

seven-plus in his first two games—but couldn't keep him from scoring three short-yardage touchdowns. The attention to Dawson also created openings for Harvard's array of gifted receivers. Pizzotti, unexpectedly returning at quarterback, had 15 completions in 29 attempts for 291 yards and one touchdown—a fourth-and-four strike to freshman Matt Luft that covered 42 yards and began the team's second-quarter comeback. Another aerial touchdown came on a flashy 32-yard reverse pass from receiver Chris Sanders '09 to senior Corey Mazza, who had 118 yards on four catches. "Today we became a football team," said coach Murphy afterward. "To get behind the eight-ball and see the way we responded was tremendously satisfying."

TIDBITS: The Stadium's new FieldTurf suits Clifton Dawson. "I personally thank

Harvard for installing this surface," he said after the Holy Cross game. "It felt great. You feel faster, you feel confident in your footing." Dawson has bulked up in the past year—he's now listed at 210, as against 190 last season—but still has the squad's fastest time (4.49 seconds) in the 40-yard dash.

The Dawson watch: As the holder of every single-season and career rushing record that Harvard keeps, Dawson rewrites the record book on a weekly basis. Three games into the season, he ranked first among active Division I-AA players in career rushing yards (4,073) and career all-purpose yards (5,086). His exploits in the Holy Cross and Brown games earned him successive citations as Ivy League offensive player of the week.

Role reversal: Harvard's 21-0 start in the Brown game was a turnabout. In the teams' last two contests, Brown had a 37-3

advantage in first-quarter scoring, building leads of 21-0 in 2004 and 16-0 in 2005. But both games were cliffhangers. A second-half rally gave Harvard a 35-34 victory in 2004, and in the first double-overtime tie-breaker in Harvard annals, a field goal by Matt Schindel '08 won it for the Crimson in 2005, 38-35.

New faces: Five of Harvard's nine assistant coaches are new this year. One is quarterback coach and offensive coordinator Joel Lamb '93, who saw the error of his ways and returned to Cambridge after nine years as quarterback coach—and, for the past three years, offensive coordinator—at Yale.

Sign of the times: The games at Brown and Lehigh were the only ones on this year's schedule to be played on natural grass. Just two of the eight Ivy teams, Brown and Yale, still retain natural surfaces, and Yale comes to the Stadium for this season's finale. ~"CLEAT"

ALUMNI

"This Craving to Fly"

In a darkened alley next to the Cleveland Public Theatre, the crowd stares up at a sprite in white suspended from two rings high above the ground. Bathed in a pinkish spotlight, Montana Miller '96 appears vulnerable, even as her outsized biceps contract to pull her body up between the rings and her legs slide into a perfect split. Then she wraps the ropes around her arms and is held aloft, her hands and body free, appearing to float above us all.

"I'VE ALWAYS wanted to fly," Miller says after the show, her tightly wound body curled up in a chair and covered with a silky black cloak. "Freedom is a compulsion for me." As a young competitive gymnast, she was frustrated by moves that never catapulted her high enough. From flying dreams she awoke, disappointed. So when a family friend said she'd make a good trapeze artist, "Something just clicked."

Right after high school, she studied for three years at an elite circus training in-

stitute in France, performing with its fledgling troupe. Later, she translated those talents into work as a professional high diver in the gritty underworld of amusement parks. In 1996, she was among the first women to dive off the famous cliffs in Acapulco. There she stood on a rocky perch 87 feet up as the Mexican divers yelled out when the tide was highest, and took a deep breath before hurling herself off the side into the air; a straight small line falling into the green waves. "Every high dive was just as scary as the last one," she says now. "The fears never leave me...I just have an extraordinary willingness to overcome them."

AT 36, MILLER has built a life around defying gravity—and other limits of the human condition, like age, culture, and career tracks. In her full-time work as an assistant professor of popular culture at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, she wants students to think critically

about the world of mass media in which they are immersed: Who is promoting what symbolic messages, and why? What do the messages mean for different groups of people in society? "I want them to stop taking things for granted," she says. "Deeper thinking doesn't come naturally to them. But we want scholars and thinkers in the field, not just people who love pop culture and collect it or watch a lot of TV." She is lively and encouraging in class, open to students' perceptions and unafraid to use the occasional dirty word, or slang, like "bling" (it's flashy jewelry often worn by hip-hoppers).

