughout fall quarter, we focused our efforts on recruiting new writers, many of whom were first-year students eager to apply their love for sports to journalism. We capitalized on their willingness to be single off-season voices to report on the new and seemingly return of sports.

Our writers produced stories about the NBA bubble and its applicability to UCSB athletics, and the future of college sports.

As UCSB athletics began to slowly open up in the winter, beginning with the basketball team playing basketball in our attic back home and got our writers accustomed to beat writing. Here, we kept up the progress and statistics of our teams over the course of the season. Come spring quarter, they were producing consistent coverage of four different UCSB sports programs.

For all of this, we want to thank each and every one of our writers this year, including but not limited to Preston Espoo, Garrett Harcourt, Jacob Davis, Tiberius Hernandez, Oliver Bley, Ella Wiemann, Jai Usurkar, Vire Pathak and Krishan Yadav for their hard work, flexibility and dedication to the section.

This will be the last article we write for the Daily Nexus sports section. It’s been an amazing four years, and we cannot wait to see the incredible achievements of the section’s next editors.

Thank you, Garrett Harcourt and Preston Espoo. We leave the section knowing that it couldn’t be in better or more capable hands.

Here’s to many more years of UCSB athletics and many more years of Daily Nexus sports coverage.

2021 NBA Award Predictions

Garrett Harcourt
Sports Editor

With the NBA regular season coming to a close, there are a few awards for the NBA’s most prestigious awards and some that are still in close contention.

The standout few in the running for most improved player are the Los Angeles Lakers’ Anthony Davis and the Atlanta Hawks’ Trae Young.

Davis has made a huge leap from a mere 12 points per game to 28.5 points per game, 10.6 rebounds per game and 1.2 blocks per game.

Young has made leaps in every major category — blocks, assists, rebounds — and has been averaging 30.5 points, 8.8 rebounds and 8.6 assists per game.

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Young has made leaps in every major category — blocks, assists, rebounds — and has been averaging 30.5 points, 8.8 rebounds and 8.6 assists per game.

My pick for Coach of the Year is none other than Billy Donovan.

Donovan has guided the Chicago Bulls to a 42-30 record this season, winning 10 more games than last season.

Porter Jr. has made leaps in every major category — blocks, assists, rebounds — and has been averaging 20.1 points and 11.8 rebounds per game.

My pick for Most Improved Player is Porter Jr. He has been the leader on the new look New York Knicks and is a force on the floor to be a Knick for the next 20 years.

For all of this, we want to thank each and every one of our writers this year, including but not limited to Preston Espoo, Garrett Harcourt, Jacob Davis, Tiberius Hernandez, Oliver Bley, Ella Wiemann, Jai Usurkar, Vire Pathak and Krishan Yadav for their hard work, flexibility and dedication to the section.

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Five Meals Freshmen Can Look Forward to Eating at Ortega

Emma Demorest
Nexustentialism Editor

With campus set to reopen this fall, Nexustentialism is priming incoming freshmen – as well as incoming sophomores (who science tells us are just more freshmen, really) – for the luxuries they can look forward to during an on-campus school year. One of those luxuries, as returning students need to be told, is the Ortega Dining Commons. Known for both its unbeatable ambiance and five-star dishes, Ortega is more than a cafeteria – it is a place of community, of luxury and, in the spring/summer, a respite after wedding venue. Of all the dishes new students should be on the lookout for when reveling in the Ortega experience, here are Nexustentialism’s all-time favorites.

Meat Cube
A timeless classic, Meat Cube™ just can’t be beat. This dish will have you wondering, “What type of meat is this? And why can’t I pin down the flavor?” The answer to both? We’re legally not allowed to disclose that information! Meat cube runs S-XL, you’re bound to find a size that works for you. The hands of the great Ortega and the students your age that make this dish, the bug holes? Or maybe the very bottom? Your fate lies in the hands of the great Ortega and the students your age that make the stuff in there. Though the thrill of the surprise is almost as good as the dish itself, there’s no beating the fresh taste of a limp lettuce piece paired with something we can’t legally call ranch.

Water Bowl
This crowd pleaser is an inventive take on the classic guacamole. Ortega chefs insist that this dish was in fact heavily requested by students and not created due to a tight budget.

