



Push-Ups

ROTC students say the program gives them a little something extra.

STEVE SANDORI



Cadets Yvonne Lataille and Miranda Demarest at ease in the ROTC lounge at Archbold Gym.

It's 7 a.m. and we're sitting in the Carrier Dome waiting for some action.

It's cold—obviously there's little to no heat on—and there's no one visible in the building except a lone student on the field, checking the distance between some orange barrels.

We'd heard that Air Force ROTC was having a physical fitness test and we have come to see whether these students seemed to truly be all that they can be.

Suddenly, a door behind us jolts open and a gaggle of sweat-clothed students burst into the dome and down to the playing field. They are a visual potpourri of college life: concert teeshirts, sweat-shirts from other schools, lots of tie-dye.

They look like regular students. Even many of the men, wearing bandanas over their closely cropped hair, look more like hackey-sack players than future military leaders of America.

The first event is push-ups. The students—32 men and 10 women—must do as many regulation push-ups, chin touching the floor, as possible in two minutes. Yvonne Lataille, a junior nursing major from St. Louis, “maxes out” with 37—the number needed to get a full point award in the event. Men max out at 70. It's amazing how many are able to do it.

Lataille is a military brat. She enrolled in Air Force ROTC as a freshman, and at the end of the year was awarded a

full ROTC scholarship. She was attracted to the opportunities afforded by the ROTC nursing corps.

While ROTC is a big part of her college life, it isn't everything. She's president of her nursing school class. She's got a boyfriend who's not ROTC.

“It's a nice support system to have,” she says of the program. “A good outlet.”

On the field, the activity has switched to sit-ups. A few students seem to have difficulty, but most do at least the minimum. Kate Freseman, a sophomore mathematics major, does 70. Miranda Demarest, a junior majoring in engineering, maxes out with 79. “I do well on those,” she says. “I hate the run.”

The run is a 600-yard run, which all three of these female cadets easily complete in the required time. In fact, they pass all six events—which also include pull-ups and the standing long jump. They are required to pass only five.

A few days later we meet again. They are gathered in the ROTC lounge on the second floor of Archbold Gymnasium. It's between classes. A group of cadets is playing darts. A few others watch TV.

Today, as is the case once a week, the cadets are dressed in military attire. Lataille and Demarest wear dress uniforms. Freseman wears camouflage fatigues. They stress it's not their clothing that sets them apart from their peers on campus.

“I don't feel different because I'm in uniform. I feel different as a student,” says Lataille. “We have to give presentations in our ROTC classes every semester. I just had to give a 30-minute presentation in a nursing class and it was a breeze. Everyone else was all stressed out over it.”

“It definitely builds self-esteem,” says Freseman.

“I know I'd be a much different person without it,” says Demarest. “I'd be quiet, shy. Not involved in anything.”

“In ROTC,” says Lataille, “you have to learn to work together. That teamwork makes leaders.”

—RENÉE GEARHART LEVY

CURRICULUM

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Is the economy turning up? Are TV networks losing audience shares to cable? Does red wine reduce heart attacks? Are call-in polls worthwhile?

Without at least a bit of statistical thinking tucked away in our mental tool kits, we are doomed to accept bad information as gospel, make poor judgments, and miss the boat across a treacherous sea of data.

This was Professor David Moore's message in an address, titled "Statistical Thinking: How to Tell the Facts from the Artifacts," he gave to future statisticians in March.

The lecture capped a three-day Statistics Fest, sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences to promote its new undergraduate statistics concentration and its master's degree program in applied statistics. The "fest" featured films on statistics as a profession and as an academic discipline, plus a reception for curious students.

Moore enlivened his presentation with a foray into stat humor. "Not long ago, I saw a sign on a door that read, 'How To Tell Which Course You're Taking,'" he said. "If it moves, it's biology. If it changes color, it's chemistry. If it doesn't work, it's physics. And if it puts you to sleep, it's statistics."

"There's no denying that statistics has a somewhat merited reputation as a dull, technical subject," Moore said. Yet his address, playing to a nearly full lecture hall, captivated an attentive crowd of students and faculty members.

"Statistics' systematic ways of thinking about data, variation, and uncertainty," Moore said, "should be part of everyone's intellectual armament."