She has certainly made an impression: one girl created a biopic about Miller that opens with her declaration: "Conquering your fears is the greatest expression of freedom." Students call her the "coolest teacher" and "friend" her by the dozens on Facebook (the hugely popular on-line social network founded by Mark Zuckerberg '06). On her own profile, she reveals her favorite TV shows, quotations and movies, and her relationship status. (Her boyfriend is a 26-year-old paleontology graduate student at the University of Michigan.) Dressed in a flouncy miniskirt and cowboy boots, she could almost pass as a student herself.

Miller is a new professor. She earned her doctorate in folklore from UCLA in 2003 (after concentrating in the same subject at Harvard) and began teaching at Bowling Green last year. She thinks of herself as a “phenomenologist” and a non-traditional folklorist because she focuses on communication outside the conventional oral tradition. “Contemporary folklorists think of Internet communication as being a form of orality, largely due to its immediacy and informality,” she reports. “And it is certainly possible to find the intersections between mass-media communication and ethnography—that is, what people do with what they receive through TV, how they incorporate it into their daily lives. For example, adopting customs they see modeled on TV, or participating in discussion boards about TV shows, or simply getting together with friends for ritualistic viewings of *Desperate Housewives* or *Sex and the City*.”

Her research has examined “the ways

people perceive and play with risk”—athletes, gamblers, addicts, cheerleaders, and bungee-jumpers. For her dissertation, Miller traveled to high schools all over the country to study a popular nationwide drunk-driving prevention program that dramatizes a fatal accident and its aftermath in an effort to transform teenagers’ view of risk-taking behavior. “What actually happens,” Miller explains, “is that everyone gets all distracted by the fun of the role-playing scenario—of being in the spotlight, eulogized and praised, and cried over, and the seductive drama of it all. People are having the experience of dying and coming back to life and giving speeches about how ‘impactful’ it was. So this risk-taking behavior—DUI—actually gets associated with getting lots of attention and glory.”

She has created something of a field of her own—emerging traditions in American youth culture—“because I knew there was nothing that I could do with a degree in folklore, and my ridiculous UCLA diploma signed by Arnold Schwarzenegger,” she says, laughing. Bowling Green, which touts itself as “the only university in the United States with a graduate department devoted to the scholarly study of popular culture,” offered her a plum. “I have a need to perform, which I do in the classroom,” she says. “I have a passion for good writing and making other peoples’ writing better.” (She is a prolific writer herself.) “And I love emerging phenomena.” She has always watched loads of television (and is devoted to “reality TV”), and falls asleep to CNN. “I’m a news junkie. The *Daily Show* is what keeps me from getting too depressed by all the news I absorb,” she adds. “Jon Stewart is my hero.”

Miller takes to the air.



