

Author inspired millions to resist totalitarian life

AUTHOR INSPIRED, FROM PAGE A-1

The West offered him shelter and accolades. But Solzhenitsyn's refusal to bend despite enormous pressure, perhaps, also gave him the courage to criticize Western culture for what he considered its weakness and decadence.

After a triumphant return from exile in the U.S. in 1994 that included a 56-day train trip across Russia to become reacquainted with his native land, Solzhenitsyn later expressed annoyance and disappointment that most Russians hadn't read his books.

During the 1990s, his stalwart nationalist views, his devout Orthodoxy, his disdain for capitalism and disgust with the tycoons who bought Russian industries and resources cheaply following the Soviet collapse, were unfashionable. He faded from public view.

But under Vladimir Putin's 2000-2008 presidency, Solzhenitsyn's vision of Russia as a bastion of Orthodox Christianity, as a place with a unique culture and destiny, gained renewed prominence.

Putin now argues, as Solzhenitsyn did in a speech at Harvard University in 1978, that Russia has a separate civilization from the West, one that can't be reconciled either to Communism or western-style liberal democracy, but requires a system adapted to its history and traditions.

"Any ancient deeply rooted autonomous culture, especially if it is spread on a wide part of the earth's surface, constitutes an autonomous world, full of riddles and surprises to Western thinking," Solzhenitsyn said in the Harvard speech. "For one thousand years Russia has belonged to such a category."

While avoiding a partisan political role, Solzhenitsyn vowed to speak "the whole truth about Russia, until they shut my mouth like before."

He was contemptuous of President Boris Yeltsin, blaming Yeltsin for the collapse of Russia's economy, his dependence on bailouts by the International Monetary Fund, his inability to stop the expansion of NATO to Russia's borders and his tolerance of the rising influence of a handful of Russian billionaires.

When Yeltsin awarded Solzhenitsyn Russia's highest honor, the Order of St. Andrew, the writer refused to accept it. When Yeltsin left office in 2000, Solzhenitsyn wanted him prosecuted.

Solzhenitsyn and Syracuse

Syracuse University honored Alexander Solzhenitsyn with an honorary degree, a doctor of letters, at commencement in May. Solzhenitsyn's son, Stephan, accepted for the Nobel-prize winner.

Two days earlier, the university hosted a forum about Solzhenitsyn's work, which his son attended.

Dr. Patricia Burak, who teaches about Solzhenitsyn and other Russian authors at Syracuse University, nominated him for the honorary degree.

Solzhenitsyn wrote about "how to look at eternal and universal questions of life," Burak said Sunday night after learning of his death. Her students would read about life in the Gulag, she said, and learn not only about the Stalinist terrors, but about what it takes to "maintain a moral vision when confronted with communism."

The author was profoundly Christian, Burak said, and he wrote in a vein familiar to readers of other Russian authors such as Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoevsky. Burak said she could not name another modern author who was writing about the eternal questions and struggle between good and evil the way Solzhenitsyn did.

"I think Solzhenitsyn has so much to teach," she said. "You don't have to be Christian to appreciate this. It's a deeper morality."

— Charles McChesney, staff writer

\$10 million spent on new technology

\$10 MILLION, FROM PAGE A-1

Although the Army lab where Ivins worked had long been on the FBI's radar, scientists were unable to pinpoint the specific strain used in the attacks until about a year ago.

The FBI recruited top genome researchers from across the country and encouraged them to do groundbreaking work to identify and isolate the type of anthrax in the attacks.

At least \$10 million was spent on the research in what the scientist called the FBI's most expensive and scientifically compelling case to date.

The new genome technology that tracked down Ivins was either not available or too expensive to use often until about three years ago.

It also looked at the DNA of the anthrax still in the envelopes that began showing up at congressional offices, newsrooms and post offices soon after Sept. 11, 2001.

The science is known as DNA fingerprinting. Although any two samples of anthrax bacteria will probably share roughly the same DNA structure, there are tiny differences from sample to sample. Scientists used those "fingerprints" to identify the source of the anthrax that killed five people.

In the years since scientists mapped the human genome, computer speeds have increased dramatically, making this process easier and less expensive. DNA fingerprint analysis that would have taken years not too long ago can now be done in days.

The government scientist said the FBI knew the DNA evidence linked Ivins to the attacks for at least a year. However, prosecutors worried that because the genome technology was so new, it might be questioned and eventually thrown out if the case against Ivins ever went to trial. Researchers tested it for many more months to make sure its conclusions were reliable.

Even so, its use in the anthrax case will probably spark scientific debate on how strongly it can be used to help solve crimes, the scientist said.



Sam Yu, Frederick News Post / AP

BRUCE E. IVINS, a biodefense researcher, is seen in 2003, at Fort Detrick, Md. Ivins, the scientist who was developing a vaccine to combat anthrax, died Tuesday at a hospital in Frederick, Md., in a suicide.



John Berry / The Post-Standard

BOB WASKIEWICZ, a security officer for the Downtown Committee, walks down South Salina Street in Syracuse during his patrol Friday.

