

HARVARD



**Gay Pride
Greets the
General**

HARVARD

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ON THE COVER

The selection of General Colin Powell as honorand and featured speaker shaped this year's Harvard Commencement. The cover photograph of Powell is by Brooks Kraft. The photograph of Hillary Anger '93 is by Stu Rosner. For more about Powell's and Anger's day, please see page 26.

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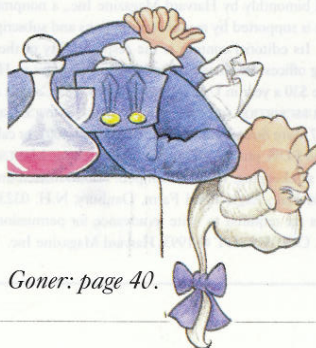
Harvard's 342d Commencement in words and pictures. Many notable women speak. A bumper crop of honorands. Protests, as promised, are polite. . . . In his annual report to alumni, President Rudenstine outlines plans for the coming decade. . . . Harvard rowers leave Yale in their wash.



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The 342d: Airborne

At the 342d Commencement, a senior has her day (with some aerial accompaniment), and a four-star general glitters in Harvard Yard.

by CRAIG LAMBERT

Helium squawks, rubber squeaks, and bangs; balloons rubbing against balloons, occasionally one exploding: these sounds greet Hillary Anger '93 as she opens the door into Hemenway Gymnasium at midnight. It's an early start to her Commencement day. Inside Hemenway, home of the varsity squash courts, scores of people are pulling one last all-nighter, staying up late to blow up seven thousand pink balloons bearing the

motto LIFT THE BAN. Behind huge, ribbon-tied bunches of the helium-filled slogans, people mill about blindly. "This is not how I expected to be spending the night before my Commencement," says Anger.

In the morning, protesters will distribute the balloons as a way of advocating their cause: an end to the prohibition

In the small hours of Commencement day, Hillary Anger helps blow up balloons at Hemenway Gym.

against homosexuals in the military services. The ad hoc group that organized this protest, Commencement Pride, chose the number seven thousand to represent their tally of gay and lesbian personnel expelled by the armed services during the tenure of Gen. Colin Powell as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Powell will receive an honorary degree that morning and give the main address at the afternoon exercises on the occasion of Harvard's 342d Commencement.

In the gym, Anger joins three men at a helium tank, introduces herself, and begins tying ribbons to inflated balloons.



The sound is like a steam boiler run amok. A member of Dudley House, Anger walked to Hemenway from her residence at 3 Sacramento Street, a Dudley co-op house that offers a semi-off-campus living arrangement.

Although Anger will attend Commencement, her diploma will be issued next winter, after she completes two more courses in physics and one in math. (Harvard allows students who finish their degree requirements in winter to attend Commencement the year before or the year after—or both.) Anger's delayed graduation is not due to any scholarly shortfall; she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa as one of its Junior Twelves. The extra term makes up for a semester she spent traveling in Turkey, Greece, and Switzerland, and also enables her to receive her degree with concentrations in both physics and Sanskrit. Anger says that she "feels like a phony for going through it before I'm really done," but she wants to graduate with her friends.

The University's announcement on April 8 that Colin Powell would be this year's Commencement speaker touched off a controversy that gripped Harvard all spring. Many within the University community felt that the invitation to Powell clashed with Harvard's official policy prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. Homosexuals are barred from serving in the American armed forces, and as chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Powell has publicly supported this policy despite President Clinton's announced intention to rescind it.

Gay and lesbian organizations and others at Harvard criticized the invitation to Powell. On April 21, the Leadership Council, a network of twelve gay, lesbian, and bisexual organizations from various parts of the University, staged a rally in the Yard opposing the Powell invitation; about three hundred people attended.

One of the rally's speakers was David Scondras '67, a gay member of the Boston City Council, who later elaborated on his views. "Essentially, it's disrespectful," says Scondras. "It's analogous to having Louis Farrakhan or Phyllis Schlafly speak at the Harvard Commencement. It's an insult to both the gay and black communities to imply that the only person of stature who has something to say is a bigot—this at the height of a civil-rights struggle."