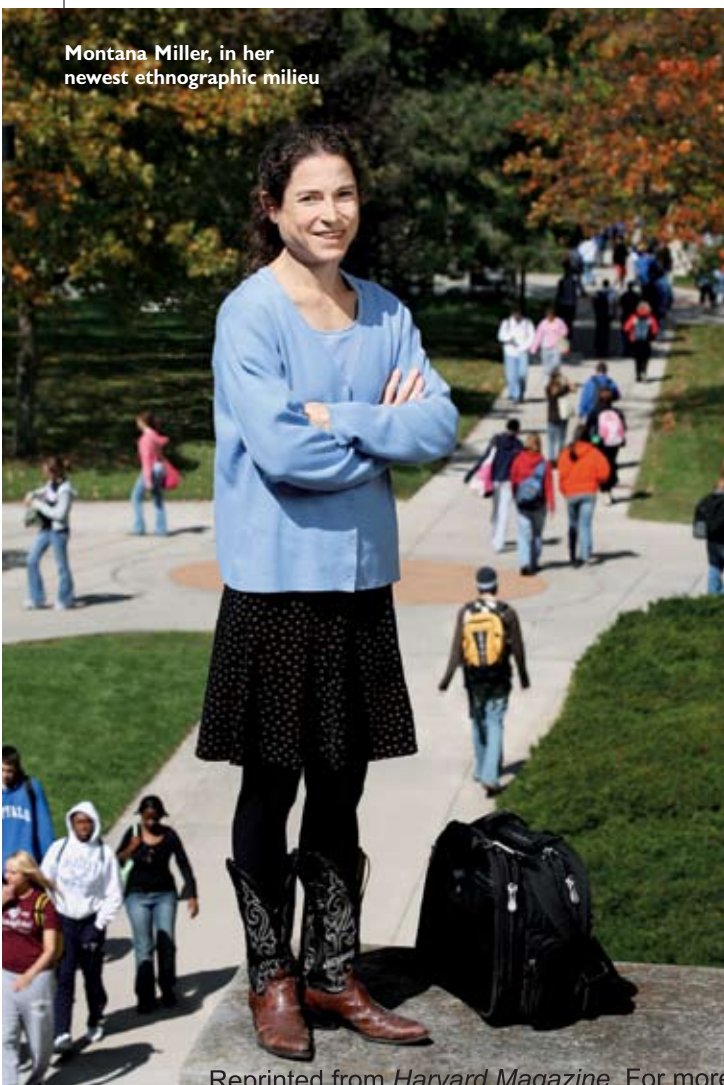
COURTESY OF MONTANA MILLER

PERHAPS SOME OF Miller’s courage and resourcefulness was handed down. Her grandfather was a trained paratrooper and U.S. Army general who was shot down several times in Vietnam, earning medals for bravery. Her parents, Kathleen Cushman and Edward P. Miller ’70, Ed.M. ’92, met by chance in college when Cushman, who was at Wellesley, placed a crank call to him using a phone number her roommate had found on the floor of a phone booth. “She was 19 when she had me,” Miller says. “They were poor, crazy kids who somehow got through college with a baby and moved to Harvard, Massachusetts,” and started the *Harvard Post*.

Miller remembers lying in bed at night, listening to the beeps, clicks, and whirs of the IBM Compugraphics machine, “and the sound of my father’s fingers tapping away; my lullaby. I learned everything about putting a newspaper together and that’s really my upbringing, it’s in my blood. I always assumed I would go into journalism and my ultimate goal was to be the editor of the *New York Times*. So going off to join the circus was a real detour for me. It didn’t make a lot of sense except that I had this craving to fly.”

Her time with the *École supérieure des arts du cirque* was unromantic. “We were kids with soaring fantasies, but we spent our days sweating and straining and steeling ourselves against chest-gripping fear,” Miller relays in a recent piece for *Tiferet: A Journal of Spiritual Literature*. “Forty feet up, we shared the narrow perch, breathing in with the chalk dust

Montana Miller, in her newest ethnographic milieu



each other's ambition and anxiety." (She and her mother published *Circus Dreams: The Making of a Circus Artist* about the experience.) Faced with signing on with a professional circus she didn't like, Miller returned home, where she got into Harvard on early action and spent the intervening year as a solo aerialist for the Pickle Family Circus. There, she got a concussion from falling headfirst onto the stage during a pole-climbing act in which she hung by one foot with two women dangling from her. Healed after three months, she kept working until Freshman Week.

Entering Harvard in the fall of 1992 (at age 22), Miller quickly found a home with the committee on folklore and mythology and a mentor in Deborah Foster, senior lecturer, head tutor, and director of undergraduate studies. And even though she had never been on a diving board, she joined the diving team, reorienting her skills. (She was with the team all four years, but did not compete for two, after being hit by a truck while riding her bike to practice early one morning.)

"...the beautiful, superhuman hero."

Folklore, myth-making, and narrative all appeal to Miller's sense of how we should understand the world of human experience—and herself. Foster's fieldwork course "made clear that what I was doing in my life in taking these risks was to plunge myself into very different cultures and really live that culture for awhile, and that the powers of observation and writing that I had and used were really the skills of a fieldworker," she explains. "I approach folklore as anthropology." Her senior thesis looked at how women gymnasts who become media commentators perpetuate mythologies of the sport.