Moore's talk included good advice for at least 99.9 percent of us:

"There is data, and then there is data."

We should not let our experience

blind us to the big picture. A friend of Moore's bought a Honda, had bad luck with it, and dismissed all Hondas as bad cars. He was, of course, wrong. Large data samples show Hondas to be highly reliable. Experience inevitably colors our perceptions, but by keeping a few basic principles in mind, we can avoid the trap snaring Moore's friend.

Bad data abounds.

Ann Landers asked her readers, If they had to do it over again, would they have children? Seventy percent of 74,200 respondents said no. But in a nationwide random sample of 1,373 people, 91 percent said yes. Voluntary response samples are worthless. They attract self-selected people who feel strongly. This applies to instant TV call-in polls as well.

Statistically literate people question every figure put before them.

Moore cited a study that shows young women scientists earn 70 percent of men's salaries. But in individual fields, they earned 90 percent. Why the discrepancy? Women more often work in

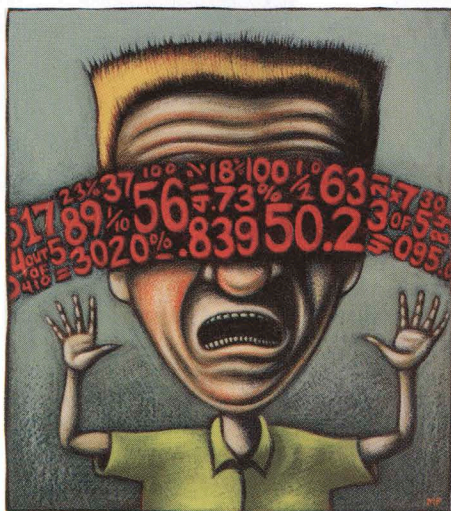
social sciences that pay less than physical sciences dominated by men.

"Beware the hidden variable," he said.

We actively resist the idea of chance, clinging to the idea that things ought to occur with some regularity.

Why doesn't anyone ever bat .450 for an entire baseball season? The statistically innocent—most of us—are apt to give causal, deterministic answers: an injury, sun in the eye. The correct explanation: it's simply random behavior. Misperceiving randomness, we believe a winning gambler is on a "streak" or a high-scoring basketball player has a "hot hand." Some gamblers do win more, some basketball players do make a higher proportion of baskets than others. But overall, we see consistent random performance.

Statistics' greatest contribution was to science, in the form of randomized comparative experiments.



MICHAEL PRINGO

HEADLINES

Commencement. Wendy Kopp, founder and president of Teach for America, a national teacher corps composed of recent graduates, addressed the graduates at the 138th Commencement on May 10 in the Carrier Dome.

Dr. Charles Willie was awarded an honorary degree. Willie, who received his Ph.D. in 1957 from the Maxwell School, is a professor of education and urban studies in Harvard's Graduate School of Education. He is a noted sociologist specializing in black American life.

A total of 4,600 degrees were conferred by SU (2,800 of them at the undergraduate level). The College of Environmental Science and Forestry presented an additional 496.

On May 17 the College of Law held its own Commencement. Degrees were conferred upon 250 students. The speaker was John R. Dunne, assistant U.S. attorney general, civil rights division, who also received an honorary degree.

Rare Books. Dr. David L. Poushter '45 and Phyllis Freeman Poushter '47 recently gave 128 volumes of rare, fore-edge painted books to the University's George Arents Research Library. The Arents Library now holds one of the world's largest collections of such books.

The practice of painting intricate images on a book's unbound page edges dates back to mid-17th century England. Included, for example, is an 1850 edition of *Irish Melodies*, by Thomas Moore. When the pages are fanned in one direction, a painting of the Royal College of Physicians appears; in the other, the Royal College of Surgeons. Other books include an 1801 four-volume set of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

Chancellor's Citations. In early March, seven members of the University community were awarded with the Chancellor's Citation. They were **Bette C. Gaines**, associate director of Project Advance; **Joseph M. Levine**, professor of history; **Bruce L. Riddle**, academic computing specialist for Metropolitan Studies; **Otey M. Scruggs**, professor of history; **Marshall H. Segall**, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; **Arthur Storch**, outgoing chairman of drama; and **James B. Wiggins**, chairman of religion.