The issue of gays in the military has had a high profile in re-



Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, engulfed by the press and others before the academic procession on Commencement day.

cent months and remains unresolved in Washington. For this reason, gay students, faculty, and staff questioned the timing of Harvard's invitation. "The invitation sends the signal that 'we're not opposed to the ban,'" says Jeffrey Masten, assistant professor of English and American literature and language, a gay professor who, with four gay colleagues, signed a letter to *The Harvard Crimson* protesting the invitation. In a letter to President Rudenstine, professor of philosophy Warren Goldfarb '69—who, several years ago, became the first Harvard faculty member to "come out" as a gay man—asserted that "Har-

vard would not today award an honorary degree to an individual, whatever his or her accomplishments, who advocated the denial of equality of opportunity to a religious, racial, or ethnic group. The rights of gay people deserve the same respect."

Others at Harvard backed Powell firmly. "The Republican Club supports his opinion on the ban, just as we support the man and recognize him as the incredible American he is," said Karen Boyle '94, president of the Harvard-Radcliffe Republican Club. "It's wrong for people to be opportunistic with a visit such as Powell's—to use it as leverage to try to have something they disagree with changed."

Like Powell, Lt. Gen. Bernard Trainor, director of the Na-

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tional Security Program at the Kennedy School of Government, grew up in the South Bronx and later rose to the rank of general (Trainor in the marines, Powell in the army). Trainor interviewed Powell seven times for his forthcoming book on the gulf war, *War by Miscalculation*. "He's a delightful man," says Trainor. "For Harvard to recognize him is not only legitimate but commendable and appropriate. The fact that he is opposed to gays in the military has nothing to do with his performance or his achievements. Those who object and seek to prevent him from coming are treading very close to a violation of free speech."

After getting some sleep, Anger heads to Harvard Yard at 7:00 A.M. A huge display of flowers guards the door of Lehman Hall, the headquarters of Dudley House. Dudley is hosting a champagne breakfast for its graduates. In the dining room, long banquet tables with red and white paper tablecloths hold muffins, breads, and pastries. Anger sits down and receives a plate of scrambled eggs, toast, diced potatoes, and sausage. Champagne appears. "Oh, a really exquisitely cheap vintage they've sprung for us," she exclaims jovially, and pours it into her orange juice to improvise a mimosa.

This year Anger co-chaired the Dudley House Committee and represented Dudley on the Harvard Undergraduate Council (HUC). She identifies herself as a bisexual woman and has belonged to the Bisexual, Gay, and Lesbian Student Association (BGLSA) since her sophomore year. Regarding homosexuality, Anger says that she "always knew it was an aspect" of her identity and adds that her family "has been very supportive." She also echoes the common undergraduate view that "social life at Harvard is less than booming." Still, Anger has had a couple of long-term relationships. Her most recent involvement was with a male partner; it lasted about six months and ended in April. A breakfast companion asks Anger whether Dudley House has a significant number of gay students. She nods and says, "Oh, yes."



A mimosa at breakfast.

When she learned of the Powell invitation, Anger "was outraged at first. It seemed like very inconsiderate timing. I was thinking about not attending my own Commencement. But I realized that going to the ceremony and protesting in a dignified but festive way was a better choice." This spring, Anger wrote a letter to President Rudenstine which the HUC authorized after extensive wrangling. The letter requested student involvement in the choice of Commencement speakers, asked that the University emphasize its stance opposing discrimination against gays in the military or elsewhere, and suggested a public statement discouraging disruptive protests.

At 8:10 A.M., Anger and her House committee co-chair, Gordon Fauth Jr., carry the Dudley banner and lead their fellow seniors to the senior class chapel service in the Memorial Church. Their herald is a trumpeter from the Berklee School



Anger carries the Dudley House banner, leading her housemates to Memorial Church.

of Music who improvises some jazz riffs. On the way they encounter another marching House, led by another trumpeter; the two musicians jam together briefly as the Houses pass each other.

In the Memorial Church an air squadron of pink balloons hovers above the black-robed students. The Reverend Peter Gomes, minister in the Memorial Church, presides. At a political rally in 1991, Gomes, who has been at Harvard since the late 1960s, publicly came out as a gay man. This May, he had called the Powell invitation "a lapse of good governance, another example of bumbling by the Governing Boards. They are extremely culpable in this matter. The sin is one of utter imprudence. They have put the president in a position where he has to face a divisive issue within the community. President Rudenstine is obliged to be a good host and to take the hit. Long after the Overseers have turned in their rented hats and gone home, the president has to deal with the fallout from this. This is a perfect textbook example of how *not* to govern Harvard."

