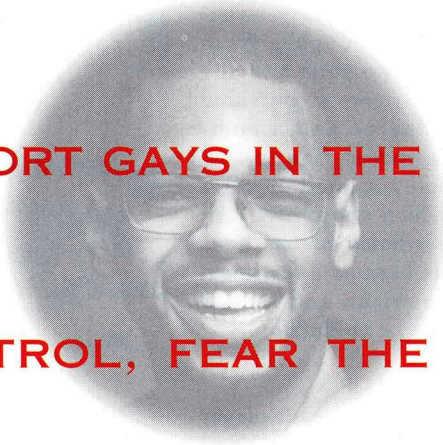
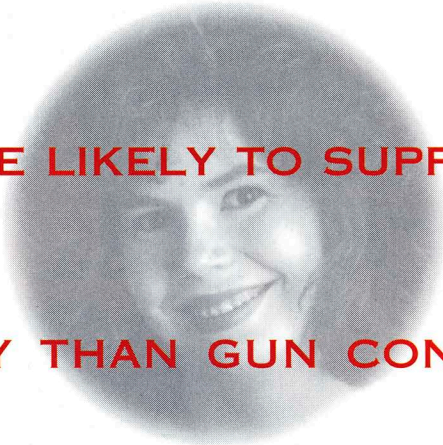


SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARE

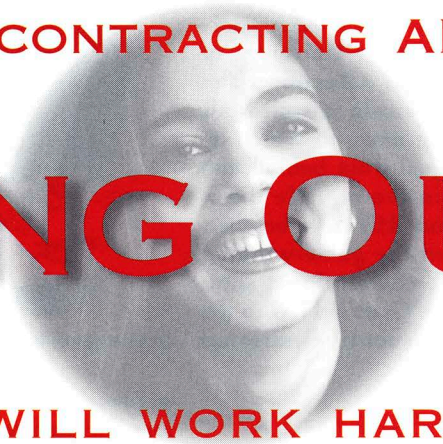
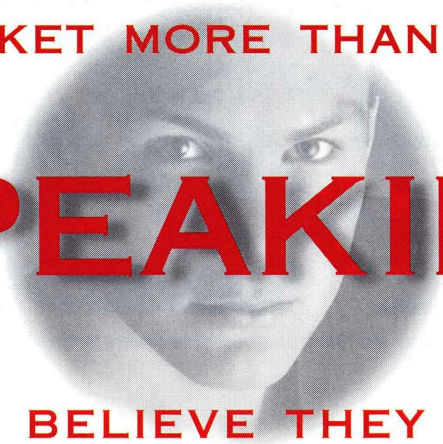


MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT GAYS IN THE MILI-

TARY THAN GUN CONTROL, FEAR THE JOB

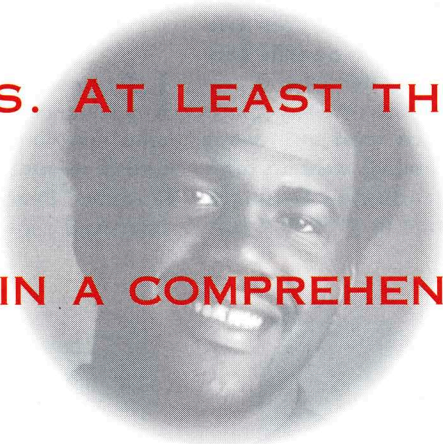
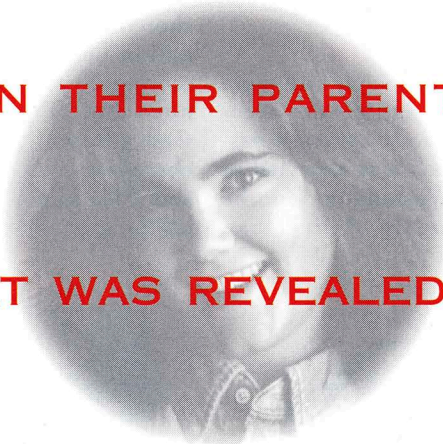
MARKET MORE THAN CONTRACTING AIDS,

SPEAKING OUT



AND BELIEVE THEY WILL WORK HARDER

THAN THEIR PARENTS. AT LEAST THAT'S



WHAT WAS REVEALED IN A COMPREHENSIVE

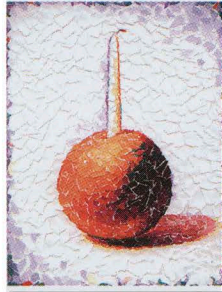
SURVEY OF STUDENT MORES AND MINDSETS.

Let's get one thing straight: this is not the MTV generation. Okay, it's only a hypothetical question, but given the choice of living with just one television station—MTV or CNN—Syracuse University students say nearly two-to-one they'd rather tune to Ted Turner's all-news station. And 60 percent say they watch no more than five hours of TV a week anyway.

Lou Dobbs over Kurt Loder? Read on.

Despite what you've been hearing about a generation of unmotivated, mush-headed couch potatoes, all 18- to 22-year-olds are not headed for a life of bartending or flipping burgers. Today's Syracuse University students prove otherwise.

They're busy: studying, working, vol-



125 YEARS

future leadership of America.

Beavis and Butt-head for Congress? Think again.

