

Living Arts

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JOHN ROBINSON

Here's a toast to Harvard's No. 2

WHEN JONATHAN DAVID FARLEY won Harvard's prestigious Wendall Scholarship as the school's most promising sophomore scholar, his mother, Ena, told the family's hometown newspaper she hoped her son's ethnicity in the future would be an unremarkable feature of his achievements.

That was in 1989, when young Farley became the first black student to win the Wendall, and it was a good bet then that there would be other "firsts" for young Farley.

Ironically, though, it was the first he did not win that has thrust Farley — and his "ethnicity" — back into the spotlight.

The Farleys of Brockport, N.Y., are a highly accomplished six-member Caribbean-American family with roots in Africa and Europe. Both parents are professors at the State University of New York. Farley's eldest brother, Anthony, a Harvard Law School graduate, is an assistant US attorney for the District of Columbia. His brother, Felipe, graduated Harvard in 1986 and Harvard Law School last week. Another brother, Christopher, graduated Harvard in 1988 and is a reporter for USA Today.

The achievements of blacks are rarely highlighted in public, where images of black depravity or black idiocy have more currency.

So, when someone like a Farley does something of distinction, racial background becomes a compelling part of any story about it for those who recognize the importance of role models.

But Farley's distinction this year is that he was No. 2. He came in second to Constantin Telesman as the graduating Harvard senior with the highest academic average.

Farley's record was 29 A's and three A-minuses vs. Telesman's 24 A's and one A-minus. By Harvard's calculations, that put Telesman in the lead.

After word of Farley's near-miss leaked

An ex-Christian

A new book offers a rare and disturbing view of how the church affects the lives of its adherents

By William A. Davis
GLOBE STAFF

Even after 30 years, Thomas Simmons vividly remembers — he can still *feel* — the pain that bored into his brain "like a fusillade of needles," blazing through his head and suffusing his small body with an agony that caused him to writhe and kick ceaselessly in his sweat-soaked bed, screaming out for help.

What Simmons suffered, and suffered often, was a common childhood ailment: an ear infection. His mother, a loving and devoted woman, would try to comfort him, holding his hand, praying, and sometimes — when the screams were loudest and his distress almost unbearable — filling an old woolen sock with hot salt and applying it to his ear to provide temporary relief. What she didn't do, because her Christian Science beliefs would not permit it, was call a doctor or administer the common medicines that could relieve her son's pain and cure his infection.

Instantaneous cures through prayer are part of the lore of Christian Science, and examples are constantly cited to the faithful, says Simmons, but although he grew up in an observant Christian Science household, he never experienced one. "I do not remember being instantaneously healed of any ear infection, or even being healed at all," recalls Simmons, now an assistant professor of humanities at MIT. "I remember hours and hours of unrelieved pain and my



mother, who did everything she could for me."

The Church of Christ, Scientific denomination based on spiritualism that Mary Baker Eddy founded in the mid-19th century — has been under fire by the medical community and scientists of late. Most recent criticism is based on a number of incidents of Christian Science practitioners charged with failing to provide medical treatment for their children.

After word of Farley's near-miss leaked out the day before Harvard's June 6 commencement, many black students, their parents and some school advisers were deeply upset.

At first, there was widespread suspicion. Did the university rob Farley on a technicality to preserve the top honors for Teleman, who is white, and perpetuate for one more year the myth of white superiority?

After that all-too-understandable apprehension abated, the black families and advisers wondered why Harvard did not find a way to recognize both students. After all, they reasoned, there could not have been more than a small fraction of difference between the two academic records; Teleman really should have been classified in the Class of 1990 anyhow; and Harvard should realize the importance to public perceptions that a black student came so close to the top of his class.

In the end, though, everyone concerned about the issue decided to let the matter rest.

"I really don't think there was a color bias," said professor S. Allen Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations. "But it's a question of sensitivity. Farley's record was outstanding and he makes us all very proud."

Farley's brother, Christopher, said his family wanted to avoid the perception of being petty about the outcome.

"Although my family is upset about it," he told me last week, "after thinking it over we don't want to take away or knock what Constantin has done. But we feel Jonathan should have some recognition."

As for Jonathan, he said that "just being near the top is a great enough achievement."

Farley, whose degree is in mathematics, has other things on his mind.

He is a recipient of a Marshall Scholarship to study for a master's degree at Oxford College in England, and he is preparing to uproot himself for that adventure.

"I just want to move on to other things," he said. "Let bygones be bygones. I don't want to dwell in the past."

So, here's a toast to No. 2, at Harvard and everywhere competition creates a false ranking of winners and losers. For, in the end, it is not the outcome but the struggle itself that is worth the candle. Win, place or show, everyone's a champion who runs the race with one eye on the tape and the other on achieving his or her personal best.



MTV's Pauly Shore: his own show, his own slangage.

GLOBE 77

The making of a literary brouhaha

By Charles E. Claffey
GLOBE STAFF

It's no revelation that the conglomeratized American book publishing industry panders shamelessly to the bottom-line demands of the corporate countinghouse, often sacrificing quality editing on the altar of the fast mega-buck.

Accordingly, an article entitled "Rough Trade" and sub-headlined "The sad decline of American publishing" that appeared in a recent issue of The New Republic magazine, although well reported, was hardly groundbreaking and might have been expected to pass practically unremarked across the desks of the immunized New York literati.

PARTY
LINES
By Marian
Christy

The benefit "A Taste of Asia" featured a feast of traditional song, dance and food. It also showed how the East inspired the fashions of the West. Story and photos are on