The inside of the Memorial Church is hot, moist, and stuffy; the temperature is already well above eighty degrees. At the chapel service, Gomes does not speak of Powell, whose view he opposes, but instead addresses the seniors in his characteristically avuncular tone, punctuated with drollery. "You're not here looking for religion, or from curiosity, but out of anxiety fueled by alcohol," he says, then adds, "I'm not about to take advantage of it." Among Gomes's nuggets of advice: "Don't obsess over the future. The future is very much like the past, only longer."

Over the past ten years, gay men and women have been organizing themselves politically at Harvard and have built up a formidable array of associations. A gay-oriented newsletter began in 1981, and 1983 saw the founding of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus (HGLC), a network of about fifteen hundred gay, lesbian, and bisexual alumni, faculty, and staff. Its membership has increased by 30 percent in the last three years. The HGLC publishes a quarterly newsletter and holds an annual dinner on Commencement day. Three hundred attended this year's dinner at the Faculty Club, where President Rudenstine was the featured speaker. During the weeks of controversy before Commencement, Rudenstine maintained an ongoing dialogue with Jack Wofford '57, LL.B. '62, IOP '76,

who co-chairs the HGLC with Diane Hamer, office manager at the Schlesinger Library. Rudenshine and Wofford have known each other since they were Rhodes scholars together at Oxford in the 1950s.

"One of the characteristics of being a gay person is that your sexuality is invisible. You don't wear it on your sleeve; it's not the color of your skin. That's why we're an invisible minority," says Wofford. "Therefore coming out—being visible—is the most important personal and political step that any gay person can take. There's something paradoxical in this, because one's sexuality is inherently very private. It's asking people to be public with something that is an essentially private aspect of their own identity."

On May 18 the gay citizens of Harvard won a victory when the Faculty of Arts and Sciences approved the recommendations of a 1992 report regarding ROTC. It called on Harvard to stop paying fees charged by MIT to defray the costs of including Harvard students in MIT's ROTC program. The report cited the contradiction between the military's (and hence ROTC's) ban on homosexuals and Harvard's policy of nondiscrimination. In theory, a repeal of the gay ban could save ROTC for Harvard students. But for now, according to Lee professor of economics Hendrik Houthakker, a faculty supporter of ROTC, "statements that ROTC will continue are not based on fact."

Two days after the faculty vote on ROTC, gay and lesbian constituencies heard some more favorable news. President Rudenshine endorsed the recommendations of a faculty-staff committee that had been examining the question of health coverage for domestic partners. Beginning in November, Harvard will offer family health and dental benefits to same-sex partners of faculty and staff, and to their dependents. The report defines a domestic partnership as "a couple in a committed and enduring family relationship similar to spouses, but who are not legally married." Wofford notes that both of these political triumphs occurred after the Powell announcement.

At 8:45 A.M. the academic procession forms between University Hall and the Johnston Gate. Anger holds her pink balloon closely, not letting its string unfurl. A man in the crowd looks at the balloons and mutters, "We should have brought a needle." Near Massachusetts Hall, Powell shows himself "very willing to shake hands and to talk with people, which sort of delayed the start of the procession," in the words of Powell's faculty escort, Samuel Huntington, Eaton professor of the science of government. "Scores of people wanted to talk with him, and he was eager to have these exchanges. Three of us were trying to get the general into line."

Dignitaries and honorands process into Tercentenary Theatre, flanked by throngs of undergraduates on both sides. When Powell walks by, two female seniors opposite Anger literally jump with excitement. "We want you!" they shout. "Don't look at the balloons!" After he passes, Anger self-mockingly sticks out her tongue in the opposite direction. But she, too, clapped when Powell passed. "Not because I so much approved," she explains. "Just out of recognition."