THE NUTS AND BOLTS. Our survey was created and analyzed by the public-opinion company Luntz

Research, pollsters for Ross Perot, Pat Buchanan, and Rudolph Giuliani and winner of the *Washington Post's* Crystal Ball Award for accurately predicting the outcome of the 1992 presidential election. The survey was based on a study conducted at Ivy League colleges last year. Luntz Research claims the survey has a 2.5 percent margin of error at the 95 percent confidence level. That means if the same survey were conducted among similar respon-

LAST FALL, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE TAPPED THE MINDS OF 450 UNDERGRADUATES. THEIR OPINIONS—ON EVERYTHING FROM POLITICS, RELIGION, AND FAMILY, TO SEX, DRUGS, AND ROCK 'N' ROLL—PROVIDE A FASCINATING GLIMPSE INTO THE MINDS OF THE FUTURE LEADERSHIP OF AMERICA.

unteering, involving themselves in student organizations.

They're pragmatic: most of their activities are aimed at preparing for future careers or building an impressive resumé.

They're activists: writing public officials, attending rallies, doing more than just complaining about problems facing the world.

They're fun: they play sports, date, have sex, and tip a few beers now and then.

In other words, they're pretty well-rounded.

How do we know all this? We asked them. Last fall, *Syracuse University Magazine* tapped the minds of 450 undergraduates through a 104-question survey on student attitudes and behavior.

Their opinions—on everything from politics, religion, and family, to sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll—provide a fascinating glimpse into the minds of the

students, the results would fall within 2.5 percent in 19 out of 20 cases.

"If you ask unbiased questions, surveys paint an accurate picture of what people think and do," says Ed Miller, senior research analyst at Luntz. "The results give you an accurate representation of the beliefs of the undergraduate population at Syracuse University."

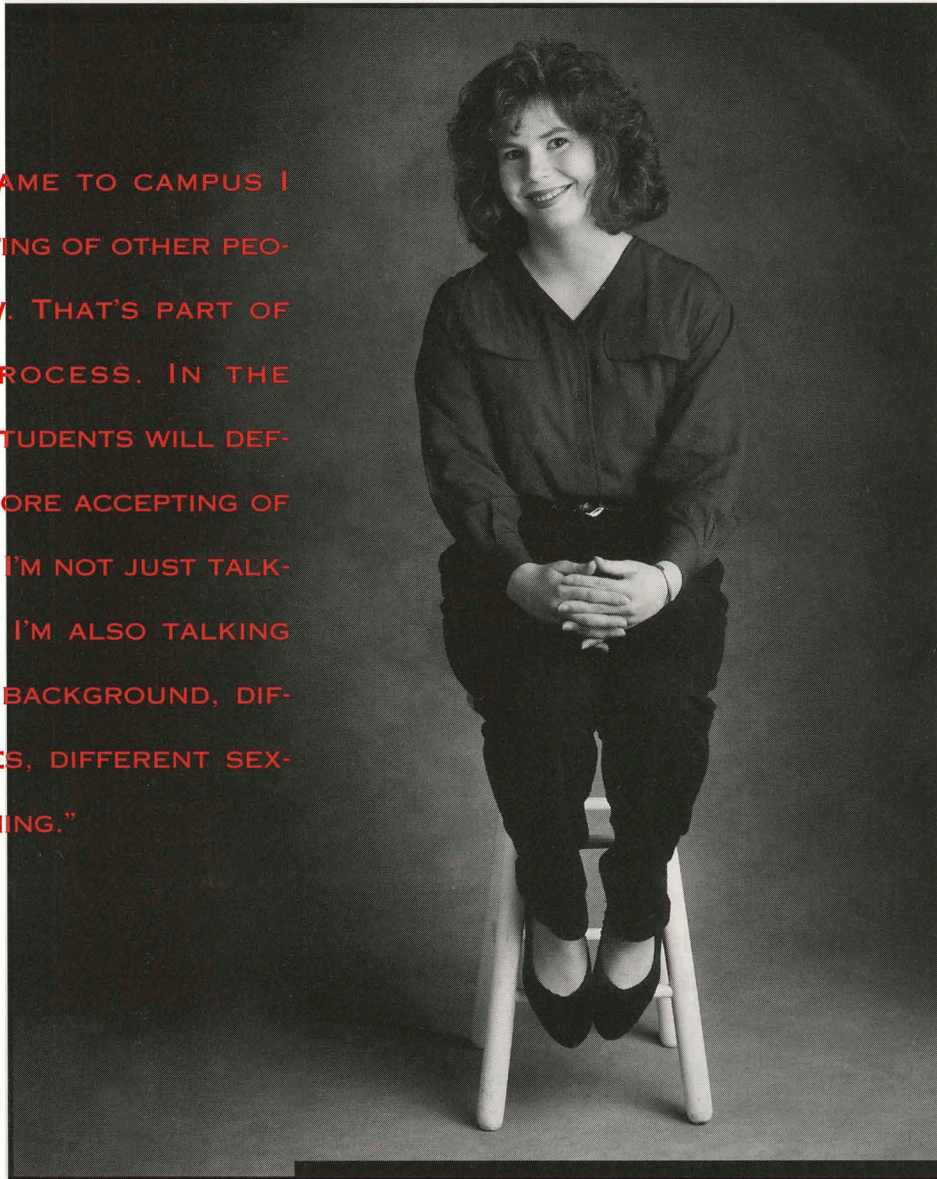
So who participated in this survey? According to the demographics, our respondents—some of whom chose not to answer every question—are 69 percent white, 8 percent African American, 5 percent Asian, 4 percent Latino, .5 percent American Indian, and 8 percent "other."

