The department is comprised of a pretty restless bunch. This month’s PLB documents the travels of the Psychology Department. We have travelers trekking all over the world as shown on the map below.

Thanks to the many department members who submitted travel photographs. (And thanks to the many others who did not submit to PLB, but posted their travels on the department website to be freely downloaded for editorial purposes!)
DEPARTMENT TRAVEL PHOTOS

Eli Finkel’s “wild” time in Africa...
Bob Siegler’s explorations in Costa Rica
Belly Dancing in Florida!

No, you are not in Morocco, Istanbul or Asia. On March 7th through the 9th was the third annual meeting of the “Spirit of the Tribes” in Davie, Florida, 20 miles west of Fort Lauderdale. The conference was a celebration of belly dancers and musicians from the West coast, Midwestern states, East coast to India and Egypt. The experience was an exchange of cultural ideas of Middle Eastern Asian dance and music that has been in existence for thousands of years. Twenty-eight troops of dancers and musicians performed to express and interpret this cultural custom of music and dance. My daughter was one of the 28 performers with her troop called Khafif.

In attendance were 500 women of all sizes, color and ages to experience other dance interpretations while taking rigorous workshops of hip rolling, shimming and foot work to different styles of music, none of which were afraid to bare their bellies. For the men and the women drum classes were given to practice Middle Eastern riffs. The sounds of bells, jingles, flutes, violins and drums gave you the feeling of being entertained in a tent on the by Sahara desert nomads.

And to make the experience more exciting the festival was held at the Bergeron Rodeo Grounds, hence the dirt floor in the photos. Normally, dancers would perform barefoot but considering what events took place before the tribes arrived, shoes were required. Some were brave enough to go shoeless but by the end of the day wore shoes for the rest of the conference. I need not say anymore about the dirt.

Besides the work shops there were vendors galore of which I was one helping my daughter sell her wares of rajeshtanie cholie tops, harem pants and circle skirts made by her. One could find anything from hair bones carved from animal horns to fur Sherpa hats and vests. Brightly colored silks from the Far East decorated the walls with hand crafted jewelry made in Afghanistan and dye wool macramé hip belt decorations from Uzbekistan.

All in all the experience was exciting and enlightening.

By Bridget A Boring
I recently gave a talk at a meeting of virologists, which gave me the opportunity to learn some about some of the viruses that are going around these days. Information I thought you might be interested in.

SARS—the respiratory virus that has killed about 50 people worldwide is a pretty serious threat. It is thought to be a coronavirus (so named because the virus looks like a crown). Coronaviruses are one of several types of viruses that cause common colds. In fact, in the early days of our own research we used a coronavirus (222E) in our trials. The problem is, that these viruses spread by close contact (aerosol and touch, will survive on a surface for at least 2-3 hours)... not good news. However, so far, they have been fairly successful at limiting its spread. Most people recover after a moderate to severe illness. However, people with suppressed immune system (e.g., HIV patients, elderly) are at fairly high risk for death. (I would be concerned about infants as well). Moral: Don't travel to places where SARS is a problem.

Small Pox--Some better news about small pox. Contrary to earlier reports, those of us who have previously been vaccinated (they stopped vaccinating in the US in early 1970's, so this applies to those over 30) are partly protected. Even those of us over 50, but the protection does decrease with time. More good news for the old people: Apparently, the risk of side effects of a new vaccination are much reduced for those who were vaccinated earlier in life. If you are immunosuppressed (HIV positive, taking immunosuppressive drugs) or have coronary heart disease (or even if you have multiple risk factors for coronary heart disease) you do not want to get this vaccine. In fact, until there is a clear and present threat (this is from the editor of the New England Journal of Medicine) you do not want to get this shot. By the way, it will work if you are vaccinated up to 2 days (some say 3 or 4) after your are exposed.