The ceremony begins. Unitarian-Universalist minister Thomas J. S. Mikelson gives the opening prayer, ending with a wish that there be no barriers erected with respect to such categories as race and religion, and adding, "or ways of discerning or expressing love." In her graduate English address, Bhaswati Bhattacharya, M.P.H. '93, encourages her audience to redefine

traditions that isolate and exclude, including the tradition "that gay men and lesbian women have not been freely allowed to serve in the armed forces of the United States merely because they are different"; she then turns and makes eye contact with Powell. Cheers, as well as a few boos, greet her exhortation. Powell remains impassive. She finishes by wishing her listeners "most of all the feeling of safeness," which, she says, creates "a place of strength." After Bhattacharya's speech, Powell stands and enthusiastically shakes her hand. Later, Anger reflects that "some people thought her speech was angry and rude, but I didn't."

Commencement Pride may in fact have distributed seven thousand balloons, but nothing like that number appears in Tercentenary Theatre. Today the University is conferring 5,812 degrees, but no more than 10 percent of those receiving them hold balloons. Two of the honorands, Susan Sontag and Deborah Meier, have balloons; so does Renée Landers '77, one of Harvard's thirty Overseers.

The ceremony culminates with the presentation of fourteen honorary degrees, the last of which goes to Powell. Perhaps reflecting atmospheric tension—or perhaps just Murphy's Law—University Marshal Richard Hunt stumbles on the words *global power* at the start of his introduction and instead says "global Powell." There is a big laugh, perhaps a needed laugh. A couple hundred students and faculty ostentatiously turn their backs on Powell, some doff their mortarboards to brandish LIFT THE BAN stickers, others chant the slogan. But these gestures are nearly unnoticeable amid the huge crowd in Tercentenary Theatre. The applause for Powell kicks in even as Hunt intones the first words of his introduction; cheers mix with waves of applause that build as the throng of more than thirty thousand rises to its feet. At the microphone, Hunt presses on, raising his voice as he strains to be heard above the loud, pro-



Memorial Church and a flight of balloons.

longed, standing ovation. On the platform, Colin Powell stands at attention.

After the morning ceremonies, Anger returns to Dudley House for lunch. Her mother and brother meet her there. Anger gets her symbolic diploma, an envelope with a blank piece of cardboard inside. "People sitting behind us this morning were really supportive of Powell," she says. "They were saying, 'Move your balloons, we can't see.'"

The previous evening, Powell and the other honorands had attended a formal dinner in Memorial Hall. Naturally, military aides and a portable telephone accompany the chairman of the Joint Chiefs whenever he travels. Before dinner, Powell was summoned to take a call from the White House. The general

synopsized the conversation (see page 60) as part of his post-prandial toast to Harvard. After the dinner, Powell decamped to the Bull & Finch Pub in Boston, the celebrated home of the "Cheers" television series and a near neighbor to the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, where he was staying. Several members of the general's staff were at the pub that evening, and Powell joined them for a nightcap.

At 1:45 P.M. the alumni procession begins from the Old Yard into Tercentenary Theatre. Watching the procession, Anger muses: "It makes me want to have children to graduate at my 25th reunion, and grandchildren at my fiftieth." Security is a bit heavier than usual; scores of state troopers stand in the aisles. For the first time in years, virtually every seat is filled for the afternoon program.

The chairman of the Committee on University Resources, Robert Stone '45, shares his confidence that this year's annual giving to Harvard will surpass 1992's record total of \$206 million. Listening, Anger calculates that the participation percentage and dollar total mean that the average donation was between \$1,000 and \$3,000 per person. "I just don't see myself being in a position to give like that," she reflects. "I'll be a professor."

By the afternoon scarcely any pink balloons remain; a handful rest in laps or dangle from chairs. The audience becomes restive as President Rudenstine gives a 34-minute speech. After a ten-minute introduction, Powell stands to speak and again the crowd rises with him, applauding enthusiastically. He ignites laughter and applause by promising that his speech will not be much longer than the introduction. During Powell's address, occasional brief bursts of chanting erupt in the audience, but the speaker clearly has the crowd's attention. Loud cheers and applause, not chanting protesters, are what interrupt Powell's speech. At a press conference afterward, Powell says that the demonstrators did not bother him: "I respected their right to express their point of view. I have spent most of my career making sure that they had that right."

