Avery Brooks, University faculty member

By Ida M. Peters

Q. Please give me some information on Gloria Naylor who wrote "The Women of Brewster's Place" that Oprah Winfrey made famous on the TV mini-series? Has she written any other books?

J. L. JONES
Columbia, Md.

A. Gloria Naylor was born in NYC in 1950. She received her B.A. in English from Brooklyn College and her M.A. in Afro-American Studies from Yale University. She has taught writing and literature at George Washington University, New York University and Boston University. In 1983, she won the American Book Award for first fiction for "The Women of Brewster Place." Her second novel is "Linden Hills" about a suburban community. Her 1988 novel is "Willow Springs" about a small island community between South Carolina and Georgia.

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Q. Was Suzzanne Douglas who stars with Gregory Hines in "Tap" a professional dancer?

IDELLE SPRIGGS
Baltimore, MD.

A. Suzzane Douglas who plays Amy, Gregory Hines's ex-girlfriend and works with her father, played by Sammy Davis, Jr. in "Taps," is an actress who never danced professionally. When she read for the part, Gregory Hines suggested she take some tap classes. She improved over four auditions and won the part.

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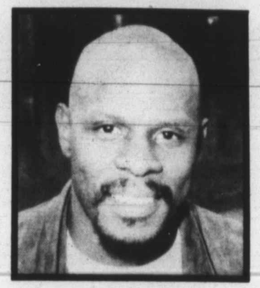
Q. Mr. Ray Charles is my favorite singer and Aretha Franklin is my favorite female vocalist. Where can I write to both of them? How old is Ray Charles and what is his real name? Where did he get his education?

O. M.
Westover, Md.

A. Ray Charles Robinson, born Sept. 30, 1930 in Albany, Ga. is 58. He was educated at St. Augustine School for the Blind in Florida. Write him, Ray Charles, c/o NIT P.O. Box 82, Cutter Mill Road 343, Great Neck, N.Y. 11021. You may write Aretha Franklin, c/o Rev. Cecil Franklin, 16919 Stansbury, Detroit, Mich. 48235.



Ray Charles



Avery Brooks

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Q. Is Avery Brooks who plays the handsome, cool Hawk on "Spencer For Hire" a professor in real life? What college? Is he married?

JOY M. SMITH
Washington, D.C.

A. Avery Brooks (Hawk) got his B.A. and MFA from Rutgers University in Brunswick, N.J. where he has been on the faculty of the Theatre Department for the past 12 years. He lives in New Jersey with his wife Vicki Lenora, an assistant dean at Rutgers, and their three children.

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Q. I have written you twice, trying to find out about a singer named Bull Moose Jackson. He was popular in the 1940's and early '50s. I am trying to locate one of his early recordings, "I Love You, Yes I Do."

MRS. EARL L. YOUNG
Imbler, Oregon

A. I have checked my various sources for Bull Moose Jackson's latest activities. Maybe some of our readers will fill you in.

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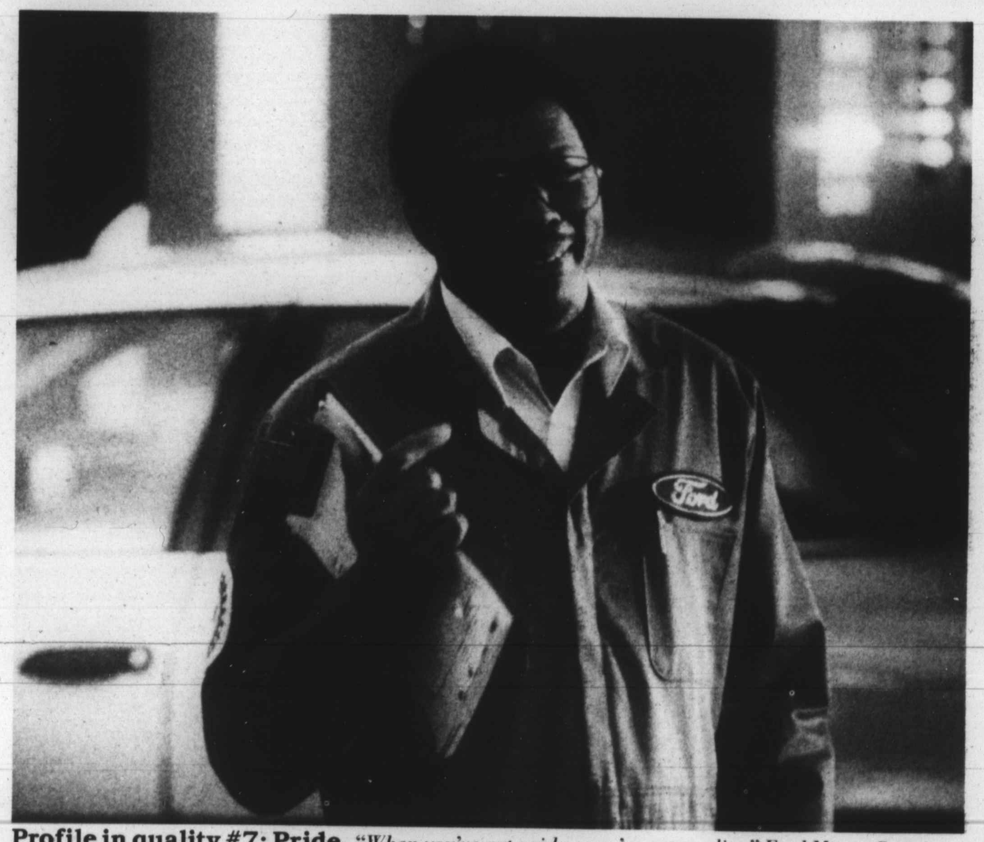
Q. Is Horace Henderson dead? He was Fletcher Henderson's brother and I read somewhere that his arrangements made Benny Goodman a star.

CHARLES CASH
New York, N.Y.

A. Horace Henderson, the pianist, composer and arranger, collaborated with his brother, Fletcher in the first big band, died Aug. 29, 1988 in Denver, Col. at the age of 83. Horace Henderson's arrangement of "Big John's Special" was heard on the third of the "Let's Dance" radio program which led to Benny Goodman's stardom. Other Henderson arrangements played by Goodman were "Sing, Sing, Sing" and "Dear Old Southland." His arrangements were also played by bands led by Earl Hines, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmie Lunceford and Charlie Barnet. Horace was educated at Atlanta University and Wilberforce and formed his first band at Wilberforce, "The Collegians."

All letters should be addressed to DAWN Magazine, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. All questions are welcome, but while Dawn cannot provide individual answers, questions of general interest will be used in this column.

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