Raw Fried Chicken
A beautiful little paradox.

Liquid Tostada
The perfect lunch for the go-on-the-go! No need to waste energy moving these chompers when you can just slurp your meal down. Not only is the liquid tostada renowned for its convenience, but some say the consistency of the dish actually elicits a rich umami flavor that can’t be found in your traditional tostada.

Little Lettuce Piece
Get some greens with this popular go-to! The best thing about Little Lettuce Piece is that you never know which piece of the lettuce you’re going to get. Will it be the top layer with the bug holes? Or maybe the very bottom? Your fate lies in the hands of the great Ortega and the students your age that make the stuff in there. Though the thrill of the surprise is almost as good as the dish itself, there’s no beating the fresh taste of a limp lettuce piece paired with something we can’t legally call ranch.

Shark Fins
This one is not a joke. Emma Demorest is a huge foodie and hopes to pursue a career in culinary journalism.

Campus Sicks Probably Can’t Wait To Hold Up In-Person Class with Useless Questions, Anecdotes

Nexustentialism Editor, Extraordinaire
Max Myszkowski

While normal students are excited for the in-person quarter ahead in Fall 2021 to see their friends again and participate in sports or clubs, others are gearing up to participate in lectures solely to show classmates how smart they are.

The transition to online learning took a serious toll on the smart alecks, wise guys and teachers’ pets of UCSB, forcing them to consult professors during office hours or via email (where few, if any, students could hear the thought-provoking comments they were brilliant enough to think of). “It’s really infuriating,” Hazel Klink, a third-year student, told Nexustentialism. “Now the only people I interact with who know how special I am are Mommy and my professors. I miss the feeling of my fellow students probably writing down every comment I make, wondering if they’re smart enough to even share a class with me.”

Thankfully, this year of minimal self-indulgence and virtue signaling will soon be no more. In person classes will mean that freaks like Klink can stop the professor in the middle of their sentence to ask the most meaningless question known to man in order to show that they’re critically analyzing the material. Second-year Joseph Newman reminisces on the time he challenged his Environmental Studies professor to host the midterm online instead of wasting hundreds of paper scantrons. “I bet everyone realised how environmentally conscious I am!” he somewhat believes.

Once the wake-up resumes, tens of students will battle with each other every lecture to see who can rack up the longest speaking time other than the professor. And whether it be raising their hands to tell a random story about something tangentially related or to implicitly question the lecturer’s knowledge of the material, they’ll be in full force come September.

To the sicks wishing to close their laptops and never experience such lectures, all a lecture is just a conversation between them and the professor, and nothing will stop their carnal desire to try and impress everyone in the room despite rarely succeeding.

Sam Franzini will sometimes miss the validation of pre-recorded lectures, where the only person talking is the one who should be.
A Conversation with Santa Barbara Musician Conner Cherland

Conner Cherland performs on stage in the mountains above Santa Barbara.

The War Over Playboi Carti’s ‘Born Sinner’

While quarantine didn’t signal the end of blockbuster hip-hop releases, it did contribute to the growing popularity of smaller indie artists. One such artist is Conner Cherland, a Los Angeles-based indie rock musician who has been using quarantine as an opportunity to write and perform new music.

Cherland’s songwriting hobby began when he was a child, and he has continued to pursue it throughout his career. He recently released a new album, ‘Born Sinner,’ which features a range of styles and themes.

‘Born Sinner’ is a collection of tracks that explores the ups and downs of life during quarantine. The album was released in April, and it has been well received by audiences.

Cherland’s music is characterized by its emotional depth and its ability to capture the mood of the moment. He draws on a variety of influences, including rock, folk, and electronic music.

The album’s reception has been positive, with many critics praising Cherland’s talent and his ability to create music that resonates with listeners.

Cherland is looking forward to continuing to make music and to connecting with fans through his music. He is also excited to see how his music will continue to evolve as he explores new ideas and approaches in his work.

Conner Cherland performs on stage in the mountains above Santa Barbara.

Record Recap: The Best and Worst of the Pandemic (So Far)

Artweek Staff

With quarantine seeming to come closer and closer to an end, now seems to be the time for reflection on what happened in one of the most chaotic years in recent memory. Music found a larger role in people’s lives as they looked for anything to distract themselves from an increasingly distant world.