Better Lighting Urged

BETTER LIGHTING, FROM PAGE A-1

Capt. Rebecca Thompson, who oversees law enforcement downtown, said the violent crime that does happen downtown, such as the four rapes reported in 2007, generally involve people who know each other.

"You'll have some issues with fighting between intoxicated individuals," she said. "But the rapes, for instance — and I don't at all want to minimize the seriousness of date rape — but none of those women were snatched off the street by strangers," she said.

"Downtown is really a very safe place," Thompson added. "And because it is a small area and we have a good rapport with the Downtown Committee security team and the shop owners, when something does happen, we can react to it very quickly."

Thompson said there are a minimum of three officers downtown at all times. During the days, they are joined by a fourth officer and two security officers from the Downtown Committee. On weekend nights, a special Armory Square detail hits the streets.

Still, there are things that could be done to make people feel safer downtown. Thompson

and Mankiewicz both say lighting can be improved downtown.

"Lighting makes such a big difference," Thompson said. "It makes people feel safer, and, in fact, they are safer. Proper lighting is a strong deterrent to crime."

Thompson also noted that downtown has a high number of goods being stolen out of people's cars, a crime she said is preventable.

"It's not like the neighborhoods where teens go around trying to get into every car on the street," she said. "Almost all these thefts are of high-ticket, high-tech items that have been left in plain view — a laptop, a GPS system, a satellite radio system. People need to take these with them or adequately conceal them."

Thompson added that most of this theft is happening to cars parked on the street, not in lots or garages. That's noteworthy because a recent city survey found that people were fearful of parking in garages.

Mankiewicz and John Marcone, director of the Downtown Committee's security force, also say more should be done to get panhandlers off the street.

"Even though most of the

panhandlers aren't dangerous, they make people feel unsafe," Mankiewicz said. "If you feel threatened, even if you were never really in danger, you are going to see downtown as dangerous."

For the most part, Marcone agreed that the panhandlers aren't dangerous.

"But most of them have drug and alcohol problems," he said. "When you give them money and they get some drink in them, then they get bolder and sometimes we have a problem."

For this reason and others, Marcone and Mankiewicz would like to see a campaign similar to one in Northampton, Mass., that discourages people from giving to panhandlers.

It instead asks people who feel they must help to put money in donation boxes that double as public art pieces. The money goes to organizations that provide drug and alcohol treatment or have other programs that aid the homeless.

"You're really only fueling their addictions, making them more dangerous and encouraging them to continue plying their craft downtown when you reward them by giving them money," Marcone said.

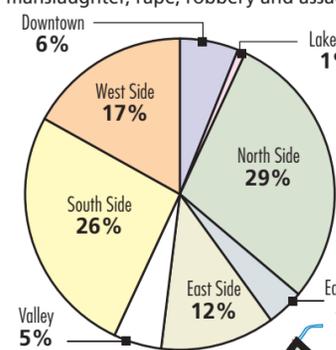
Greg Munno can be reached at gmunno@syracuse.com or 470-6084

Crime by neighborhood, 2007

Statistics compiled by the Syracuse Police Department reveal where violent crimes and property crimes occurred in 2007.

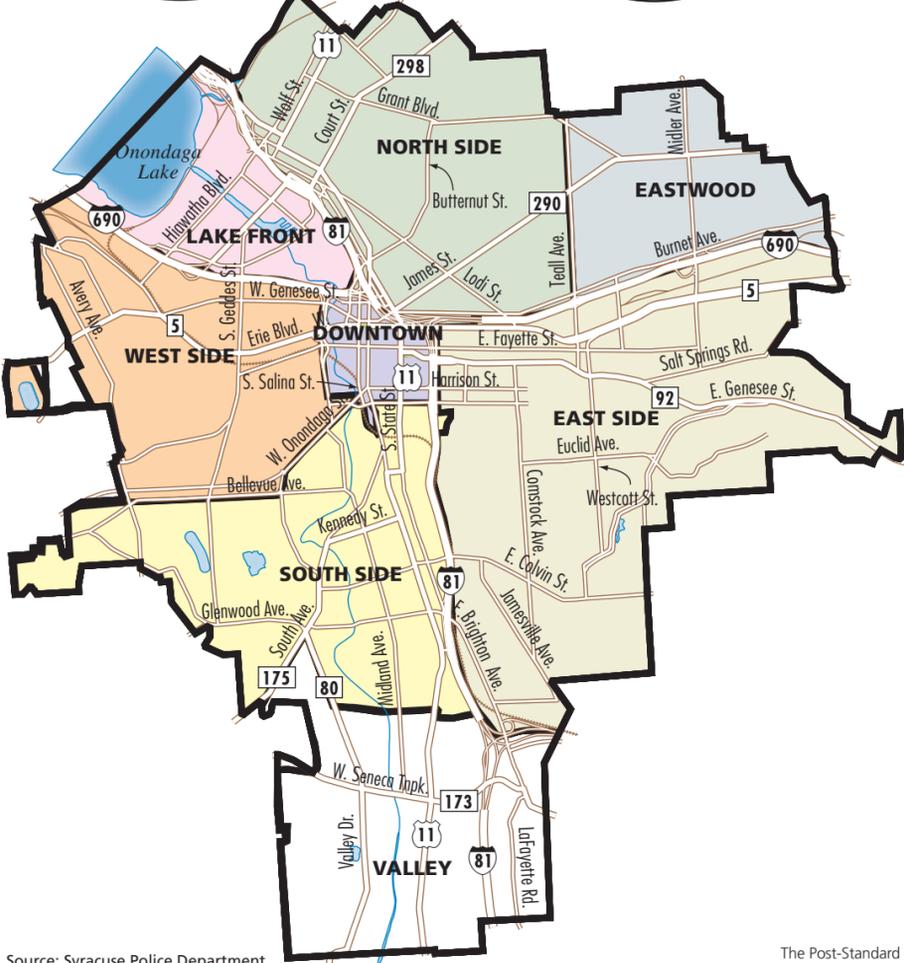
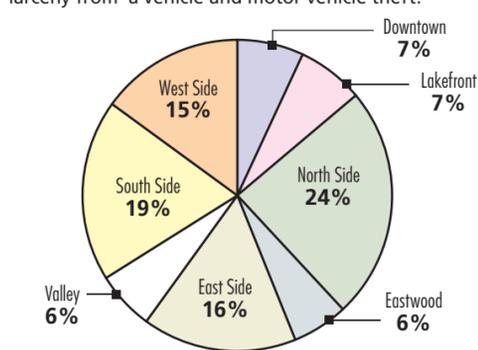
Violent crimes