Common Cold—Well, it turns out my earlier hope that zinc would help has not panned out. According to my colleagues, the recent "well done" (as opposed to medium rare) blinded trials do not support zinc (either lozenges or aerosol [e.g., ZICAM as advertised on TV]) as having any effect. The work on another “natural cold treatment”, the herb Echinacea has also not been positive. Two recent and well done trials (with placebo conditions) found no effects. However, my collaborator Ron Turner (who wouldn't take the stuff himself) says that "it is important to remember that echinacea is not just one thing. There are three difference species of echinacea which are used as herbal medicines. The echinacea can be prepared in a variety of different ways... . So it's impossible to say, based on a single study, echinacea does or doesn't work." Of course, Ron still is getting money from the NIH to study Echinacea. Probably wouldn't want to say it is worthless. So if you are a true believer (as I am for zinc), so far there is no evidence that echinacea will hurt you.

I reported some of our own work on childhood socioeconomic status (SES) and susceptibility to colds at the meeting. Unfortunately, this isn't anything you can do much about. Turns out that the number of years during your childhood (up until 18) that your parents owned (includes mortgage) your own home, is negatively associated with whether you will develop a cold when exposed to a virus as an ADULT. The important years are ages 0-6. If your parents did not own their home during those years, you are at highest risk. Moreover, if they didn't own their home during your early childhood, later (your adolescence) home ownership does not repair the damage. Finally, all of this occurs independent of your own adult SES. That is, the effect isn't due to early childhood SES molding your adult economic, occupational and educational successes. Hope you had rich parents!
Did you hear the one about the nun and the Italian police man?
Lori’s Trip to 
China
AND FROM THE “BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU MAKE FREELY AVAILABLE ON YOUR WEBSITE” FILE...
CONGRATULATION SARAH PRESSMAN!

Sarah Pressman Awarded Graduate Student Service Award!

The graduate student service award honors a student who has advanced the interests of students, improved the quality of life for grad students on campus and who has contributed to the larger academic and surrounding community.

As the vice president for graduate student life on the executive committee of the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), Pressman has been devoted to improving the quality of graduate student life on campus. She's organized events ranging from white water rafting to nights at the Pittsburgh Symphony, and plans numerous annual events like the graduate student ski trip to Seven Springs, the GSA wine-tasting event, outings to Kennywood and visits to Fallingwater. She also coordinates a barbecue cookout to welcome new students each fall, monthly ice cream socials and interdepartmental/college events that allow graduate students to mingle on campus.

"Sarah's unfailing enthusiasm and creativity has helped her not only dream up new and interesting activities for graduate students, but also to expand and refine traditions that had been established before her tenure," said Kimmaree Murday, the 2002 GSA president. "Thanks to Sarah's efforts, more and more graduate students are getting the information they need to make connections and lead a more balanced life."

Way to go (again) Sarah!

Sarah has won an NSERC which will carry her for two more years. The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada based this "Postgraduate Scholarship" on her "academic excellence, research potential, communication skills, and interpersonal and leadership abilities".
Carnegie-Mellon University

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To: Faculty
From: S. Cohen
Date: October 22, 1991
Subject: First draft, letter soliciting students

I thought that we might consider revising our letter soliciting graduate student applications for distribution with our new department brochure. Here is a copy of the letter we have been using quite successfully in the social program.

The CMU Social Program is searching for 5 to 10 outstanding undergraduates who we will prepare for careers in psychology leading to the Nobel Prize. We have a program that is especially strong in Personality (as opposed to Personality Research) with a number of amiable (read “soft touches”) faculty members. The faculty’s main areas of interest include cat care, sports cars, hunting, fishing, house repair and jogging. Faculty in related departments can provide training in bridge playing and skiing.

The student-faculty ratio in our program averages about 1 to 5 allowing for a fair amount of student-faculty interaction. Student salaries start at $40,000 and are negotiable. Students capable of programming MacIntoshes for faculty entertainment are provided with extras such as air-conditioned offices.

Pittsburgh is a lovely area to live in. Summers are hot and humid and in the winter, the rolling hills are often sprinkled with a soft gray snow. Air pollution levels are consistently below those of Gary, Indiana and it is never overcast on sunny days.

Applications along with your time for 10K should be submitted to:

Social Psychology Program
“The Country Club”
Schenley Park
Pittsburgh
Attention: D. Klahr, Entertainment Chairperson

Dear Editor,

Cleaning my desk this week I came across a memo I wrote to the department 11-12 years ago. Apparently, my suggestions were not implemented at that time, so I thought it would be worth proposing them again.