After college, Miller worked for the Great American High Dive Team, which performed at Dutch Wonderland, "a tourist trap and the most miserable show I've ever been a part of," she says. "I was doing five high-dive shows a day with no days off for \$300 a week and living with members of the team in a trailer in close, confined quarters. It's a grueling, grueling life. It's painful and monotonous."

Alumni College

The Alumni College programs, run by the Harvard Alumni Association, range from day-long symposia to two-hour workshops and cover an array of topics.

On December 7, "Shaking the Family Tree in Forensic Investigations: Genetic Surveillance in the 21st Century" features associate professor of pathology Frederic Bieber and associate professor of public policy David Lazer. They will present groundbreaking research about government-maintained DNA databases and talk about the growth and social and political effects of other DNA collections.

The event, open to alumni and their guests, takes place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Science Center, 1 Oxford Street, Cambridge. Tickets are \$10 per person, which includes appetizers and parking. For the latest details on this and other events, visit <http://post.harvard.edu/travel> and click on "Alumni College," or call 617-495-1920.

After moving to the relatively "supportive, cushy atmosphere of academics" at UCLA, Miller took advantage of Hollywood's spectacle-hungry culture, performing solo aerial acts at nightclubs, political events, award shows, schools, and private parties. She began to weave narrative into her acts: Greek mythology, and tales of people and animals who struggle, evolve—and learn to fly.

These days, her work schedule imposes a limit she dislikes on her mid-air suspen-

messages are subtly transmitted through the media." She wants students "to think about audiences, and how the popular culture we consume is deliberately shaped and targeted for specific populations. And in turn, how interest groups can become more sharply defined as popular culture carves out niches for them."

Project topics have focused on alcohol, television, drugs, music, and movies. "I try not to be judgmental," Miller says. "These are all very much a part of their thinking and their world. And I'm an ethnographer—I study youth culture. I want to know the truth about what they do—I'm not afraid of it. I actually feel honored that they let me into their lives."

She is currently studying the Facebook phenomenon through student subjects who keep journals about how they use it. Miller herself spends a couple of hours a day observing student profiles and perusing Facebook for news of her 150 "friends." Many students post sexy photos and gossip; others make serious pronouncements. "One came out as gay on Facebook and dealt with the whole repercussion of that on-line," she reports. "This is a whole new framework for socializing—an outlet, a place to perform and experiment. What I'm focusing on is what risks students will take on Facebook that they will not take in real life."

JUST AS FACEBOOK culture does not meet standards of "traditional folklore," so, too, is it shielded from the immediate, corporeal risks associated with standing in bare feet on a windy perch and throwing yourself off the side of a cliff. "That is dan-

sions. "I am struggling to find a way to integrate that without just dropping dead from exhaustion," she reports. As a new professor teaching her courses for the first time, she spends hours researching materials. (In her occupational folklore class, she used scenes from the movies *Pushing Tin* and *United 93* to explore "exoteric" and "esoteric" ways air-traffic controllers are perceived.) Often she gets by on only three hours of sleep, and is typically awake at 4 a.m. e-mailing students.

It takes stamina to keep tabs on youthful trends. In Miller's "Introduction to Popular Culture" class, students present weekly research projects, such as new TV networks with shows they've dreamed up for a niche market. "This was in the context of learning to think critically about the composition of the programming they consume," she says. "For example, how commercials are placed deliberately in shows for specific audiences, how product placement is used in TV and movies, and how moral

gerous," Miller agrees. "But I felt competent enough to handle that risk—and thought it was worth taking in order to perform this identity of the beautiful superhuman hero that was so important to me. When I am doing that, I am projecting that image, playing that part," she continues. "In the rest of my life, I feel like this boring, flawed, mundane, really ordinary person. It's only in those moments when I'm flying that I borrow that identity. That's probably why it's so hard for me to give up that part of my life. It's sad to me. It's the one time that I feel beautiful and special." ~NELL PORTER BROWN

Well Done

THE HARVARD ALUMNI Association Awards were established in 1990 to recognize outstanding service to Harvard University through alumni activities. This year's recipients were to be honored on October 12 during the HAA Board of Directors' fall meeting in Cambridge. The highlights of their many contributions are mentioned below.