While there was laughter at parties, there was also fear and worry. Many artists, however, were able to turn their passion into something useful.

“Quarantine was a time when artists were able to create music that resonated with people’s emotions,” said Artweek’s music editor.

With so much new music being released during quarantine, it is difficult to make sense of it all. Here are some of the best and worst albums of the pandemic.

High-budget professional crews and locations were ditched for music recordings that took place in your bedroom. The concept of a live performance was replaced by a recorded one, allowing for more creative freedom. The result was a burst of creativity that has led to some of the best music of the past few years.

Among the albums that stood out were Dua Lipa’s ‘Future Nostalgia,’ Billie Eilish’s ‘when we all fall asleep, where do we go?’, and Harry Styles’ ‘Harry’s House.’

These albums were released during quarantine, and they quickly became hits. They were able to reach audiences around the world, and they helped bring people together.

Dua Lipa’s ‘Future Nostalgia’ propelled her to superstardom, and it set the bar for the rest of the year. ‘when we all fall asleep, where do we go?’ by Billie Eilish was not only a commercial success, but it also received critical acclaim.

On the other hand, some albums were not as well-received. ‘Harry’s House’ by Harry Styles, for example, was not as successful as expected, and it did not reach the same level of acclaim as ‘when we all fall asleep, where do we go?’

Overall, the pandemic was a time of change and innovation in the music industry. It is likely that we will look back on this time as a period of creative growth and discovery.

Pop Finds a New Face

When quarantine may have initially seemed like the kryptonite to upbeat pop music that usually dominates summer, the genre’s potential for the spring and summer season was pointed out by fans and tweeters, who found a way to persevere. There is no end to the plume of this than Dua Lipa’s explosion on the pop scene. Always a fairly well-received artist, Dua Lipa’s ‘Future Nostalgia’ propelled her to superstardom, with the most of the biggest songs of her career being praised as the best of the pandemic.

Among the album’s biggest hits were ‘Don’t Start Now,’ ‘Physical’, and ‘Dancing with a Stranger.’

The album’s success was not only due to the catchy tunes, but also to the message of hope and positivity that it conveyed. ‘Don’t Start Now’ was a particular hit, with its upbeat rhythm and optimistic lyrics.

The album’s success was also due to its ability to connect with fans. The music was relatable, and it resonated with listeners who were going through similar experiences.

Overall, ‘Future Nostalgia’ was a well-received album that helped to bring about a new era of pop music. Its success is a testament to the power of music to bring people together and to bring hope and positivity in difficult times.
Crumble Mix:
Yields 4-5 servings
else I could find in my kitchen to make a blackberry-take the blackberries I had in my fridge and whatever
feeling adventurous one Friday night, so I decided to
blackberries are also a great fruit to bake with. I was
flavor profile make them satisfying treats on their own,
blackberries and 2) realized that blackberries slap.

Blackberry Base:
Total Time: ~1 hr

Directions:
1. Take your chopped strawberries and mint leaves, and muddle them in the bottom of your cocktail shaker.
2. Pour vodka and lemonade over the strawberry-mint mixture.
3. Add in a handful of blueberries for additional color.
4. Add ice and shake!
5. Grab a clean glass and add fresh ice.
6. Strain your mixture into the clean glass over the ice.
7. Garnish with fresh mint and enjoy!

Cocktails reflect the change in seasons. This spring, be on the lookout for lighter drinks with fresh herbs and seasonal fruits.

Spring Into Summer Strawberry-Vodka Lemonade

by Michelle Lee

The weather is warming up, and our winter layers are coming off… spring has officially sprung! Spring means pastel colors and brunches with the girls with, of course, a cocktail in hand. Try this strawberry-vodka lemonade, a simple recipe that will add a pop of flavor to your picnic or brunch table spread throughout spring and into summer.

