

Miss Michigan Jennifer Drayton is a winner.



Here She Comes, Miss America

WITH VASELINE on her teeth, Preparation-H under her eyes and duct tape everywhere else, Miss Anystate steps up to the platform, poses and aims a bright, white smile at the judges before her. Or so you hear.

DOLLARS

Each time a pageant is televised, rumors circulate about the strange things women do to their bodies and psyches to win. But people involved in the Miss America pageant insist the public-prancing-and-dancing-for-the-crown has changed.

The Miss America Organization offered more than \$35 million in college scholarships last year, making it the largest provider of scholar-

ships to college women in the world. That's appealing enough to attract nearly 60,000 women — many of them college students — annually to compete.

"In the 1950s and '60s, the ideal Miss America correlated with the Hollywood glamour," says Leonard Horn, president and CEO of the Miss America Organization. He says most of the participants are now college students. "The ideal today is a woman with substance and wisdom who cares about something other than herself."

Miss Arkansas Melonie McGarrah, a junior at U. of Central Arkansas, says Miss America has evolved tremendously over the years.

"Miss America used to be a bathing-beauty pageant. It's now a showcase of young women with high moral standards who want to make a difference in society."

Not everyone sees it that way. McGarrah regularly meets opposition to pageantry — even from the people closest to her.

"My best friend doesn't like pageants. But she supports me, although she thinks women work so hard to get past being valued just for how they look, and it doesn't help to have pageants point out appearance."

Justine Andronici, staff member of Feminist Majority Foundation in Los Angeles, says that adding the talent contests and interviews to the competition doesn't change the basic premise of pageants — it just makes them more palatable to the TV audience.

"When you look at beauty pageants, it's about who's the most attractive to the opposite sex," she says.

But Jennifer Drayton, Miss Michigan and a senior at Michigan State U., says the palate-pleasers

don't sugarcoat the pageant — they set it apart from others.

"Miss America attracts new people because it's a scholarship pageant, and you win money for college. If you're not going to school, the money doesn't do you any good."

Drayton also says today's beauty queen isn't what she used to be.

"People who don't know me are surprised when we meet because they have a stereotype of a beauty queen, and I don't fit that. I'm very relaxed and laid-back, and they expect someone who's prim and proper."

But there are still indications that the whole idea is a little weird. Consider this piece of advice Drayton got: "Someone told me to eat a bowl of vanilla ice cream before the swimsuit competition. It's supposed to make your skin glow."

By Melissa Grego, Assistant Editor / Photo courtesy of The Muskegon Chronicle



Guest Expert: RuPaul

On beauty pageants:
"I'll be the first to say I love the human body. Man or woman — even if they're 400 pounds — should celebrate life, themselves and beauty."

On ballroom dancing:
"My dream partners would be Antonio Banderas, Matthew Modine and Antonio Sabato Jr."

Tango and Class

BALLROOM DANCING isn't just for dusty old geezers anymore. While the Macarena was just a passing trend, the waltz is here to stay. So's the mambo. And the tango. And the fox trot. And any other ballroom dance you can think of.



Many colleges offer ballroom and swing dance classes, and some even have ballroom dance teams that participate in intercollegiate competitions.

"Ballroom dance is a wonderful combination of exercise, poise and performing arts," says Nancy Rapoport, who coaches the 30-member dance team at Ohio State U.

Donna Medrano, who initiated a similar program at the U. of Nevada, Las Vegas, eight years ago, says the sport stresses the coed appeal. Although experience is not necessary, Medrano looks for students who work well with one or more

partners, have a good feel for rhythm and can quickly pick up dance steps.

Hans Gonzales, a senior at UNLV and the reigning U.S. Intercollegiate American Rhythm Dance champion, became interested in ballroom dancing after taking a trip home to the Philippines.

Gonzales says he also likes the nonthreatening atmosphere of dancing as a sport. "If you go up to a girl in a club and ask her to dance, she automatically thinks you are trying to sleep with her."

Ntobeko Ntusi, a junior at Haverford College, Pa., also started his ballroom career outside of the United States. A native of South Africa, Ntusi's parents began taking him to dance class at age 6.

Although Haverford doesn't have a ballroom team, Ntusi pursues the sport independently, practicing about 20 hours a week.

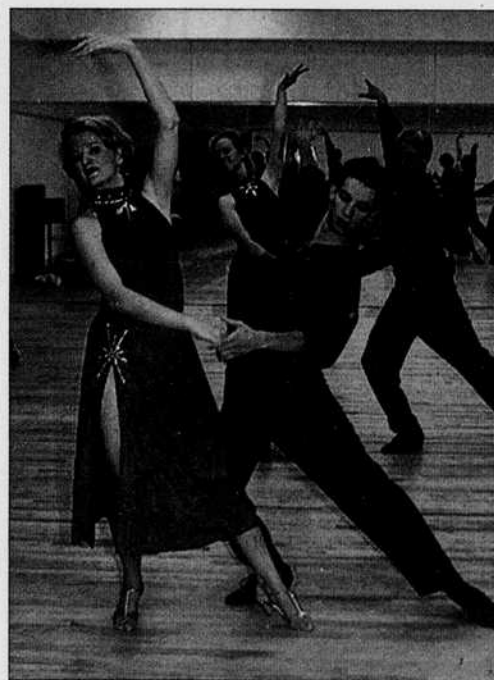
Of course, not all ballroom dancers are in it for the competition.

"My boyfriend and I took a ballroom dance class just for something different to do together," says Heather Harris, a junior at Grove City College, Pa.

And for students who think ballroom dancing is a little too formal, swing dancing is also making a comeback.

At Brigham Young U., students get into the swing of things with the Swing Kids dance club. Up to 600 students don their best 1940s duds every Saturday night to feel the beats of big-band music. Sophomore Jennifer Gale says she isn't surprised at the huge numbers who attend.

"The whole swing style is really low key — anything goes," she says. "It's fun, and the music is addicting."



Everybody cut foot loose.

By Suzanne Stewart, Marietta College, Ohio/Photo by Spencer Young, U. of Utah

Kelli Cordray, volleyball, U. of Hawaii
Wears big bows in her hair during every match.

Brian McGhee, Kareem Bryant, doubles tennis partners, Central Connecticut State U. Walk onto the court in regular shoes, walk off and change into game shoes.

Mark Abel, football, Dartmouth College Wears black socks on game day and tapes over shoes with black tape.

Nathan Morealle, football, Utah State U. Licks his hands before he catches the ball.

Jason Sissel, crew, U. of Iowa Team throws the coxswain in the water every time they win a gold medal.

Rusty Lenners, football, South Dakota State U. Pulls pranks — like dropping a frog in a teammate's pants — to keep the team loose.