Violent crimes include murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery and assault.



Property crimes

Property crimes include burglary, larceny, larceny from a vehicle and motor vehicle theft.



Source: Syracuse Police Department

The Post-Standard

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What makes a 'cool' downtown? Join the conversation at blog.syracuse.com/cny-speaks



You said it . . .

Here's what Central New Yorkers are saying about safety in downtown Syracuse:

"Crime is the number one obstacle to an enjoyable visit to downtown. . . . Clean up the city. City council and residents must be tough if they're serious about reclaiming and revitalizing the city. So far only the criminals have been tough . . . and winning."

Posted by cnyknxRenu on the CNYSpeaks blog

"The problems to overcome are the crime and homeless people that go around asking for change. There should be more police presence like there is in the mall."

Posted by money629 on the CNYSpeaks blog

"I have been frequenting both downtown and the university area as long as I can remember. . . . I have been to many other cities that have a far worse issue with 'panhandlers' on the streets. It is uncomfortable at times and I can see how it might turn off some people. I think, generally speaking, that if you are cordial and not rude and mean to them they are not that way to you."

Posted by modernpopcul on the CNYSpeaks blog

"I never felt threatened downtown, and I am a stay-at-home mom!"

Kristin Spencer of Solvay

"You have to be smart, pay attention, walk with others. But that's the same way I feel when I am at home in Cortland. I don't see Syracuse as being dangerous. I've certainly never had a problem here. But again, you have to be smart, in the city or in a small town — it doesn't matter anymore."

Spencer's friend, Missy Zell, of Cortland

"I've never felt threatened downtown. The police down here are fantastic. If they even smell it, they're on it."

Dana Jeschke, of Syracuse's Sedgewick neighborhood.

"I don't like the panhandlers. They bother me and make people uncomfortable. But I can honestly say I have never felt threatened downtown."

Jeschke's friend, Tony Simiele, of Liverpool.

"The city seems clean and safe to me. I think anyone from any suburb will see their city as dangerous, but I never get a bad vibe from people on the streets of Syracuse."

Jose Bermudez, of Ocala, Fla., who visits family in Syracuse every couple of years.

"The city seems much better off than it did when I moved to Central New York six years ago. It is cleaner. Crime seems to be down. There are fewer bums. The beggars do unnerve me a bit. But you tell them 'no' and they leave you alone. The large police presence downtown also makes me feel safe."

Jecenia Bresett, of Liverpool.

City sampler

Although substantial, Syracuse's violent crime rate is lower than in many cities, including other Thruway corridor cities and many places that Central New Yorkers visit, such as Orlando, Fla., and move to, such as Charlotte, N.C. The statistics below represent the number of violent crimes reported in 2006 per 100,000 residents. They are rounded to the nearest whole number.

- Oswego:** 292.
- Binghamton:** 452.
- Syracuse:** 1,066.
- Charlotte, N.C.:** 1,077.
- Rochester:** 1,260.
- Albany:** 1,298.
- Buffalo:** 1,411.
- Cleveland:** 1,547.
- Baltimore:** 1,697.
- Orlando, Fla.:** 1,983.

Size doesn't matter

Cities with populations between 100,000 and 200,000, such as Syracuse, can have vastly different crime profiles.

The average number of violent crimes per 100,000 population in 2006 for such cities was about 601.

Pueblo, Colo., population 105,452, came closest to this average with a crime rate of 596.

Irvine, Calif., population 188,535, had the lowest crime rate of cities in this size range at 67 violent crimes per 100,000 for all of 2006.

Flint, Mich., population 118,256, had the highest violent crime rate at 2,596 per 100,000.

Source: FBI