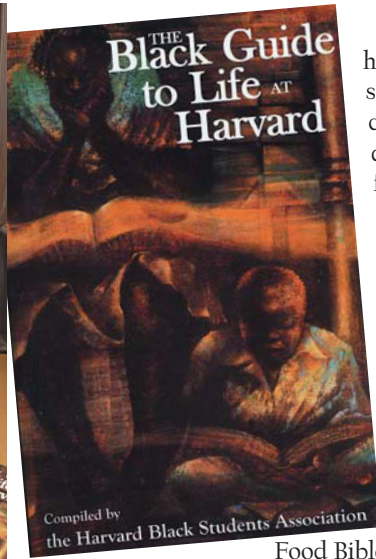


Marques J. Redd



STU ROSNER the history of African Americans

in Boston and the University, occasionally evoking from the recent past a vocabulary as well as memories that now seem ancient: a 1964 *Crimson* headline on “The Ivy League Negro: Black Nationalist,” the 1970s protests advocating sale of Harvard

holdings in Gulf Oil stock, Derrick Bell’s campaign for a more diverse Law School faculty, the “Black & Crimson” guide for incoming freshmen.

The directory of undergraduate organizations numbers 16, from the Association of Black Harvard Women to the Harvard Society of Black Scientists and Engineers and Soul

Food Bible Study. In the professional schools, the list includes groups focused on African business and governance, African-American healthcare, and more. Within the “Life at the Ebony Tower” section is a statistical profile of black students at the University (1,244, or 6 percent of the total enrollment), their College concentrations (economics ranks first), and family backgrounds. There are

faculty and staff profiles, and student essays: Stephanie Wilford ’84 describes her journey from inner-city Chicago to Harvard—“I was not an ‘incoming’ freshman. I was an ‘outlanding’ alien from a different planet”—and its outcome: “I’ve learned much about experiencing new things while watching Harvard experience me.” And signs that the adjustments continue: from the list of the 10 stupidest things said to black women at Harvard, the prize at number two, “I know your struggle. I read *Beloved*.” (A separate top-10 list, stemming from his personal dating issues and inserted by Redd, was found offensive by other BSA members, and has been removed from the *Guide*.)

The concluding section, on Cambridge and Boston resources, exudes possibilities and options beyond the already extensive student universe (how many undergraduates have dined at M&M Ribs in Dorchester?). And it is in that spirit that the editors solicit ideas and comments for improved future editions at bsa@hcs.harvard.edu.

Pillars of the Economy

AS DETERIORATING local-government finances collide with expanding—and property-tax-exempt—campuses, Boston-area research universities reported jointly on their collective size, stability, and importance to the metropolitan economy. At a Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce briefing on March 11, Harvard, Boston College, Boston University, Brandeis, MIT, Northeastern, Tufts, and University of Massachusetts Boston unveiled *Engines of Economic Growth*, an analysis of their collective impact at the outset of the twenty-first century; the text is available at www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/daily/0303/10-econ_impact.html. (Harvard had previously profiled its own economic impact on Greater Boston. *Investing in the Future*, released in 1999, highlighted its multi-hundred-million-dollar payroll and purchases, and role in building the “human and intellectual” capital that underpin the region’s medical, technology, and financial-services businesses; see “The

Academy and the City,” November-December 1999, page 77).

In a summary, the institutions’ presidents quote John Adams’s language from the Massachusetts Constitution, written in 1780, urging “legislatures and magistrates” to “cherish the interests of literature and the sciences” and institutions of learning. Today, they proclaim, “Greater Boston’s eight research universities...are the region’s special advantage: an enduring and stable economic engine, constantly changing and developing as new knowledge is gained and new technologies and industries are created.”

The report itself aims to support those twin messages: that universities are critical sources of economic “infrastructure,” and that they must grow and develop

new facilities to sustain that critical contribution. Thus, the report argues, Greater Boston’s position in the modern global economy is very much rooted in the quality, speed, and outcome of local decisions.