Paul R. Corcoran Jr. '54, of Waltham, Massachusetts, has cochaired his last four class reunions and, throughout the early



Paul R. Corcoran Jr.

1980s, held various HAA posts, including that of HAA director. He is a former president of the Harvard Club of Boston and has served as a member and adviser of the board of directors for the Harvard Student Agencies. He is also the former owner of the Harvard Shop in Harvard Square and was, until 2003, director of Port Financial Corp., the holding company for Cambridgeport Bank.

Frank H. Duehay '55, M.A.T. '58, CAS '65, Ed.D. '68, IOP '82, of Cambridge, a former assistant dean and lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education,



Frank H. Duehay

has also served as director of graduate programs in educational administration and as associate director of the Harvard Summer School. He has a long association with Phillips Brooks House Association and most re-

cently led a successful \$7.8-million capital campaign for that organization. For more than three decades, he held elected office in Cambridge, including three stints as mayor. He is currently chairman of the board of trustees for the Cambridge Health Alliance.

Karen Spencer Kelly '80, of Philadelphia, the first African-American woman to serve as president of the HAA, is also a former Radcliffe trustee who aided in that College's metamorphosis into the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. She was selected chief marshal of her class, has served as president of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Philadelphia, and is a past member of the HAA committee that nominates Overseer and elected director candidates. She is a partner at the law firm of Kelly, Monaco & Naples.



Karen Spencer Kelly

Frederic P. Smith '56, J.D. '59, A.M. '62, of Los Angeles, has been a member of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Southern California since 1964, and joined its board six years later. As treasurer of the club, he increased its



Frederic P. Smith

fundraising for financial aid for students, and later, as club president, helped arrange celebrity benefits to further benefit that cause. (Due to his efforts, then and now, the club's donations to Harvard have increased from \$1,000 every three years to \$55,000 a year.) He is the 1997 recipient of the club's John Harvard Award for Distinguished Community Service, and in 2002 was given the HAA Outstanding Club Contribution Award. A retired intellectual-property attorney, he is also involved in the Boston Latin School West Coast Alumni Association.

Sidney M. Spielvogel, A.M. '46, M.B.A. '49, of New York City, has been chair of the Graduate School Annual Fund for a decade, and a member of the Graduate School Alumni Association Council, almost continually, since 1983. A volunteer solicitor, he regularly partici-



Sidney M. Spielvogel

pates in phonathons, organizes career information panels, and hosts two annual events at the Harvard Club of New York, where he is a member. He was also gift chairman for his fiftieth Harvard Business School reunion, and is chief agent for the Class of 1949 HBS Fund. An investment banker, he is a managing director of Corporate Capital Consultants Inc.

Ciji Ware '64, of Sausalito, California, has been involved in University affairs for many years, most notably throughout the 1990s as the first female graduate of the College to serve as president of the HAA and as president of the board of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Southern California.



Ciji Ware

In addition, she helped create two notable, musical, scholarship fundraisers: *Puddin' on the Ritz: Hasting Pudding's Greatest Hits*, starring Jack Lemmon '47 and John Lithgow '67, A.D. '05, and *Bravo Bernstein!* with ringer Gene Kelly. An author, she has written five historical novels and has been a reporter and commentator in Los Angeles for 23 years.

Job Notices

SEVERAL COLLEGE programs match students with paid and unpaid jobs and internships. To find out more about how alumni can provide these learning and working opportunities, contact the offices listed below.

The Office of Career Services connects students with employers for full-time, part-time, and summer jobs or internships throughout the year. During spring recess, the Harvard Career Internship Program matches College students with unpaid internships, and the Radcliffe Extern program offers students time with alumnae at work and at home. For information, including details about posting opportunities, contact Nancy Saunders at 617-495-2595 or e-mail nsaund@fas.harvard.edu.

The Radcliffe Mentor program is operated through the new Harvard Women's Center (see page 73). For further details, call 617-959-4864 or e-mail marine@fas.harvard.edu.

To offer a paid position, contact the Student Employment Office. Call 617-495-2585 or visit www.seo.harvard.edu.