

Colleges rethink study trips after Guatemalan attack

By Christine Tatum
CPS

When gunmen raped and robbed 16 college students and school officials from St. Mary's College in Maryland who were on an anthropological tour of Guatemala, some educators back in the states promptly canceled their plans to back similar study trips to the Central American country.

Spring Arbor College in Michigan ordered 18 of its students and faculty members, also in Guatemala at the time of the attack, to return home immediately, cutting short their trip by two days. Administrators at Michigan State University, which sent 22 students to the area last month, weren't planning to send another group until this December. They've already nixed those plans.

The attack of Jan. 16 raises questions of liability. Courts already have ruled that colleges and universities are legally responsible for some injuries happening on campus, but whether the same is true for studies abroad isn't clear.

"We're always scared that if there were one terrorist incident in Rome, what could happen to us there, despite our liability insurance protection," said Rose Hayden, a board member of American University in Rome, according to news reports. "It sends a cold shiver down the backbones of anyone sending Americans anywhere."

Such uncertainty comes at a time when more American students are studying abroad than ever — and venturing into more diverse territories. The number of students in Latin America in 1996 jumped 18 percent to 13,726 over the previous year; in Africa by 10 percent to 2,027; and in Asia by 5 percent to 5,699.

The uncertainty also comes at a time when the State Department is advising Americans worldwide "to exercise greater than usual caution" when traveling. Experts suggest tips ranging from avoiding loud talk to staying out of dark areas at night. They also say travelers should follow current events and leave clothing with coveted labels — Nikes and

Levis, for example — at home.

More travel safety tips and a list of destinations where the State Department discourages travel can be found at [HYPERLINK http://www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) <http://www.state.gov>.

Recent events suggest there's a growing threat of anti-U.S. violence. Saddam Hussein's angry and intermittent exchanges with American leaders, the November murders of four Americans visiting Pakistan, targeted, their killers later said, in retaliation for the conviction of a Pakistani man who had killed two CIA workers; last year's conviction for the bombing of the World Trade Center.

The recent attack wasn't the first inkling of danger in Guatemala. The U.S. Embassy there has reported an increased number of kidnappings, rapes, shootings and violent assaults involving American tourists. In July, the State Department reported that a public bus was hijacked during daylight hours, all 20 passengers robbed at gunpoint. Gang members raped five.

The student group from St. Mary's

was aware of these incidents and had been counseled about safety concerns before the trip. Nonetheless, college officials did not believe students were at great risk, noting a lack of travel restrictions issued by the State Department at the time.

Michael Conn, like most students who study abroad, told the Associated Press he's bound for Western Europe. France is the "safest place" to study French, he said.

"I think people might say at first that Africa would be cool, and then they say, 'This place might have an unstable government, and I don't want to be in that area if it blows up,'" he added.

Conn also said he's been encouraging his girlfriend to study Spanish in Spain instead of Central America so she'll have a better chance of avoiding incidents like the attack in Guatemala.

"She's pretty definitely going to Spain, and she's looking for one more deciding factor," he said. "I think she may have found it."

NCAA takes action after wrestling deaths

By Marco Buscaglia
CPS

Dan Everett remembers chewing gum so often that his jaws would hurt.

"I did it to generate saliva," said the former wrestler at Indiana State University. "It was chew, spit, chew, spit — anything I could do to get some spit out. If I could lose a few ounces in spit a day, I wouldn't feel so guilty about drinking some water now and then."

Everett's scenario was played out on college campuses and in high school gyms across the country as wrestlers struggled to make the weight.

The National Collegiate Athletic Administration hopes that will change. The governing body of collegiate athletics took action this fall after three deaths in the college wrestling community. Under the newly-imposed rules, wrestlers are not allowed to use saunas for water loss and rubber suits and diuretics are banned altogether.

"We're taking away the absurd measures some athletes would use to qualify for a certain weight class," said Marty Benson, head of the NCAA Wrestling Rules Committee. "We're not going to allow someone to do permanent damage to himself for the sake of a wrestling match."

According to Benson, wrestlers now will be weighed no more than two hours before match time instead of the night before.

"You get a lot of kids doing whatever they can to make weight, then eating and drinking in massive quantities to regain strength for the match," Benson said. "We're going to take that away by eliminating most of the time between weigh-ins and the match itself. That means that the weight you weigh in at better be the weight you're at at full-strength, otherwise you're going to be out of luck when it comes time to wrestle."

Benson says the new rules will strengthen the NCAA's current policies, which ban fluid restriction, laxatives, self-induced vomiting, hot boxes and steam rooms for dehydration. Although there is no way NCAA officials can check

every locker room for infractions, Benson is hopeful that coaches and athletes will see the benefits of following the rules.