They are 38 percent Catholic, 21 percent Protestant, 11 percent Jewish, nearly 20 percent "other," with a smat-

Written by Renée Gearhart Levy • Photographs by Russ McConnell

"WHEN I FIRST CAME TO CAMPUS I WASN'T AS ACCEPTING OF OTHER PEOPLE AS I AM NOW. THAT'S PART OF THE GROWTH PROCESS. IN THE FUTURE, I THINK STUDENTS WILL DEFINITELY BECOME MORE ACCEPTING OF EACH OTHER, AND I'M NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT RACE. I'M ALSO TALKING ABOUT RELIGION, BACKGROUND, DIFFERENT LIFESTYLES, DIFFERENT SEXUALITIES, EVERYTHING."

*Suzanne Sheets
senior, nursing major
Salem, New York*



tering of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and agnostics.

Twelve percent are freshmen, 21 percent sophomores, 29 percent juniors, and 30 percent seniors.

Most identified themselves as coming from middle- or upper-middle-class families—only 4 percent classified themselves as lower or upper class. More than half come from suburbia, 23 percent come from a rural area, and 21 percent come from an urban setting.

Although students come to SU from all over the country (and world), 40 percent hail from New York State, 20 percent come from New England, and 20 percent come from the Mid-Atlantic states. More than 75 percent of students attended public high schools.

According to the admissions office, our random sample is representative of SU's undergraduate population.

WHERE THEY'RE COMING FROM. If it's true the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, student and parent attitudes should be similar.

Three-quarters of the students polled grew up in traditional two-parent households (67 percent of those parents are still married to each other), including 73 percent of whites, 78 percent of Jews, and 81 percent of those who classify themselves as upper-middle-class or above. Seventy-one percent of students say their mothers worked outside the home while they were growing up.

Students most likely to share the beliefs of their parents—politically and religiously—are freshmen, Jews, and physical science majors. Those who said they disagreed most include students who did not grow up in a two-parent household, those who lost their virginity at age 16 or younger, and those 21 or older. Appar-

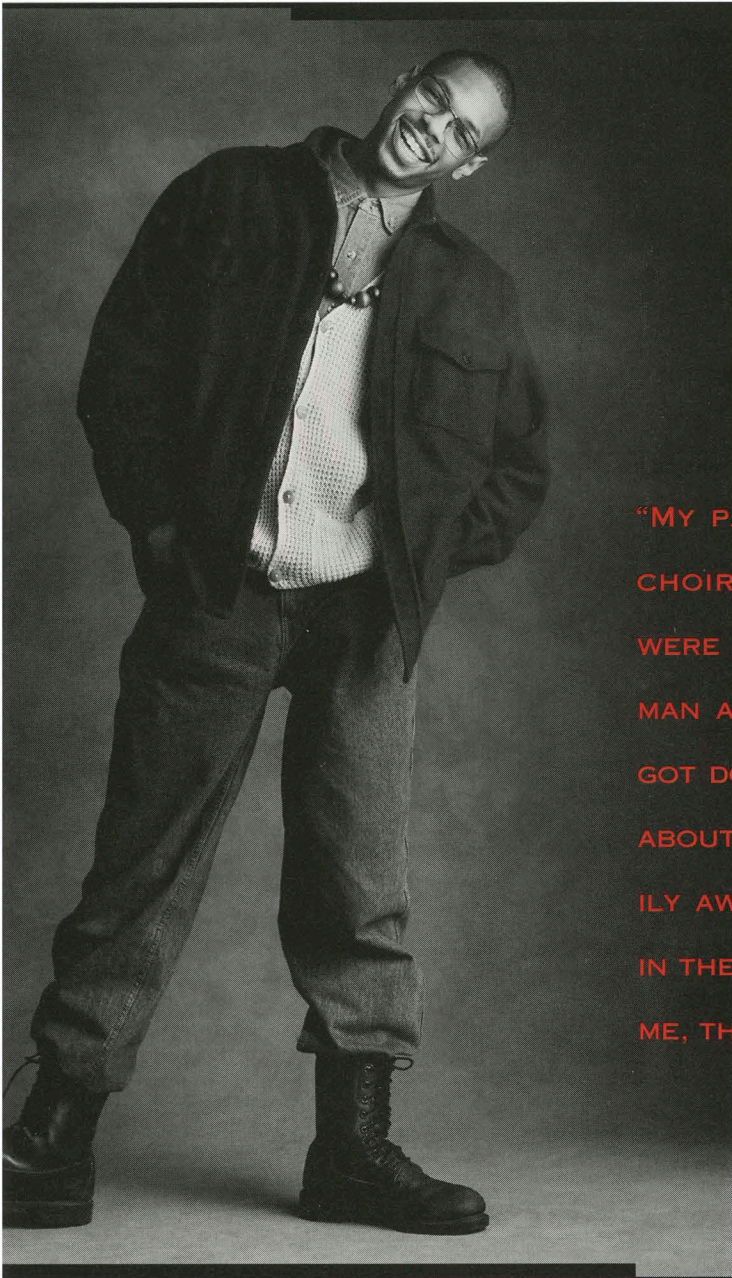
ently, many students develop ideas of their own during four years of college.