The report emphasizes the universities’ role in the development of skilled workers through their degree-granting and continuing-education programs. Their roughly 118,000 degree candidates make them a magnet for talent, as well as centers of learning for local residents. Similarly, they

attract outside research funding, principally from the federal government: that now runs about \$1.5 billion per year, plus another \$1 billion deployed at affiliated hospitals and research centers. Those funds fuel academic projects and collaborative ventures with local industry.



Proximity to skilled graduates and the concentration of research attracts business investments, such as pharmaceutical research centers now being built in Boston and Cambridge by Merck and Novartis, respectively. Through licensing, direct support, incubator space, faculty involvement in startups, training in entrepreneurship, and real-estate development, the universities

encourage commercial use of academic discoveries and the birth of new enterprises.

Engines of Economic Growth also examines



President Summers speaks on education and the regional economy at the March 11 briefing.

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the universities as a major regional industry in themselves. At the end of 2002, they employed, all told, more than 50,000 people—including 2,000 hired during the two previous years, even as metropolitan Boston shed some 58,000 jobs due to the downturn in financial services and technology. Local purchases total more than \$1.3 billion per year. Construction on the eight campuses—for

laboratories, housing, and other facilities—might total as much as \$850 million annually in the next four years, an impor-

tant counterweight to moribund commercial projects.

Looking ahead, the report returns to its sponsors' introductory theme. Despite "increases in productivity" resulting from use of information technology, research remains a "space-intensive activity. Real growth in the universities' research enterprise will over time require the development of additional space." Even allowing for renovation and more intensive development of existing properties, "universities will sometimes need to build new facilities outside the historic boundaries of their campuses." To that end, both the institutions and the economy of their home communities would "benefit from the creation of a framework that simultaneously respects local concerns and allows the institutions to respond quickly to emerging needs and opportunities."

Speak Memory

"Here I am, an old man in a dry month,/Being read to by a boy, waiting for rain," said T.S. Eliot '10 into the microphone. He was giving a reading at Sanders Theatre and making the first recording—of his poems "Gerontion" and "The Hollow Men"—on the Harvard Vocarium label.

Launched in 1931 (in collaboration with Harvard's Poetry Room, the Harvard Film Service, and the English Department) by Frederick C. Packard Jr. '20, a Harvard professor of public speaking much interested in recording voices, the Harvard Vocarium label persisted through the early 1950s. Dozens of poets and other writers read their works, among them Tennessee Williams, W.H. Auden, Robinson Jeffers, Marianne Moore, Archibald MacLeish, Theodore Roethke, Muriel Rukeyser, and Robert Lowell. Meant to foster the "appreciation of literature," the phonograph records were sold to the public and have been in continuous use at Harvard by students and researchers. About 110 records were made, according to Donald Share, present curator of the Woodberry Poetry Room in Lamont Library.

The entire corpus has been chosen by the Library of Congress for inclusion in the first annual selection of recordings for the National Recording Registry. "Congress created the registry to celebrate the richness and variety of our audio legacy," says Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. The inaugural set of 50 recordings emphasizes, he says, "important firsts in the history

of recording in America: technical, musical, and cultural achievements."

The Vocarium series shares registry honors with such landmark items as 1890 field recordings of Passamaquoddy Indians, Caruso singing "Vesti la giubba" from *Pagliacci* in 1907, vaudevillian DeWolf Hopper reciting "Casey at the Bat" in 1915, Bessie Smith singing "Down-Hearted Blues" in 1923, and the first radio-broadcast version, in 1938, of Abbott and Costello's "Who's on First." Elvis is on there, of course. (For the entire list, go to www.loc.gov/rr/record/nrpb/nrpb-nrr.html.)

"The actual artifacts—the cylinders, discs, piano rolls—are at the heart of the registry," says Share. "Preserving, restoring, and digitizing them, and then storing the results in a permanently safe place, ensures the future survival of these priceless and unique recordings." The Library of Congress won't re-release any of the recordings in the registry commercially, but the recordings will be available to the American people on site and

perhaps to some extent on-line if copyrights permit.

The poetry room has almost 60 years of similar recordings not on the Vocarium label. A core part of that collection is to be restored and digitized, thanks to Rob Hildreth '72. "The result will be on-line access to our recordings, which are now accessed only on site," Share says. "So, we've got two wonderful projects underway to restore and reformat our unparalleled audio collections."



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