A faculty member concerned with the graduate program,
Sheldon Cohen
Rachel Diana has been awarded the 1st Annual Psychology Department Movie Guru Award in recognition of excellence in prognostication of Academy Awards.

Rachel Diana narrowly edged out runners-up Bridget Boring and Julie Booth (11 correct predictions each) by correctly predicting 12 of the 24 Academy Awards.

Rachel becomes the first-ever recipient of the prestigious award. In recognition of her achievement, Rachel was bestowed with a statuette at an earlier, un-televised ceremony.

Pictured at the left with her award, Rachel will preside over the Movie Guru statuette (possessing all rights and privileges therein) for a term of one year...unless she can win again.

Take this as a departmental challenge to hone your movie acumen over the next year so that you might be the proud recipient of the next Psychology Department Movie Guru Award and have Oscar grace your desktop in 2004.

Ballot counting was overseen by Arthur Andersen Accounting

Breaking News: NIH to cut summer graduate funding. Owing to recent recession-led cut-backs in NIH funding, we have been informed that the 1/3 of graduate students currently supported by NIH or departmental funds will have to seek external funding elsewhere to support their summer salary. Following a meeting at the beginning of April, the graduate committee decided that there was no fair way to decide who should be funded this summer and who should not. Consequently, each graduate student was designated a "lottery" number which was placed in their mailbox. If you are a graduate student and your number is below, please see Queenie, Theresa Kurutz, or Ken Kotovosky ASAP to discuss alternative means of financial support for this summer.

The "lucky" numbers are: 2, 6, 8, 11, 14. Powerball (will be supported for half summer): 15

Graduate students with flexible summer plans willing to give up their summer stipend for a student with less-flexible arrangements are encouraged to do so and will be rewarded with the equivalent a USAirways domestic flight anywhere in the continental United States. Individuals who demonstrate a willingness and aptitude to clean faculty cars (both inside and out) will be exempt. Anyone with dark hair, a tattoo below the waist, or fewer than three complaints about the psychology department likewise will be unaffected by the new ruling. For further details, and if you can find one, speak to your local TSSC representative.
Sobriety Epidemic Endangers Nation’s Well-Being

By Roy F. Baumeister and Kathleen D. Vohs

Experts are warning of an alarming new plague overtaking our community and our very culture: sobriety. Everywhere the seemingly ubiquitous face of sobriety appears to be rearing its ugly head.

Although some may in the name of tolerance seek to make light of sobriety or dismiss it as a passing, harmless fad, disturbing statistics reveal what may turn out on closer inspection to be merely the poisonous tip of the iceberg woe. As just one example, newly released FBI statistics have revealed that a shocking number of crimes are committed by people who are legally sober at the time. In many cases, both the assailant and the victim were found to be sober.

Official traffic statistics suggest that sober people are often a menace to themselves or others. Sober people have been found to be responsible for half the fatal car crashes and a large number of lesser accidents. If one includes both drivers and passengers of all cars involved, a whopping 87 percent of all automotive accidents involve at least one sober person – sometimes even a child. Sobriety is implicated in many serious injuries and deaths. Many unfortunate people die while sober, in tragic contrast to the fortunate individuals who have some control over their final hours and generally choose to be heavily lubricated throughout the experience.

The effects of sobriety on mental health are believed to be no less than the havoc wrought on the physical self. Sobriety causes a dampening of emotional state. Sober people are often described by clinical experts as overly restrained, a condition that is sometimes attributed to their unnatural habit of thinking about the future or their excessive, fastidious concern with preserving the so-called shreds of dignity.

It is tragicomically ironic to think how many hapless individuals fall prey to the primrose path of sobriety only to sorrowfully discover that life has become a stark, barren wasteland utterly devoid of fulfillment. Their daily lives are punctuated only by the dull thuds and cloyingly earnest rhythms of sober conversation, which usurp the place of the scintillating wit that enlivens badinage among the intoxicated.