Parental attitudes about drugs and sex seem to influence student behavior—if it was okay for Mom and Dad, it's okay for me. Take students who say they smoke pot at least monthly. More than half say at least one of their parents has tried marijuana. In terms of ethnicity, African Americans were most likely to say their parents tried pot (55 percent). In terms of religion, the highest percentage of users were parents of Jewish students (43 percent).

Slightly more than half of the students polled say they believe at least one of their parents engaged in premarital sex. Many of those same students also said their parents smoked pot (79 percent), that they did not grow up with both parents at home (79 percent), and that they had had four or more sexual partners (72 percent).

Twenty-eight percent of the students' mothers and 29 percent of the students' fathers graduated from college.

LIFE AT COLLEGE. Actions speak louder than words, and that's as true at Syracuse as anywhere. Although fewer than 40 percent of students believe a private college education better prepares them for life than a public college education, more than 71 percent say they would not choose a state university—at a substantially lower cost—if they had it to do over again. Those most supportive of a private college education are freshmen (51 percent), economics/business majors (52 percent), and 1992 Bush voters (53 percent).



“MY PARTICIPATION IN THE GOSPEL CHOIR HAS KEPT ME HERE. THERE WERE A COUPLE OF TIMES MY FRESHMAN AND SOPHOMORE YEARS THAT I GOT DOWN ON MYSELF AND THOUGHT ABOUT LEAVING. BUT IT WAS THE FAMILY AWAY FROM HOME THAT I FOUND IN THE GOSPEL CHOIR THAT HAS KEPT ME, THAT HAS SUPPORTED ME.”

*Moses Thomas Greene II
senior, African American studies
and television, radio,
film writing major
Bay Shore, New York*

THIS was not the only comprehensive survey of student attitudes at Syracuse University. The first known study was conducted in the late twenties, the results of which are published in the book *Student Attitudes: A Report of the Syracuse University Reaction Study*, available at Bird Library.

The survey, carried out under the auspices of the School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, was conducted with the logic that understanding what's on students' minds is just as important for instructors as understanding their subject matter.

Some topics covered: Snobbishness in College Life, Attitudes Concerning Cribbing, Need for Personal Advice, and Changes in Religious Beliefs and Practices During College.

Even now, that survey contains some interesting stuff. For instance, more students sought advice about "sex

Snobbishness in College ?

knowledge" from the dean of students than about changing courses or campus activities. When polled about willingness to admit certain groups to fraternities or rooming houses, "anarchists," "loafers," and "students low in intelligence" were deemed more objectionable than Italians, Jews, or atheists. While 32 percent of students polled admitted cribbing on more than one exam, it was a sin deemed "as bad as lying and cheating" by a majority of them. And men responded twice as often as women that the presence of the opposite sex "distracts from the work in hand."

What we don't know about the survey is how it actually helped the professors it was designed for and what came about as a result of it. Sex education courses? Stricter rules against cheating? One can only presume men overcame the distraction of studying alongside women. Perhaps we should ask them.—RGL

More than half of students classify grades as "extremely important" and spend more than 11 hours a week studying. Thirty-five percent of students are "very worried" about getting a job or getting into graduate school, while only 16 percent are as concerned about finding a significant other.

And despite SU's enduring reputation as a party school, more than half of students say, on average, they go out two or fewer nights per week. When asked to choose which of several events they would attend if all were scheduled at the same time, the top choice—an anticipated romantic event—edged out a review session for a final exam by less than 1 percent. Those most likely to choose romance over study: seniors, Jews, 1992 Perot voters, and New Englanders. Those at the review session: African Americans, those who've tried pot only once or have never smoked it, and those who study 21 or more hours per week.

Athletics and social organizations are

More than half of the students polled have never smoked marijuana. Fourteen percent admit to smoking on a monthly basis; only 4 percent of students are daily pot smokers. Whites are far more likely to have smoked a joint than any other racial group.

Thirteen percent of students polled think premarital sex is morally wrong. Forty percent of the freshmen polled are virgins, compared with 15 percent of seniors. Nearly a third of the respondents lost their virginity at age 17 or 18. Twenty-two percent of students have had between 4 and 10 sexual partners. Ironically, while only 13 percent consider themselves promiscuous, 49 percent label their peers as such.

Nearly 60 percent of students say they always use birth control and most say both men and women are equally responsible for providing it. Although 27 percent of students know someone who has contracted the AIDS virus, 30 percent say they are not at all afraid of being

YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION? IT MAY NOT BE THE SIXTIES, BUT COLLEGE STUDENTS STILL WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD. MORE THAN A THIRD OF SU STUDENTS HAVE ATTENDED A RALLY FOR A POLITICAL CANDIDATE, CIVIL RIGHTS, OR AN ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSE.

the most popular extracurricular activities. The students most likely to belong to a sorority, fraternity, or other social club are those not receiving financial aid, who have below a 2.8 grade-point average, *New York Times* readers, and those who smoke pot at least monthly. Sixty-four percent of students spend 10 hours or less a week on extracurricular activities, half of those less than five hours.