Ingredients (makes 1 drink):
• 3 fresh strawberries, chopped
• 4-5 mint leaves
• 2 ounces vodka (I use Tito’s Handmade Vodka)
• 3 ounces pink lemonade
• 5-10 blueberries
• Ice

Equipment:
• Shaker (if you have one)

Directions:
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Blackberry-Mint Crumble

by Michelle Lee

On the Menu Asst. Editor

Fun fact: While I was a kid, I was terrified of blackberries. Their dark purple, almost black, color had me convinced that they were poisonous and I would physically pale whenever they were in my sight. It wasn’t until I accidentally ate a blackberry that was buried
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Chinese Mantou Recipe

by Christine Tu

Staff Writer

Mantous are delicious, fluffy steamed buns that are a staple in Chinese cuisine. These delightfully chewy and soft buns are a great alternative to rice or bread and are super easy to make. Only consisting of five ingredients and taking around an hour to make, this recipe is perfect for anything from a light afternoon snack to a full-fledged meal. For those who like it, feel free to leave it out or sub it with some

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As interest in climate science has exploded with the looming threat of climate change, scientists around the world have sought to better understand how precipitation patterns may change in the future or have changed in the past due to corresponding changes in temperature. This is how it is done by using both complex mathematical climate modeling and proxies found throughout Earth—like ice cores— to reconstruct paleoclimates found in Earth’s past.

“I think it is really valuable, especially, to understand climate change, climate variability and what drives this variability. Paleoclimate studies contribute significantly to this understanding,” Syee Weldeab, a professor in the earth science department at UC Santa Barbara who studies paleoclimate, said.

Weldeab has sought to better understand the paleoclimate of various places worldwide, including Central Asia, the Eastern Tropical Atlantic and the Bay of Bengal, using marine sediments and cave deposits, like stalagmites, as climate archives.

Along this vein, Weldeab, in collaboration with other researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, University of Massachusetts Amherst and UNAM Campus Juriquilla, has worked to piece together data to better understand how the northern Yucatán Peninsula’s precipitation patterns have changed during the mid-Holocene, roughly 5.2 to 5.7 thousand years ago, to the Holocene-era, immediately before the industrial revolution.

Such information is important because rainfall patterns have profound implications for whether or not a landscape is hospitable for human beings.

“If you have a wet climate, and it is not subject to large-scale frequent dry-and-wet cycles, then you also have a decent vegetation cover. In addition, agricultural activity is less affected by drought. That makes it stable and a more conducive environment for human beings,” Weldeab said.

The Yucatán Peninsula is a relatively flat low-lying area that they were not fit to experiment—rather, they derived their numbers by solving the quantum mechanical equations that describe how electrons behave in materials.

In research, their team used calculations to study candidate defects that could explain what had been seen.

“We came across something novel, a hydrogen defect,” said Dr. Xie Zhang, a postdoctoral researcher in the group. “Most studies treat the organic component as an inseparable part, but we found a hydrogen vacancy. It’s like breaking a hydrogen atom [from] these molecules.”

Their calculations quantitatively suggested modifying the structure of the defect compared to what those defects were. So, they applied their methodologies to build a foundation and understand the perovskite itself as well as to see rather than running experiments in a lab, the team performed computational research, running calculations using supercomputing resources provided by the National Energy Research Scientific Computing Center.

Turiansky said their work was also relatively flat-lying area that they were not fit to experiment—rather, they derived their numbers by solving the quantum mechanical equations that describe how electrons behave in materials. In their research, the group found defects that were limiting the efficiency of the solar cells. Experimentally, they could not find what those defects were. So, they found a hydrogen vacancy, which hasaji became the leading low-cost, high-efficiency solar cell material, because they are very low-cost to material’s potential, the team was hybrid perovskites, consisting of the inorganic perovskite and an organic material component, the team was able to measure the isotope composition of oxygen present within the layers of the formation.

“We did this by using the ratio of two oxygen isotopes: Oxygen-18 and Oxygen-16. The ratio between these two isotopes reflects mainly two factors. One, how much it’s raining over the cave, and where the moisture is coming from which precipitation over the perovskite,” Weldeab said.

“With this knowledge of the isotope composition of oxygen, we can make inferences about changes in anthropogenic climate change. ‘We know for instance that two isotopes reflect the season and geographical climate conditions. So when we look at a warming climate, we’re seeing a decrease in the summer but also a warming of winter. We can use this knowledge to think about future climate scenarios and how they might affect the region.’

“This has an impact on the rainfall patterns that result from changes in the Sun’s energy and Earth’s configuration. So when we look at a warming climate, we’re seeing a decrease in the summer but also a warming of winter. We can use this knowledge to think about future climate scenarios and how they might affect the region.”