"This past year should put the fear of God in a lot of people," Benson said. "Three deaths should be enough to alter anyone's behavior."

Wrestling's tragic season began on Nov. 9, when Campbell University's Billy Saylor, 19, died while trying to drop six pounds to make his weight class. Less than two weeks later, Joseph LaRosa, a 22-year-old wrestler at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, died after wearing a rubber suit while riding an exercise bike. LaRosa was trying to lose four pounds. Finally, 21-year-old University of Michigan wrestler Jeff Reese died of kidney failure on Dec. 9. Like LaRosa, Reese was wearing a rubber suit and riding a stationary bike. He was trying to lose 12 pounds. All three deaths were blamed on dehydration.

Everett, now a wrestling coach at a high school outside of Chicago, says he would feel out of control when it came time to drop weight. "I would get obsessed by it" said Everett. "I would do whatever I had to do to drop a few pounds. I'd ride around in my car in a rubber suit with the heat on high. It was scary."

Like so many other wrestlers, Everett finally walked away from the sport he loved because of increased pressure — pressure he put on himself, he's quick to add — to lower his weight.

"It wasn't fun anymore," Everett said. "I needed to take some time away to figure out why I was doing it. It took a few years, to tell you the truth, then when I wanted to go back, I felt like coaching was the right way back in."

Dan Gable, who led University of Iowa wrestlers to 15 national championships in 21 years, said the changes were needed and overdue.

"This should help a lot of people," Gable said. "The sport had created an emergency situation for itself and I'm glad that the NCAA took the time to make the necessary changes."

Campus News Briefs

by College Press Exchange

Coach Gives \$3.5 Million

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. - Joe Paterno, head football coach at Pennsylvania State University, and his wife, Sue, have pledged to give the school \$3.5 million for new teaching jobs, an interfaith spiritual center, scholarships and a sports hall of fame.

University President Graham Spanier said the school has never received such a large gift from a collegiate coach.

The Paternos' latest donation brings their grand total of giving to the university up to \$4 million.

Suicide Cards

CHICAGO - Hallmark has come up with a card offering condolences to people whose loved ones have committed suicide.

Though suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States, many people still don't know how to express their sorrow to those who are left behind.

The new card comes at a time when card makers are trying to address a wider range of difficult situations, such as depression, job loss and substance abuse.

Hallmark suicide card shows a small boat on misty waters and contains the verse, "When someone we love flees from life, it is so hard to understand / But our compassionate Creator sees clearly into what is beyond our understanding and already has welcomed your loved one home."

This Joint Is Jumpin'

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - An article in the February issue of *Vanity Fair* describes Brown University as the hottest and hippest of the Ivy League schools, but many students and administrators aren't pleased.

They're complaining that the story portrays students as young, rich and beautiful socialites with big names, not big test scores, to back them up. According to the article, Brown is "a magnet for the children of A-list New Yorkers, Hollywood stars, Wall Street tycoons and European jet-setters" and a haven for the latest "explosion of BMWs and Chanel jackets."

Names such as Duncan Sheik, John F. Kennedy Jr., Lisa Loeb and Amy Carter - never mind all the kids of royal descent - are among its list of alumni. Commencement ceremonies, the article states, seem

like "old home week for aging 60s icons." Jane Fonda, Carly Simon, Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Diana Ross, George Harrison, Ringo Starr and Marlon Brando have all sent kids to Brown.

"(The story) does not portray the Brown I know," said University President E. Gordon Gee. "This is a serious place with serious students doing serious things."

Virginia Tech Student Given Go Ahead For Lawsuit

CHICAGO - A federal appeals court has ruled that a former student at Virginia Tech can continue fighting a lawsuit against the university and two former football players who she claims raped her in 1994.

The Fourth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, which lets victims of violent crimes sue in federal court. Christy Brzonkala has used the law as a basis for the civil suit she has filed against the university and former football players Antonio J. Morrison and James L. Crawford.

The court also ruled that Brzonkala can sue Virginia Tech under a title of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits schools that accept public money from practicing sexual discrimination. The court found that a college's failure to address a "known sexually hostile environment" could qualify as sexual discrimination.

Brzonkala claims that Morrison and Crawford raped her in a dormitory room and that she didn't file criminal charges against them because she relied on the university to prosecute the case. Judges noted in the majority opinion that Virginia Tech never reported Brzonkala's allegations to police. Their opinion also indicated skepticism that the university took "prompt and adequate remedial action" once it knew about the incident.