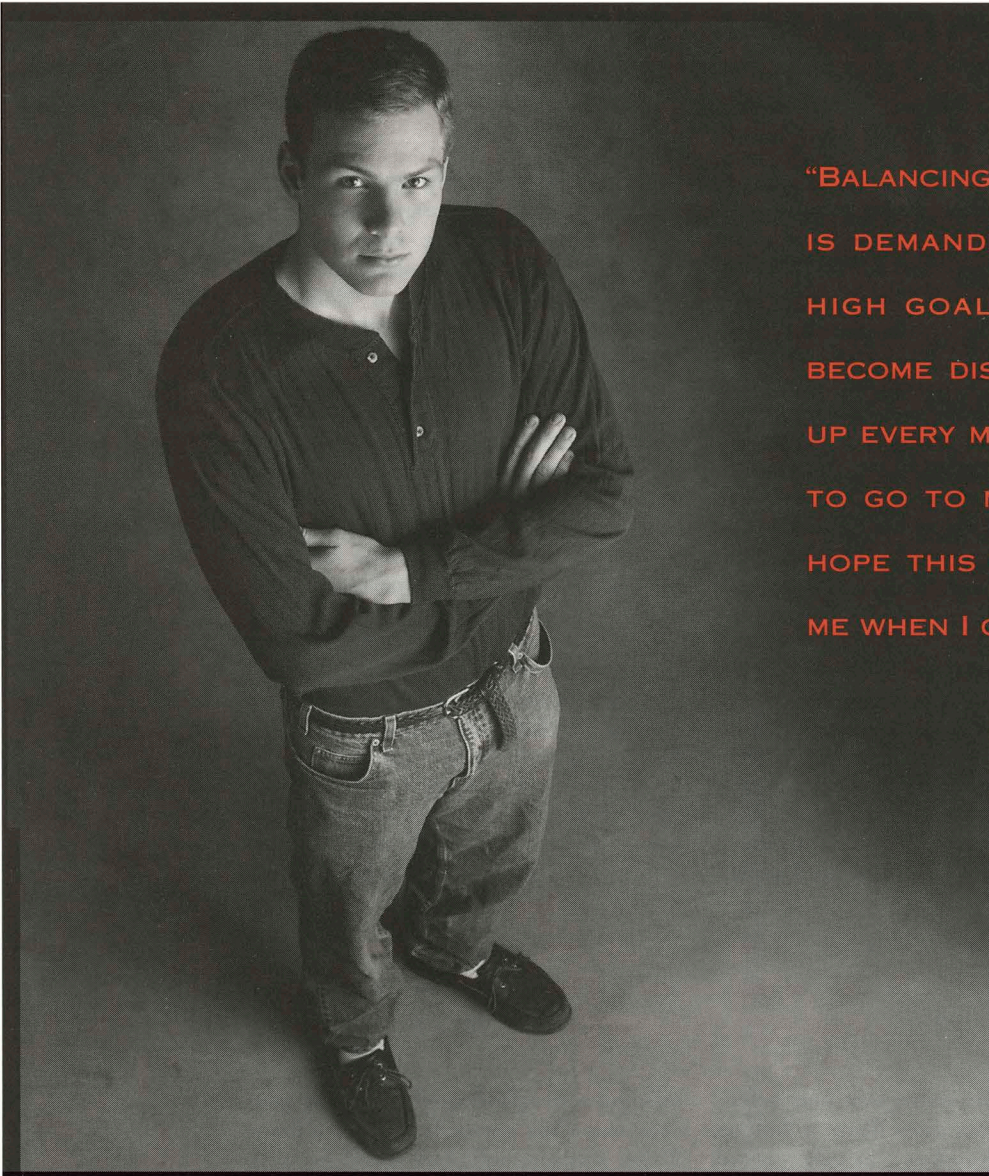
A majority of students—72 percent—believe there's a problem with race relations on campus. Other than freshmen, most students polled had similar responses concerning racial issues.

THE OTHER EXTRACURRICULARS. Alcohol is the drug of choice on campus: more than half of students drink at least on a weekly basis and more than half admit to using a fake ID. Among the heaviest drinkers: students who say their grade-point average is unimportant to them, Republicans, students who smoke pot at least monthly, and students who go out three or more nights per week.

infected with AIDS, and another 30 percent say they are only a little afraid. Either students don't fear AIDS because they're using condoms or they just don't think they could become infected.

YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION? It may not be the sixties, but college students still want to change the world. More than a third of SU students have attended a rally for a political candidate, civil rights, or an environmental cause. A quarter of them have written to a political official and 30 percent hope to run for political office someday.

A plurality of Syracuse students (46 percent) identify themselves as Democrats and a majority (51 percent) identify themselves as liberal. Conversely, only 20 percent consider themselves Republicans and slightly fewer think of their beliefs as conservative. Groups with strong numbers identifying themselves as Republican include males, Protestants, and business/economics majors.



“BALANCING SWIMMING AND SCHOOL IS DEMANDING. YOU HAVE TO SET HIGH GOALS FOR YOURSELF AND BECOME DISCIPLINED, LIKE GETTING UP EVERY MORNING AT 5:30. I WANT TO GO TO MEDICAL SCHOOL AND I HOPE THIS WORK ETHIC WILL HELP ME WHEN I GRADUATE.”

