

MATTHEW HOY SEPTEMBER 17, 2016 4:37 PM

Practical advice for Cal Poly students: Don't be stupid



These photos show the scene before and after a roof collapsed Saturday, March 7, 2016, on Hathway Street near Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo. Courtesy of the San Luis Obispo Police Department

BY MATTHEW HOY

In the fall of 1993, I wrote an op-ed in the then-Mustang Daily welcoming students back to Cal Poly for another year and giving practical advice to freshmen navigating their first college experience.

With more than 20 additional years of life experience, I've got better, more useful, advice for you than what meals should be avoided at the Campus Dining Room, aka The Stalls.

Here it is: Don't be stupid.

It may sound trite or, perhaps, unnecessary. After all, many of you were at, or near, the top of your high school class. You're going to school at U.S. News & World Report's "Best in the West" school for the 24th straight year. Cal Poly wasn't your safety school. You're not idiots.

Well, most of you aren't.

But you're also in your late teens or early 20s, and for most of you, your life experience and judgment is still sorely lacking.

You can have a great college experience without using illegal drugs, excessive amounts of alcohol or committing large-scale mayhem. You don't need to get on a garage roof at 6 a.m. with your beer. Garage roofs are designed to keep rain out, not carry your weight and that of 50 of your closest friends.

National Lampoon's "Animal House" was not a how-to guide.

Ladies, the vast majority of the young men you'll meet at Cal Poly are solid, upstanding guys. As is the case in the larger world, some of them are not. Learn to tell the difference.

Gentlemen, the vast majority of young women at Cal Poly are smart, caring and thoughtful. As is the case in the larger world, some of them are not. Learn to tell the difference.

You'll learn a lot at Cal Poly, and not just in the classroom.

You'll make memories that will last the rest of your life.

Just don't be stupid.

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For those of you seeking more specific advice, I offer this: For many of you, there are some music classes that will fulfill some of your general education requirements.

Take whatever class Craig Russell is teaching. You'll thank me for it later.

Conservative columnist Matthew Hoy is a former reporter, editor and page designer. His column appears in The Tribune every other Sunday, in rotation with liberal columnist Tom Fulks. Read Hoy's blog at Hoystory.com. Follow him on Twitter @Hoystory.

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MJ Johnson · Brigham Young University
 Good life advice for people in general. We could all do with a bit more thought before action. Agree with the Brewing example, too, that was indeed a series of dumb choices that led to an accident which easily could have been avoided.

Fully disagree on the "Ladies, learn to tell which men are not nice." That should be re-worded to, "Gents, don't rape." (ala not continuing a language culture of victim-blaming-- "You should have known he wasn't a nice guy" is a terrible approach that excuses the perpetrator. We should be educating youth on accountability, not blame.) Meant in the best intentions, but even nice men do dumb things under the influence of peers, alcohol, and lack of consideration for consent.

Like · Reply · Sep 19, 2016 3:53pm

Taylor Guthrie · Works at Oracle
 This photo was from 2015. If you're going to make remarks about stupidity, at least get your facts straight.

Like · Reply · Sep 19, 2016 1:50pm

Mick Bruckner · Student Organizer at California Faculty Association
 this is such a rude and condescending article! Aside from him creepily prescribing heterosexuality and conformity onto young "ladies" and "gentleman", he completely MISSES the problem the San Luis Obispo community is facing! NEWSFLASH: many Cal Poly students are entitled, stupid, ignorant, and bigoted! Guess why? Because Cal Poly allows and encourages this behavior! If you want to make a real impact on San Luis Obispo's relationship with Cal Poly students, it would help if you thought more critically than simply insinuating our own stupidity.

Like · Reply · 1 · Sep 19, 2016 11:09am

Mick Bruckner · Student Organizer at California Faculty Association
 SLO Tribune this article is TRASH

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Matthew Hoy · Works at Professional Annoyer of Liberals
 Column seems a little short this week? Read what the Tribune wouldn't publish at my blog:

<http://hoystory.com/2016/09/tribune-wont-publish/>

Like · Reply · 5 · Sep 18, 2016 9:18am

Rodger Avalanchier · Morro Bay, California
 Read your blog, I agree with the Tribune, the section was inappropriate. The same points could have been made by other means. The edit was clearly not censorship or political correctness - it was about crossing a line which separates benevolent advise from thinly disguised social condemnation.

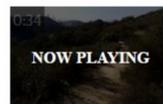
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ABOUT MATTHEW HOY



Matthew Hoy, a conservative, is a San Diego-area native and 1994 graduate of Cal Poly's journalism program. He spent 15 years at various newspapers along the West Coast, including The Lompoc Record, The Daily World in Aberdeen, Wash., The North County Times in Escondido and The San Diego Union-Tribune. For 15 years, Hoy has written a blog on politics and the media, Hoystory.com. Hoy's column will be published in The Tribune every other week, in rotation with liberal columnist Tom Fulks.

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