Pérez-Torres said that the results of the research help scientists understand the past hydroclimate of the northern Yucatán, and suggest that the mid-Holocene had a wetter, more stable hydroclimate than the late-Holocene and the present.

However, according to Weldeab, it is important not to confuse the reconstructed past climate of the Yucatán with potential future climates influenced by current anthropogenic climate change.

“We cannot go back in time and measure precipitation. But the environmental change—in what we call climate—for the future we can’t observe it yet, but we can observe the results of those changes today. We can study the past and use that information to inform our understanding of the future.”

UCSB Earth Science Professor Syee Weldeab and a stalagmite under study in Central Asia, where other paleoclimates analyses happen.

“A photo of a perovskite crystal.
An Open Letter to a Perverted Elderly Man

Kathleen Santacruz
Staff Writer

To the elderly man who blatantly sexualized me at the vaccination site:

Getting my second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine was supposed to feel like such an accomplishment. I was finally going to be closing the door on the past year and heading one step closer to putting it behind me. I was excited to do my part.

But you looked like a nice elderly man. I wondered if you had a granddaughter my age who you would talk to me about. Then I saw and asked if all kids could do it, and you said, “You can do it on my lap if you want.”

Just like that, it was all gone. My stomach dropped. Was I just an extension to be used? I didn’t even completely remember what your face looks like. I don’t even know what you said. It was like a sick memory — someone crying and feeling helpless all over.

This interaction may never cross your mind again, but it will be etched into my mind. It was something that I remember for the rest of my life, whether I want to remember it or not.

The only difference being that in today’s generation, women are treated with more respect and we are not only more often allowed to stand up for ourselves and are given the means to do so, but they are also more likely to be heard. Your conceptions of women are products of an outdated — and dated — system where gender roles are an easy way to make my existence — years of my life — disappear, and make me feel like someone less than myself. This is the only difference.

The voice of the girl who you saw as no more than a “bad Asian” — a violin-playing banana. White on the skin, orange on the soul. And despite the welcoming arms of my congregation, I shamed myself for not fitting in. I measured myself, my faith, my culture, a hazy history. It means everything to me. But it’s not enough. It’s not enough to be accepted, to be understood, to be heard. Your conceptions of women are products of an outdated — and dated — system where gender roles are an easy way to make my existence — years of my life — disappear, and make me feel like someone less than myself. This is the only difference.

I have goals for my life, and I’ve had many accomplishments in my life, but there are so many things that, with practice, I have learned to value and love about myself. But at that moment, none of those things mattered. I was nothing more than you to the subject of a sick fantasy, with no worth other than what you bestow upon me. In my mind, I was worth so much more.

I didn’t know how to put effectively into words. But my silence didn’t take long for my silent shock to turn into a rage against the institutions of oppression that we find ourselves. At the same time, no measure taken against those institutions of oppression will be seen as small in the face of the fury for equality across all interactions of feminism. Women are so much more powerful than you will ever be able to comprehend, little old man.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Santacruz strives to disrupt the status quo and demand the respect due to women that all men deserve.

Temi Olupinmi-Onayemi

An Open Letter to a Perverted Elderly Man

Kathleen Santacruz
Staff Writer

An asfthi Chinese adoptee raised in white suburbia to a Jewish-Protestant faith: “I don’t know” has become a staple in my vocabulary.

“Where are you from?”—A question that has been asked countless times across my generation and beyond. It’s the same numb question that comes over me when I look out from my synagogue’s bimah into a sea of congregants that looked nothing like me on the morning they bar mitzvahed, or when that stranger pressed to 2-year-old me on the street and whispered to my mother, “Adopted? Oh she must be so smart.” It’s the same hollow question that I am asked when I tell 7-year-old me on the street and whispered to my mother, “Adopted? Oh she must be so smart.” It’s the same hollow question that I am asked when I tell 7-year-old me on the street and whispered to my mother, “Adopted? Oh she must be so smart.”

Do you identify as: Asian? Yes. Hopefully. I don’t know. Those damn “choose your identity” checkboxes on online forms are for the girls who deserve to have their voices heard, and their existence to be considered worthy.

The significance of women’s gender will now never be the same.

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