*Matt Niemi
junior, biology major
Mendon, New York*

Despite widespread liberal identification, there is strong student support for many conservative positions on a range of issues (perhaps mirroring the attitudes of their parents): 78 percent of students favor a balanced-budget amendment; 66 percent favor school choice; 65 percent favor term limits for senators and representatives; 58 percent support free trade with Mexico and Canada; 67 percent support the death penalty; and 71 percent believe a moment of silence should be allowed in public schools.

Their opinions on social issues, however, are far more liberal than mainstream America: 77 percent are pro-choice; 54 percent support a ban on private ownership of handguns; 74 percent support government-subsidized health care; and 71 percent support gays in the military.

Nearly 40 percent of students consider

themselves environmentalists (those 21 and over, physical science majors, and students from rural areas showed the strongest identification), while just 23 percent consider themselves feminists (seniors, environmentalists, and those who scored well on current-events knowledge were prominently represented).

CURRENT AFFAIRS. They may be serious about school, and they definitely have opinions about issues facing the nation, but when it comes to current events and cultural literacy, SU students could learn a thing or two.

The survey included 17 questions on current events and American history, many of them culled from the test required of immigrants to become United States citizens. Unfortunately, it seems that's one test most SU students weren't

studying for. Only 35 percent of students polled could correctly answer more than half of the questions:

- 77 percent could not name who defined the government of the United States as "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people" (Abe Lincoln).

- 67 percent could not list both United States senators representing their home state in Congress.

- 74 percent could not answer "World War II" as the last time Congress declared war (53 percent answered the Persian Gulf War).

On the brighter side, 84 percent of students knew Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and

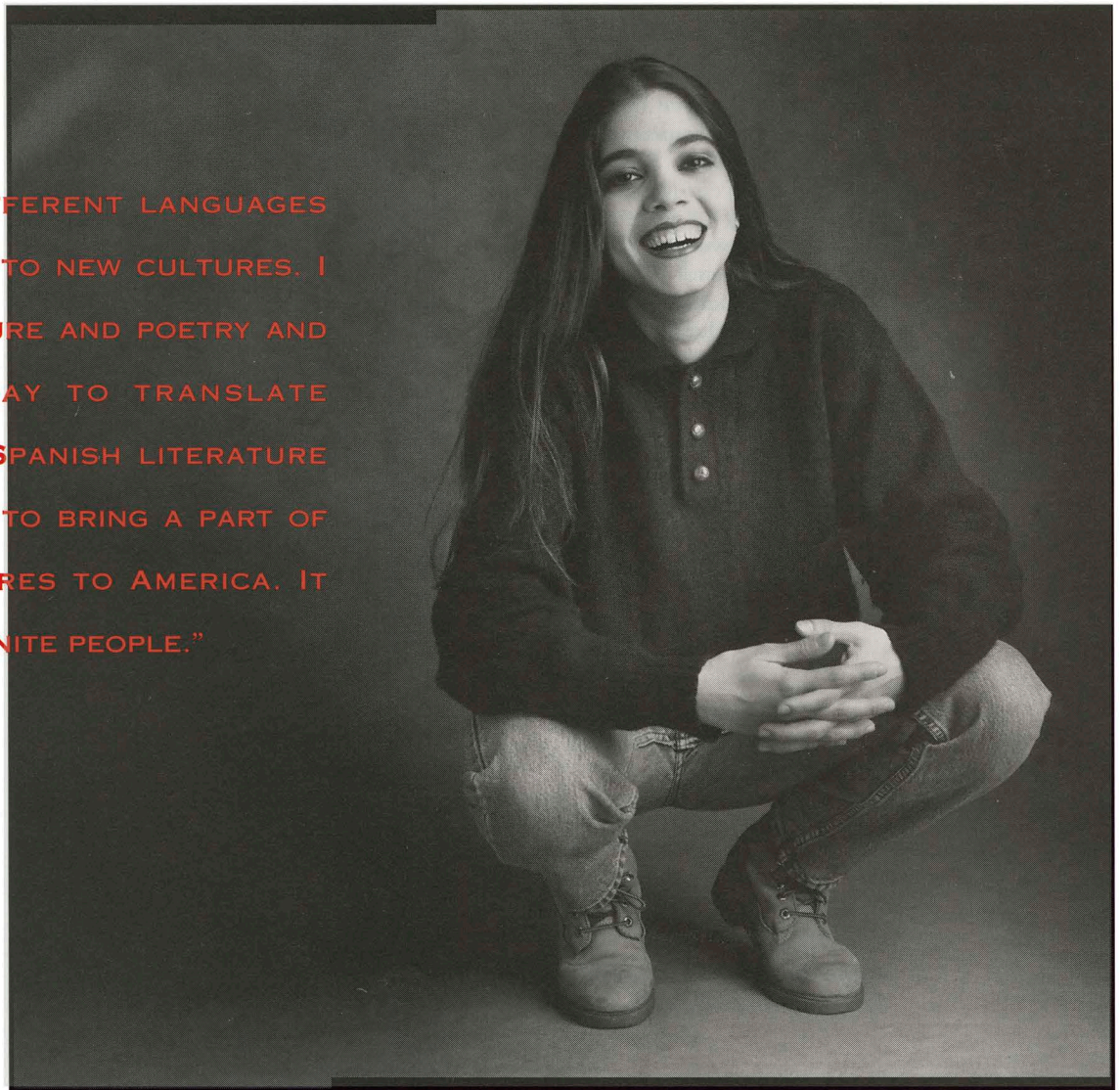
that it was Rosa Parks whose refusal to give up her bus seat led to the end of legalized segregation. And thanks to the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill controversy, most students can name at least one member of the Supreme Court. Thomas was the only justice mentioned by more than half of the respondents. Sandra Day O'Connor was second most popular, followed by Ruth Bader Ginsburg and William Rehnquist.