Surely the mall media bear part of the blame. Many television stars now portray characters who seem to almost revel in a sober lifestyle, thereby polluting the airwaves with pro-sober propaganda and misguiding or enticing innocent, unsuspecting portions of our nation’s youth into experimenting with sobriety as if that were a perfectly acceptable way to live. Looking back, however and unfortunately, sobriety has been wreaking its monumental toll for enough myriad years to have utterly soiled out nation’s morals compass.

For concerned friends and family members, spotting sobriety is not always early, even though it is best to do it early. Here are three major warning signs that someone may be experimenting with sobriety:

1. **Humorlessness.** Although it is an exaggeration to say that sober people are unable to laugh, studies do confirm that in most cases something will have to be genuinely funny before a sober person can laugh at it, and even then they may laugh only when forced or shallow manner.

2. **Straight walking.** Sober people can often be stopped by their peculiar method of walking, which typically consists of moving quietly through space in fairly straight line. One California Highway Patrol offices describes the walk of sober individuals as ‘the ghost float,’ in recognition of how they seem almost supernaturally able to avoid crashing into walls, door frames, barstools, parked cars, fellow patrons, and other alleged obstacles.

3. **Sexual Pickiness.** Sober people have been observed to display an inordinate, almost absurd degree of picayune fussiness in their choice of sex partners. Researchers have proposed that sobriety causes an unnatural rise in personal standards and criteria for what would qualify as an acceptable person to engage in sexual activity with. As a result, many potential partners who would seem instantly fine and charming, even glamorous, to any normally intoxicated person will be judged unsuitable by sober individuals. Sober people have even been known to refuse to have sex with someone for the most shallow and superficial of reasons, such as lacking intelligence or not smelling just perfect.
Sobriety Epidemic Endangers Nation’s Well-Being (continued…)

Sober people tend to spend time together, shunning the company of society at large. One possible reason for this is that sober people believe that they will meet with disapproval from normal, intoxicated persons and may feel ashamed or self-conscious about their painfully uncool sobriety. Whatever the reason, though, this may result in a vicious circle of enabling in which the sober people end up encouraging each other to be sober and giving each other a false sense of consensus that sobriety may be normal and widespread. Indeed, the sexual pickiness noted above may result in sober people only having sexual relations with other sober people, which can foster a kind of inbreeding.

Many people enter into sobriety innocently or naively, not realizing the full extent of the dangers or perhaps underestimating the seductive lure of being sober. College students, for example, may start with the accidental discovery that writing a term paper or programming a computer seems (subjectively) to go more smoothly when one is sober. The student may even cultivate the delusion that his or her work is actually better in quality if produced while sober, and this may encourage that student to try being sober on other occasions or in other contexts.

Our nation’s youth may certainly be at risk for vulnerability to sobriety, but again there is no cause for general worry. The kids are all right. The younger generation has shown such staunch, almost heroic capacity to resist the blandishments and temptations of sobriety, and many individual stories attest to the power of the human spirit as individuals manage to extricate themselves from the empty and dehumanizing swamp of life without drugs or alcohol, into which the young and innocent may all too easily be led astray.

Most disturbing is still the relatively small movement to present sobriety as a positive good and try to encourage unwitting, innocent people to convert to sobriety. In some places clinics and detox centers have sprung up (often with murky financial backing) try to promote sobriety. At these places, inmates are forced to wear fashionable clothing and attend boring meetings while being systematically deprived of existence of a fanatic and proselytizing corps of sober people, there is no immediate reason to worry about this movement. A quick count of the relative number of such detox clinics versus the number of bars will reassure anyone that society in the whole still has its priorities straight.

Editor’s Note: Happy Belated April Fool’s Day!
Oscar season is over and the Razzies have come and gone. I got to thinking: If movie stars can win glamorous prizes, the adoration of people across the globe, and millions of dollars for a starring role, then why shouldn’t you? Well, ok, maybe you not going to have hordes of groupies nationwide (unless you are Sheldon Cohen) and you are certainly not going to have millions of dollars in the bank (unless you are Marcel Just). And I guess you’ll never star in a big budget picture (unless an undergraduate from the Drama school makes it big and remembers you as that “eccentric” yet film-worthy graduate, professor, or staff member). But, at least you, like the rich and mostly plastic film stars that we love, can win prizes.