Moore pointed to AIDS activists, who contend that because the disease is fatal, any treatment that may help should be made available. "If you do that, you will never know whether those treatments are really helpful," he said.

All statistics bend to the immutable laws of variation, randomness, and chance.

If we understand that, we are less likely to accept every number, every percentage thrown our way.

Invoking the statistician's motto—in God we trust; everybody else has to have data—Moore explained, "Statistical thinking is educated common sense."

—GEORGE LOWERY

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

LEG UP

Patrick Walker came to the marathon after all. "We were strongly encouraged to participate this year," the freshman says sardonically.

"He's a pledge," his friends announce in chorus. Sophomore Kevin Lee is there on behalf of the fraternity, to monitor the initiates. "I'm supposed to hold them up and prod them when they get tired," he says.

"It just means he's here for half as much time," interrupts Garrett Rosenblum, another pledge.

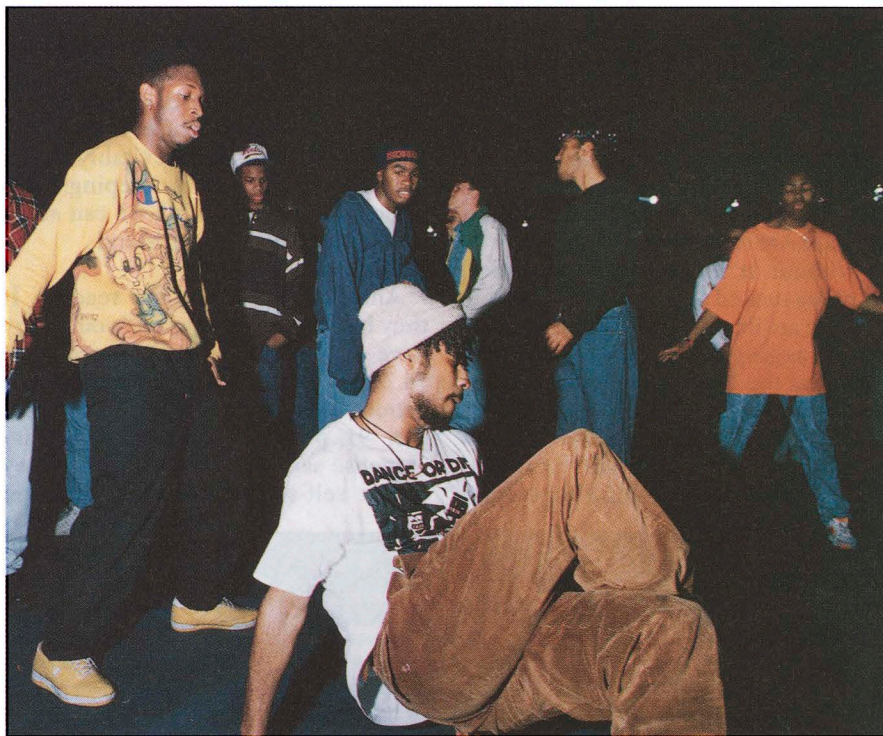
"We're the motivators," Lee explains. "If they're slacking toward the end, you've got to get them moving."

Rosenblum anticipates a rough night. If he's still moving his head at 10 a.m. tomorrow, he declares, that's good enough.

And so it begins, this snowy Friday evening in late March, another Syracuse University Muscular Dystrophy Dance Marathon, sponsored by the Greek Council. Tonight they celebrate the event's 20th anniversary. The past 19 have earned a total of \$1 million for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

When it started, the marathon was a bit more taxing. (Past contestants danced for 52 hours.) Tonight, 250 students prepare for a 30-hour crusade in their own variation of almost constant dancing. Proceeds, both from the door and dance-team sponsors, are presented to Jerry Lewis on his Labor Day telethon.

Bags are checked at the door, not only for booze but Jolt cola (an inadmissible artificial boost). Anxious participants



Dancing for those who can't: This year's MDA Dance Marathon was the 20th annual fund raiser by Syracuse students.

devour pizza and bananas, a last-minute carbohydrate fix. Students disperse and conversations fade as the opening ceremonies begin.