The groups with the most success on the current-events section included *New York Times* readers, seniors, feminists, and Republicans. But the highest score came from virgins.

Ironically, one-third of students said they thought their knowledge of world

**"KNOWING DIFFERENT LANGUAGES
OPENS DOORS TO NEW CULTURES. I
LOVE LITERATURE AND POETRY AND
HOPE ONE DAY TO TRANSLATE
ITALIAN AND SPANISH LITERATURE
INTO ENGLISH TO BRING A PART OF
THOSE CULTURES TO AMERICA. IT
COULD HELP UNITE PEOPLE."**

*Patricia Bayona
junior, English and
textual studies and
Italian language,
literature, and
linguistics major
Somerville,
New Jersey*



political and current events would contribute a significant amount to their future careers. Perhaps they should spend more time reading a newspaper.

While virtually all students read the *Daily Orange* regularly, only 43 percent read a Syracuse newspaper regularly, while 33 percent read *The New York Times* regularly and 31 percent read *USA Today* regularly. Unlike society at large, which is extremely critical of the media, 48 percent of students classify the media as only "slightly biased."

WITH A WING AND A PRAYER.

Baby boomers may be flocking to organized religion, but it seems religion is a private matter for SU students.

The students polled were split on whether they considered themselves religious. Forty-five percent said yes, 48 percent said no.

Yet more than three-fourths of students polled believe in God and 61 percent believe a supreme being plays an active role in human affairs. Nearly 60 percent say they pray privately, but only 14 percent attend religious services weekly; 25 percent say they never attend. The most active churchgoers include freshmen, conservatives, and those from rural areas.

Seventy-four percent of students say

they would not skip class to attend a major religious service if they knew it would adversely affect their grade. Those most likely to let their grade suffer include African Americans, Jews, and students who scored well on current-events questions.

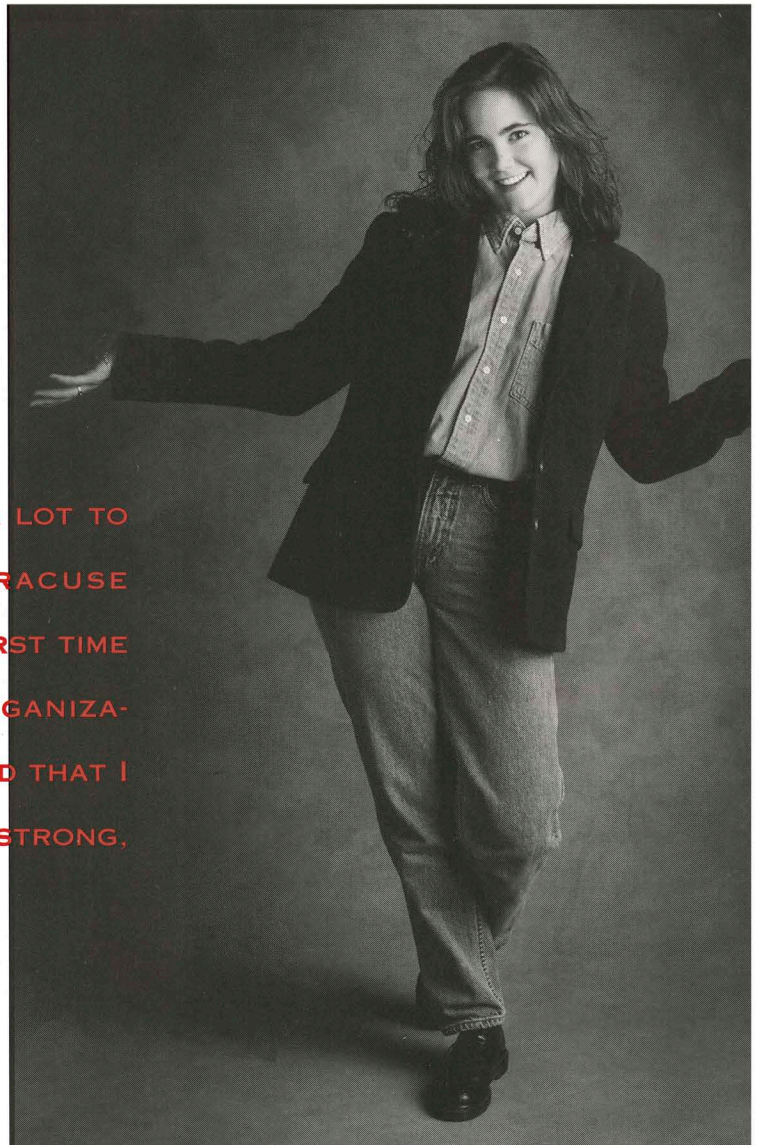
Nearly 83 percent of students say they would marry someone of a different religion. Jews and 1992 Bush voters are least likely to stray.

FUTURES PAVED WITH GOLD?

