

## Hypnotist puts the Strafford Room in a trance

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Saturday night, over 250 students gathered in the Strafford Room to watch veteran hypnotist Steve Taubman perform. A relaxed Taubman joked and performed magic tricks with the enthusiastic crowd before the show.

Taubman has been credited with hypnotizing more than 10,000 people in the United States. In the past, he has also been a doctor, a pilot and a trainer. When asked which profession he enjoyed the most, he replied "magic and hypnosis."

"This is as healing, if not more, than a lot of other things," said Taubman. "It's laughter as healing."

Taubman is a repeat performer at UNH and enjoys working with students. He comments that UNH students are "very receptive, kind, joyful and supporting of each other."

He began the show with three reasons why "you" should want to be hypnotized: 1. It's really cool. 2. It can help you get rid of phobias. 3. One hour of hypnosis is equal to over four hours of sleep.

From there, about 30 people were selected to participate onstage and undergo hypnosis. Taubman had participants take off their shoes and get comfortable. Calming music followed as he counted down from 10 and put the students under hypnosis, which to audience members appeared to be a deep sleep. From that point on, all he had to do was say "sleep" and participants would automatically fall, sometimes literally, into a deep slumber.

Taubman was successful at making participants forget their own first names and believe that they were secret agents with telephones that happened to be some unlucky audience member's shoe. He took participants to the "movies" as they watched the scariest and funniest movies of their lives on a screen that only they could see. Participants performed certain tasks asked of them and Taubman would suddenly say, "awake." They would jolt awake and have no idea what they were doing or why they were doing it.

The act lasted an hour and a half and concluded with one female participant, at Taubman's cue, running into the lap of a large bald man who she didn't know, believing him to be the famous actor Heath Ledger.

"I felt really relaxed," said participant Autumn Henley. "I could hear people laughing but I really didn't care."

Autumn's favorite part was the MTV dance party complete with a conga line around the audience. Yes, Autumn did forget her name, but no need to worry; Taubman took all of the participants backstage at the end of the show and reminded them of their first names.

UNH student, Perry Gagne, said that he remembered his name but when Taubman asked him onstage, he could see it but couldn't say it. He admits that at first he "played along a little bit" in hopes of really falling under hypnosis.

Student, Scott Donovan, was skeptical at first, believing he wasn't hypnotized. However, after the show he admitted that he had a hard time recalling his actions on stage.

During the show, Taubman maintained control, even when one participant believed he was Tarzan and began hanging on the railings of the stairs to the stage.



Media Credit: Mercedes Trujillo  
"Yes we are!" shout the hypnotized students on stage, pumping their fists in the air. This was in response to Taubman's question "are we confident!?"