"We are taking on the challenge of dancing for those who cannot," begins the speaker. The stage is overrun with men in tuxedos and women in snug black dresses. It seems an endless preamble; emcees introduce directors who introduce public relations people. But finally, the guest of the hour: the MDA poster child J.J. Kushin. As the frail toddler walks slowly across the stage with the help of his parents, the exuberant audience stills. The disparity of the boy and the vibrant, robust students seems overwhelming—a paradox in itself of youth and beauty. For a moment, they have entered the realm of this child's pain. The task at hand takes a clearer, more definitive course.

The MDA and Greek committee close with a motion to dance till you drop. Over the weekend, four live bands will perform in between an assortment of recorded music.

By midnight everyone is bobbing to the rhythmic beat of a steel drum band. The floor is a mass of white teeshirts, save the rare tie-dye and an odd-ball black jersey with the slogan "Let's do it for 30 hours."

By the next morning, Manley Field House is tepid and reeks of gym class. The long night has taken its toll on the weary dancers. At least hygiene rules. "They let us shower earlier," Rosenblum says. Clearly it is not a marathon in the strictest sense. Students lounge along the sides of the dance pen.

Now Rosenblum is idling. "We're not crazy about the music," he admits of the country medley now playing. "Down to 8 hours and 13 minutes . . ." he murmurs.

This afternoon, students sample the precarious art of square dancing. "Quick, quick, slow, slow." As the music picks up, the group's adrenaline surges. The music creates a rush and the controlled, measured steps become frenetic. The young women smile whimsically, while the men twirl their partners freely, inhibitions momentarily lost to the lyrical strains of Garth Brooks. "I've got friends in low places, where the whiskey flows and the beer chases. . . ."

"Hi Clyde honey," utters a stout, blue-haired woman to an approaching frat brother. "You're doing great." She's Jane Zellato, the chef at Pi Beta Phi, and she comes to the dance marathon every year to show her support. "Because I love my kids, you know," she says. "I put my heart and soul into them." By

now the tempo has picked up to the thick bass of the Beastie Boys.

Saturday night, and the last six hours woo an esoteric crowd to hear the earthy rap group, De La Soul. Security guards usher in a mob of students through metal detectors. Men in short dreadlocks, leather-clad women with Supremes hairdos, and young bohemians in long skirts and Doc Martens descend on the arena like predators.

The band begins its repertoire of record-scratching and street-smart, sagacious verse. Background dancers display signs that read "get involved," "wit it," "legit," "misfit."

One SU fan, Melvin Peterson, explains, "In these guys you'll notice more culture, and you won't hear much swearing." The words aren't out of his mouth when the singers decide to split up the audience for a shouting match. "Now over here we have the cool \$%#@& and over there we got the @#\$%& %#\$&! Repeat after me..."

—THERESA LITZ

ARTS AND SCIENCES

LITERATI

Jay McInerney and Gary Fisketjon lean against the Lubin House bar, cigarettes in one hand, drinks in the other, the props in no way hindering manic hand gesturing. An animated conversation is taking place about McInerney's new novel—his fourth—*Brightness Falls*, to be published in June by Knopf.

Toby Wolff approaches and McInerney's face lights up. "Tobe," he exclaims as the two clasp hands warmly. Wolff congratulates him on his recent marriage. Quickly, the subject returns to books, which is no surprise. Wolff is the Peck Professor of English Literature at Syracuse. McInerney is a former student. (He received a master's in creative writing from SU in 1986.) Fisketjon, a top editor at Knopf, is also McInerney's editor and a friend since the two were undergraduates at Williams College.

The occasion for this reunion of sorts is the 25th anniversary gala for Syracuse's Creative Writing Program, bringing together some of America's finest writers—all alumni or faculty of SU—with alumni interested in nurturing the program.

At the door, honorary co-chairs Morton Janklow '50 and Barbara Goldsmith greet incoming guests. Janklow is a high-

At the Creative Writing Program's 25th anniversary dinner in March (from left): Novelist and faculty member Stephen Dobyns; journalist, screenwriter, (and alumnus) Michael Herr; and literary agent Morton Janklow, also an SU alumnus. Janklow was co-host of the event.



ALL PHOTOS BY JOHN ROEMER



With Chancellor Kenneth A. and Mary Ann Shaw (from left): alumni Ken Auletta (author of *Three Blind Mice*) and Steve Kroft (of CBS's *60 Minutes*).