To this end, this month’s movie column is a bit of a departure. Usually I wax semi-lyrical about something film related providing my own hackneyed yet somehow hilarious view of some topic (see how I am my own harshest critic!). But this month, to commemorate Passover, the Great Halibut War of 1975, and the end of the long hard Pittsburgh Winter, I’m giving away a nice little prize. How do you win? By answering the various film related questions below. As you can see, they are a varied bunch. First, you need to try to name the movie and actors in the pictures provided. The one problem is that the actors have been deleted from the pictures by the neatest serial slasher ever. Second, there is a list of movie action quotes. Just tell me which film they are from (I will assume that anyone with 100% cheated one way or another). Finally, the tie breaker. I would like you to write one sentence (it can be a long sentence) that would qualify as one of the worst first or last line of a film. It can be dialogue, it can be a description of a scene, just about anything in fact. But it has to be bad. Really bad. Really really...well, I’m sure you get the picture. Here are some real examples, though not necessarily from the end of a movie: “Maybe I didn't kill him completely dead” Brian Wimmer in Late for Dinner, and “We're going to the land of milk and honey. Anybody know the way?” - a Hebrew in The Ten Commandments. I’m sure you can do much better. I will use the poor quality of your made-up lines to determine the winner in the event of a tie, or if someone writes a really good poor line (you follow?) then that could swing the prize their way. I will publish the best of the worst in next month’s column (anonymity assured of course).

So, what will you win? Well, of course you will win the admiration of all those in the department and even some in Porter Hall. Not enough? Well, the prize, paid for out of my own ever shrinking pockets, will be this year’s Time Out Film Guide. This film guide is my bible - it has over 10,000 reviews including a whole host of foreign movies, and it is indexed by genre, director, and actor. The reviews are erudite and in-depth, and in general if they like a movie, its worth watching. Enough said.

Good luck in your question answering! You’ll need it!
**Movie Pictures:** Remember, name the movie and the lead actors in the scene.
Movie Lines:
Just say which action movie these lines came from!

1. We're gonna need a bigger boat
2. Did I fire six shots, or only five?
3. Elevator to hell - going down!
4. All these things will be lost in time. Like tears...in rain.
5. What can I say? I'm a spy.
6. There can be only one.
7. I didn't kill my wife!
8. I think he's attempting re-entry, sir...
9. Come with me if you want to live.
10. Freedom!
11. Charlie don't surf...
12. Get off my plane!
13. I know kung fu...
16. But, I'm funny how? Funny like a clown? I amuse you?
17. I said... put the bunny in the box.
18. Negative, Ghost Rider - the pattern is full.
19. What do they call you, Wheels?
20. Winners go home and f%$k the prom queen.
21. Look at the size of that thing!
22. The difference is, I make this look good.
23. Houston, we have a problem...
24. I am Jack's utter lack of surprise.
25. We both knew this was a one-way trip.

Finally, the Cheesy line tiebreaker: One sentence only!

Answers to me by May 8th. Please email your answers (rakison@andrew.cmu.edu). Oh, and beware that an entry without a tie-breaker worst line will be disqualified! I want to see those cheesy lines!
Please join us in congratulating Phil Pavlik on his Allen Newell Award for Best Student Paper at the Fifth International Conference on Cognitive Modeling! It was for his paper with John Anderson, "An ACT-R Model of the Spacing Effect". Nice work, Phil!

AN ORIGINAL CARTOON FROM AN ANONYMOUS GRAD ARTIST

Sarah Pressman’s Visit to the Grand Canyon
This periodical is not peer reviewed and as such, the editorial board takes absolutely no responsibility for its contents! This is an invitation to you. Submit us your stunning artwork (or doodles), your embarrassing departmental photographs, your biting satire, and your humorous stories. We'll publish them here without the benefit of review!
Submit what you wish to Rochelle Croom at rmccroom@andrew.cmu.edu or use the anonymous drop box in the 336B Lounge.