Crawford, who said he did not have sex with Brzonkala, was never charged by the university. Morrison said he had consensual sex with her and received a two-semester suspension for sexual misconduct. His punishment was reduced after later appeals, and he was allowed to retain a football scholarship and play for the team in 1995.

Student group for nonbelievers and skeptics starts at Ohio State University

By Michelle L. Meyer
Ohio State University The Lantern

It's hard not to notice the fliers around Ohio State University's campus that read: "We Don't Believe In God. Do You?"

But then that's the idea. Students for Freethought, a new campus organization for atheists, agnostics and humanists, posted the eyebrow-raising fliers.

"We want to give people something to think about," said August Brunsmann, the group's president.

Atheism is not believing in God. Agnosticism is believing there isn't enough evidence to say whether God exists, and humanism is centered on human interests. The group wants to educate OSU and the surrounding community about these beliefs and introduce their own philosophy as well. A "freethinker," members say, is anyone who's not afraid to question claims to knowledge or authority. A freethinker also requires proof and reasons for believing and refuses to take a stance out of fear or pres-

sure to conform.

The organization believes in the open discussion of all ideas and in the freedom of people to behave however they want, as long as they are not hurting others. They are against censorship, homophobia, racism, sexism and any ideology professing to be the ultimate truth.

"No one ever told me that God was real," said Brunsmann, who was raised by parents who were not religious.

David Frison, treasurer for the group, was raised United Methodist and went to church every Sunday.

"It was something I just didn't question and didn't even look into it all that much," said Frison, a junior majoring in fine arts.

When he was about 13 years old, Frison said he began thinking about what the Bible means and wondered whether God exists, he said.

"Things just took off from there, and I eventually concluded that reasons for being a Christian were not valid ones," he said.

Rowdy floor slapped with community service over eviction

By Christine Tatum
CPS

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Imagine coming back to school after being away for a weekend to learn you've been slapped with 13 weeks of community service.

That's what happened to several of the second-floor dorm dwellers at Indiana University's McNutt Delgado Hall, who discovered their rowdy floormates had gotten into trouble again — and everyone was going to pay.

At first, the guys on the floor chalked up their disciplinary problems to a nit-picky resident assistant.

Overtaken trash barrels. Broken beer bottles. Shouting at all hours of the night. Hairy soap in the shower. The R.A. wrote'em up for it.

Then there was that incident when someone decided it would be funny to download pornographic photos of women from the Internet and use them to make posters announcing an upcoming hall meeting.

"That was a really stupid thing to do," said John Warieka, the floor's governor.

Housing administrators said the same thing when they ordered the entire hall to complete 250 hours of community service. Because no one admitted making the posters, everyone on the hall — whether they were involved in the scheme or not — had to endure the punishment.

"It's a tough rule we have here," said the residence hall coordinator Amy Cornell. "If no one steps forward, everyone has to assume responsibility."

It's a rule that has come back to haunt the hall again. Because no one has fessed up to any of the trouble that broke out one recent Friday night, all 49 residents on the hall are divvying 1,300 hours of community service. For each resident, that boils down to about two hours of volunteer work a week for 13 weeks.

"Even my next-door neighbor, who never comes out of his room, never complains, never does

anything but study and mind his own business," Warieka said. "Even guys who weren't home that weekend — and that was about 20 percent of us."

It doesn't matter, Cornell said, especially given that the latest round of offenses jeopardized the safety of so many students. She's not talking about the can of Coke spilled under the R.A.'s door or the bathroom stall door someone ripped off its hinges.

"Someone pulled a fire alarm out of the wall, and it rang for two hours in the middle of the night," Cornell said. "More than 650 students were kept awake the night before a big test while we had the alarm repaired."

"We think the guys on the second floor know who did it, and they're talking amongst themselves about it," she continued. "There's no excuse for it."

Some students may grumble about the work, but many are grateful for it. They know housing officials wanted them all kicked out of the dorm and moved elsewhere. The Resident Housing Authority, which oversees the campus residence halls, recommended the hall be disbanded entirely, Cornell said.

But a board of appeals made up of university officials decided to give the hall a second chance. Residents can stay in McNutt Delgado — perhaps the most coveted housing assignment on campus because of its party-hearty reputation — as long as they complete the assigned work and there are no more false fire alarms.

Some students, angry about having to endure sanctions for something they didn't do and afraid that more trouble is just around the bend, already have moved into other dorms, Cornell said.

"We actually told them it was a chance for them to get into a more positive community," she said.

Warieka said he knows the stakes are high. One more slip, he said, and they're all out.

"We'll see how long we last," he said. "In the meantime, doing volunteer work for the community never hurt anybody."

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