JOHN HARVARD’S JOURNAL

finished him off,” she explains. “But he won!”

Hispanics are now the largest minority group in the United States, outpacing even African Americans, according to the most recent census data. Barrios says he is part of the rising tide of Hispanic political influence. “We are in a place now where, rather than being on the outside protesting, we are increasingly on the inside,” he says. But ethnicity, like his sexual orientation, is only part of his thinking when it comes to choosing issues and casting votes. “I don’t view myself as ‘the Latin legislator,’” he says. “I view myself as a legislator who is informed in part by my Latino background, who is informed in part by my sexual orientation, but also by a host of other values.”

Barrios says he’s lucky to be able to represent his “communities,” whose voices often go unheard. “There will always be people for whom I am the butt of some joke,” he concedes. “There will always be people who focus on a negative stereotype, whose principles put us all in the gutter. But my preference while standing on the street or in the gutter, with apologies to Oscar Wilde, is to keep looking at the stars. I’m proud of what my parents made in me.”

Although a Boston newspaper has suggested he may be destined for Congress, Barrios says only that he’ll decide whether to run for reelection to the senate before the end of his current two-year term. His focus is on the 40-member Senate, which offers individual members a better chance to effect change than does the 160-member House. He chairs the public-safety committee and is vice-chairman of the healthcare committee. His legislative priorities include childcare, schools, housing, and access to healthcare—traditional Democratic issues. He has already endorsed proposals that would raise wages among human-service workers, protect consumers from unwarranted bank fees and unfair lending, and lower the cost of prescription drugs. How this agenda fares with a new Republican governor and a fearsome state deficit remains to be seen.

Despite the general public’s often cynical view of politicians, political life makes sense to Barrios because he has identified clearly in his own mind just why he is there. “If you’ve ever worked with a child who goes to bed hungry, if you’ve ever helped a family unable to provide the things for that child that we might consider basic—like food, or vaccinations, or primary education—you know the answer to that question,” he says. “You know that through your efforts you can revolutionize their world.”

John McElhenny is a freelance writer in Somerville, Massachusetts, and a former political reporter for the Associated Press in Boston.

Vote Now

To be counted, all votes for Overseers and Harvard Alumni Association elected directors must be returned by noon on May 30. Results of the election will be announced on Commencement Day, June 5.

For Overseer (six-year term, five to be elected):

Roger Ferguson ’73, J.D. ’77, Ph.D. ’81, Washington, D.C. Vice chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.
Joan Steitz, Ph.D. ’67, Branford, Conn.

For HAA Director (three-year term, six to be elected):

Alexander Aldrich ’80, Montpelier, Vt. Executive director, Vermont Arts Council.
Joseph Azelby ’84, Cresskill, N.J. Real-estate CEO and managing director, J.P. Morgan Fleming Asset Management (New York City).
Thomas Castro ’76, Houston. President, El Dorado Communications Inc.
Mark Chandler ’78, Palo Alto. Vice president of legal services and general counsel, Cisco Systems Inc.
Susan Fales-Hill ’84, New York City. Writer, television producer.

Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and Sterling professor of molecular biophysics and biochemistry, Yale.
Pauline Yu ’70, Pacific Palisades, Calif. Dean of humanities and professor of East Asia languages and cultures, UCLA.

FOR OVERSEER

Cronin Ferguson Garland Pforzheimer

Powell Steitz Wanger Yu
Marilyn Holifield, J.D. '72. Miami. Attorney and partner, Holland & Knight LLP.
Alan Khazei '83, J.D. '87. Jamaica Plain, Mass. CEO, City Year Inc.

Comings and Goings
Local Harvard clubs host numerous lectures and social gatherings throughout the year. What follows is a list of some of the events planned this spring. For further details, contact the HAA’s clubs and programs office at 617-495-3070 or visit www.haa.harvard.edu.


Harvard at Home
Harvard at Home, an on-line educational venture, offers compact versions of courses, speeches, seminars, and conferences happening on campus. To access the site, now open to the general public, visit http://athome.harvard.edu.

Among the newest segments available are two programs from a four-part series on the Radcliffe Institute’s “Women, Money, and Power Conference,” held from October 24 to 25, 2002. The first segment features an introduction by Drew Gilpin Faust, dean of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, and a panel of historians speaking about the role of women in American business. The second program focuses on women and entrepreneurship in contemporary America, and includes a keynote address by Pamela Thomas-Graham ’85, M.B.A.-J.D. ’89, president and CEO of CNBC.

Also available now at Harvard at Home is a video montage of the Hasty Pudding Theatricals’ 2003 Man and Woman of the Year award ceremony and parade, featuring film director Martin Scorsese and actress/director Anjelica Huston. And sports fans can savor video highlights from the 119th meeting of the Harvard and Yale football teams.

The Harvard Alumni Association’s next Alumni College, entitled “What We Know about How We Know: Current Research on the Mind and Brain,” is planned for May 17-18 in Cambridge.

Among those slated to lecture over the weekend, and their topics, are psychology professor Elizabeth Spelke, “Core Knowledge: How Children Come to Know about Number, Space, and the Material World”; Margaret Stratford Livingstone, professor of neurobiology, “Visual and Spatial Studies: The Biology of Seeing and Perceptions of Art”; Cabot professor of social ethics and Pforzheimer professor Mahzarin Banaji, “Attitudes and Perceptions;” and Bullard professor of neurology Christopher Walsh.

For further information on the event, call 617-495-1093, e-mail haa_alumnicollege@harvard.edu, or visit www.haa.harvard.edu and click on “Alumni College.”