Table talk: Author Barbara Goldsmith (left), event co-host, with literary agent Amanda Urban.



Alumni writers: Richard Elman (left), author of *Disco Frito* and *Tar Beach*, with John Williams, whose latest book is *If I Stop I'll Die*, a profile of Richard Pryor cowritten with Williams's son.

ly successful literary agent. Goldsmith is author of *Little Gloria: Happy at Last* and *Johnson v. Johnson*.

Richard Elman '55 and John Williams '50 talk about their new books, *Tar Beach* and *If I Stop I'll Die*, respectively. *60 Minutes* co-editor Steve Kroft '67 chats with *Three Blind Mice* author Ken Auletta G'77. Hal Drucker '53 tells Patrice Adcroft '76 about his current project, a book of famous lawyers' memoirs on their first case. Adcroft, former editor of *Omni* magazine, has her own novel coming out in September, based on characters she grew up with in her father's Scranton, Pennsylvania, doughnut shop. In all, an intimate group of 70 sips champagne and nibbles shrimp and wild mushroom tartlettes.

Over dinner, in the Lubin House gallery, Chancellor Kenneth A. Shaw jokes that the prolific output of the program must be tied to Syracuse's dreary weather. "Give us unrelenting gray days and eternal precipitation and we will give you writers," he jibes.

Shaw says the true success of the program, which has graduated 170 students, was pinpointed by program director Stephen Dobyns in his introduction to the 25th anniversary commemorative book. Dobyns writes of the impressive productivity of the faculty. "That work forms a powerful example for the students . . . that the student has the example of the writer's own passion and commitment to literature."

What is offered uniquely by SU, Dobyns writes, "is a community of writers made up of both faculty and students who are linked and encouraged by their common endeavor. . . ."

The sense of community doesn't seem to end with graduation. Everyone is eager to share of his or her current works. Wolff tells our table about his upcoming visit to Vancouver to watch the filming of his acclaimed boyhood memoir *This Boy's Life*. Michael Herr '61, author of *Dispatches* and the screenplay to *Full Metal Jacket*, is at work on another screenplay. He can't reveal the subject. David Fisher '68 is writing a book based on the FBI crime lab and the cases they solve.

All too quickly, the celebration is over, and little groups break off

to go their separate ways. Wolff leads a troupe of literati—including McInerney and Fisketjon—out into the night.

Upstairs in the library, Dobyns and fiction writer Michael Martone play a game of pool on the pool table Barbara Goldsmith grew up with. (Lubin House was donated to SU by Goldsmith's father, Joseph Lubin.)

"How's the table?" someone asks.

"It's a little slanted," says Martone, associate professor of English at SU.

"It's fine," says Dobyns. "I'm winning."

—RENÉE GEARHART LEVY

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

PARENTS
KEEP OUT!

Photographer Adrienne Salinger has taken her camera to a place most adults rarely venture: the teenage bedroom. What she found there were individual stories as diverse as the teenagers themselves.

"The tendency to stereotype teenagers is so pervasive" says Salinger, an associate professor of art media studies in the School of Art and Design. "You look at someone and think, 'Oh, she's a heavy-metaler.' But go into her room and there are 30 more clues to who she is. So much more is revealed."

Salinger photographed 61 New York state teenagers in their bedrooms during 1990 and 1991. Funded by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts, the photo series features teens from lower- and middle-income environments, hovering around the pivotal ages of 16 and 17. This is a time in their lives before they have developed public and private personas," says Salinger. "Adults spend a lot of time developing and presenting a unified and consistent image. We want to look like a solid person without contradictions.

"Teenagers don't have that mask yet. Everything that they are exists in their rooms. And they change so rapidly that there are 30 different things going on in there. This is the last time everything they own is going to be in one room."

The large 30-by-40-inch vivid color photographs allow the viewer to zero in on details offering clues to how the teens are forming their identities. Childhood toys are mixed with objects of current interests and desires.

In the photograph of Karl B., the lean teenager with red-dyed hair stands atop his unmade bed. Posters of rock bands, beer advertisements, and assorted mementos decorate Karl's walls, while childhood toys are stashed on crowded shelves. In Betsy P.'s room, a Barbie doll stands frozen in a dance stance, with a huge framed picture of Jesus and his followers looming overhead.