Perhaps cynicism goes hand in hand with being in college, but SU students are not terribly optimistic about the fate of the United States in the not-so-distant future. That doesn't mean they

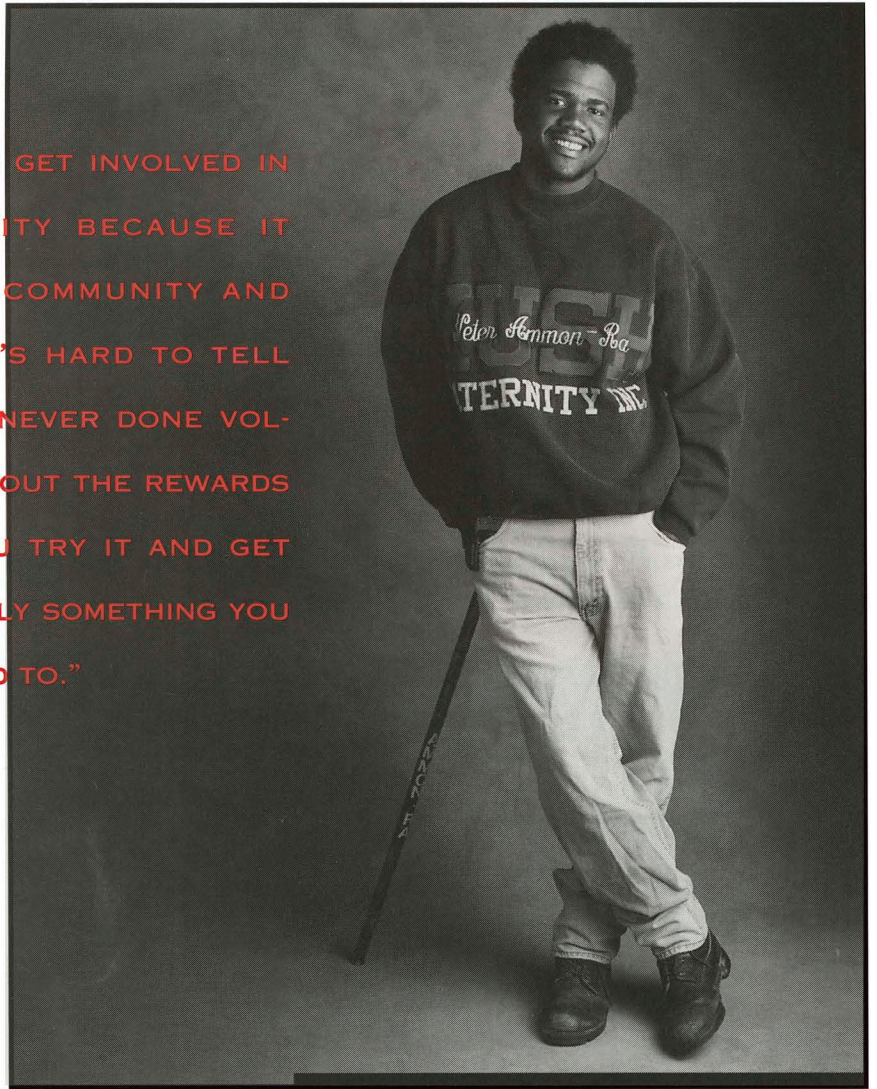
"THE GREEK SYSTEM HAS A LOT TO OFFER STUDENTS AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER BEEN IN AN ORGANIZATION THAT'S ALL WOMEN AND THAT I FEEL IS IMPORTANT. IT'S A STRONG, SUPPORTIVE GROUP."

Erin Fehlau
senior, broadcast journalism major
Bedford, Massachusetts



“PEOPLE SHOULD GET INVOLVED IN THEIR COMMUNITY BECAUSE IT UPGRADES THE COMMUNITY AND THEMSELVES. IT’S HARD TO TELL PEOPLE WHO’VE NEVER DONE VOLUNTEER WORK ABOUT THE REWARDS OF IT. ONCE YOU TRY IT AND GET INTO IT, IT’S REALLY SOMETHING YOU BECOME ADDICTED TO.”

*Jamal Wright
senior, magazine and
finance major
New York City*



don't intend to be successful themselves.

Only 42 percent of Syracuse University students believe America will be the most powerful nation in the world in the year 2010. Japan is the next most likely nation to rise to the top, followed by Germany and Russia. Those who believe Japan will be the most powerful include women (49 percent), psychology majors (47 percent), graduates of private high schools (41 percent), and 18-year-olds (40 percent).

In a series of questions on six issues—education, race relations, environment, crime, drugs, and poverty—students believe America will improve only on education and race relations in the next 15 years. Fifty-nine percent believe crime will increase, 56 percent believe the drug situation will worsen, and 47 percent believe poverty will rise.

Sixty-two percent believe they will work harder than their parents. While

most students (22 percent) have no idea what their occupation will be in 2010, the most popular career choices are business (21 percent), health care (12 percent), teaching (11 percent), and art/music (11 percent).

But jobs will not be the most important thing for many students. Two-thirds say they will place family ahead of career: 68 percent of men and 67 percent of women say family comes first. Those who plan to focus on jobs: African Americans, students who belong to social organizations, feminists, virgins, and atheists.

The students polled were unified on one point about our survey: they were happy when it was done. “This thing is long,” said one respondent. “If I can still write after this, I can do anything.” ■

Renée Gearhart Levy is a free-lance writer and former editor of this magazine.