Fred H., from Adrienne Salinger's "Teenagers in Their Bedrooms" series. Fred's wall of fame includes all his heroes, and himself.



Amie D., also from Salinger's series. Amie's priorities, including her obvious love of shopping, come through loud and clear.

"This is the first time they can exert control over their environment," says Salinger. Amie D.'s room celebrates consumerism and Donna D.'s room is a shrine to cosmetology. Sterling S. has a stylish, orderly bedroom. A serious Lepora F. poses with her framed portraits of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Nelson Mandela. Fred H. sits on his bed surrounded by images on the ceiling and walls of glamorous African-American women and prominent sports stars. Mixed in with the athletes, Fred has inserted photos of himself.

"So Fred becomes a star, too. He becomes a part of a world of heroes," Salinger explains.

Salinger selected her teenage subjects in a variety of ways. She approached them at shopping malls, in movie lines, and through referrals from adults and other teenagers. In preparation for each of the teen portraits, she recorded two-hour video interviews with them in their rooms, so that when she brought her camera in, she would have a strong sense of who they are.

Each photograph offers its own individual story, but Salinger insists that when those singular images are viewed in larger groupings, they begin to tell a collective story that is disturbing.

"Some are hilarious, but some have a

terrifying edge. They're not one-liners. They're very serious photographs," she says. A few teens had their own babies. And Salinger was surprised by the number of weapons she encountered in the bedrooms; knives, even guns.

"This is a very complex time to be coming of age and you can see that in these pictures. We have less money for higher education. We have racism, sexism, and homophobia. There's less promise for economic advancement. Drugs are a fact of life and so is AIDS. It's a much more violent culture.

"These pictures force you to realize that coming of age in the nineties is very different than it was in the fifties or even eight years ago. People have changed a lot."

Selected photographs from the series have been exhibited at New York's Museum of Modern Art and at various galleries, including solo exhibitions of approximately 25 photographs in New York City, San Francisco, and Portland, Oregon. Plans for a nationally touring exhibition are in the early planning stages and Salinger also plans to publish a book of all 61 photographs. It will include text from the video interviews she conducted with the teens.

—PAUL GERMANO

BRIEFLY NOTED

Russian Connection. In late March, a delegation from the Russian Federation visited SU to talk about the creation of cooperative educational and training programs, intended to assist public officials from the Russian Federation in their transition to a free market economy. Officials from SU visited Moscow in early April to pursue these discussions.

Human Development. In April, the College for Human Development celebrated its 75th anniversary with a weekend of activities. Guest speakers included U.S. Surgeon General Antonia Novella; attorney Sarah Weddington; and alumna Rena Merritt Bancroft, a vice chancellor at the City College of San Francisco.

Other recent visitors to campus included: Chief U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Thomas R. Pickering; Russian poet Yevgeny Aleksandrovich Yevtushenko; Montgomery Ward CEO Bernard Brennan; Archbishop of Nitra, Czechoslovakia, Cardinal Jan Chryzostom; African-American activist Leonard Jeffries; Emmy Award-winning executive producer of *The Simpsons* Sam Simon; and Penny Rosenwasser, broadcaster and Middle East children's activist.

ALUMNI NEWS

Honoring Alumni. During Reunion early this month, the 1992 Arents Pioneer Medal will be awarded to outstanding graduates of the University. Recipients are **Stephen F. Kraft '67**, co-editor of CBS's *60 Minutes*; **Susan C. Penny '70**, managing director and chief financial analyst for Equitable Capital Management Corp.; **Dr. Robert S. Rigolosi '57**, physician and director of the Regional Hemodialysis Center at Holy Name Hospital; and **Anthony Y.C. Yeh '49**, chairman, CEO, and owner of Hong Kong Carpet Manufacturers Ltd.

Where Are The Alumni? Questionnaires will be mailed this fall to all alumni, in order to begin the production of a new alumni directory, scheduled for release in the summer of 1993. If you prefer *not* to be listed in the directory, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations *in writing* as soon as possible. Their address is 820 Comstock Avenue, Syracuse, New York 13244-5040.