Powell's address discusses the changing role of the military and unexpectedly includes a few remarks on the question of military service by gays (see box). Anger listens, standing, with her arm around her brother, who offers her some iced tea from Au Bon Pain. Anger gives the speech only marginal attention. "He doesn't sound like I thought he would," she says. "He sounds more gentle. I guess I thought he'd be like a drill sergeant." Later, she reflects that Powell's presence "didn't ruin my Commencement at all. What he said was very standard, not outside the range of what he'd be expected to say. In a way, it could have been Powell, or it could have been Mickey Mouse speaking."

After the afternoon exercises close, Anger walks back to Lehman Hall and reflects on her day, and her future. She hopes to travel to India, where she expects to spend several years; she is the winner of Radcliffe's Isobel L. Briggs Traveling Fellowship. "I'm going to be really into all this corny stuff when I come back years from now," she says. "I haven't bought myself any Harvard paraphernalia since I've been here. But in 25 years I'll be totally decked out." And Commencement? "Great! Really, fabulous. So fabulous that I think I'll do it again next year." □

Craig A. Lambert '69, Ph.D. '78, is an associate editor of this magazine. This article included reporting by Sandy Kendall.

Choosing the Speaker

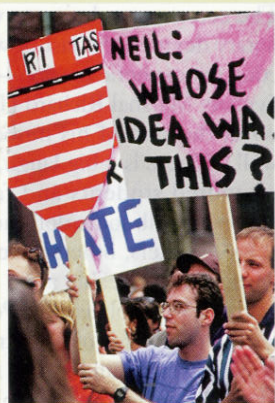
Though in recent years Harvard has taken to announcing the Commencement afternoon speaker well in advance, names of other honorands are still kept secret until the big day. And the selection process itself is relatively arcane.

Deliberations are initiated by an advisory committee consisting of three members of the Board of Overseers, two Corporation members, six representatives of the faculty, and the vice president for alumni affairs and development. This group begins meeting more than a year in advance of Commencement. In early fall it proposes a slate of honorands—including a suggested speaker—to the Corporation, which may accept the slate or request revisions. The Board of Overseers must give final approval. The nominations then go to the president of the Harvard Alumni Association for his or her imprimatur.

Invitations to honorands go out in October or November. Should a prospective recipient decline to be honored, a substitute may be picked from a waiting list. Recipients are required to accept their degrees in person.

According to one insider, Colin Powell's name was first broached at an advisory committee meeting in October 1990, and was among those submitted for Corporation approval in September 1991. Corporation members reportedly balked on the ground that having Powell as an honorand and speaker the following June might be viewed as an endorsement of the gulf war—and, by extension, of the Bush administration—in an election year. Alternatively, the Corporation suggested that Powell be invited for 1993.

Powell's position on homosexuals in the military was apparently not perceived as a potential source of tension until after the invitation had been issued and accepted. Several Overseers reportedly challenged the selection of Powell at the February meeting of the board.



The question was posed at a rally in Harvard Yard on April 21.

This New Chapter of History

Excerpts from Gen. Colin Powell's address on the afternoon of Commencement day.

Harvard and the military share a long tradition, so I really do not stand here alone. I am joined by the living memory of George Washington's Continental Army, which was housed in Massachusetts Hall during our fight for independence. I am joined by the spirit of the 136 Harvard men who fought and died in the Civil War and whose sacrifices are remembered in Memorial Hall. I am joined by the spirit of Harvard's veterans of two world wars, who quietly have their say through Memorial Church, right here behind me. Harvard graduates also served in Korea and Vietnam and in all of the nation's wars.

Some 47 years ago, in 1946, Harvard conferred honorary degrees on leading generals and admirals of World War II—Eisenhower, Nimitz, Arnold. Their spirits are here too.

What a Commencement that must have been! A world war ended! America victorious over fascism! Harvard Yard in 1946 was filled with twenty-year-old combat veterans who had won the war and were eager to build the peace. The armed forces and the people were as one in their moment of victory. The armed forces *were* the people, as they always have been in America.

But the party soon ended. We awoke with a hangover called communism; and it soon became clear that America could not simply tip its hat to a grateful world and go home. The exhausted world was building its hopes on this vigorous, powerful, can-do nation of free men and women called America.

In the years that followed, we led a grand alliance through the Cold War—that long, awful twilight struggle with surrogate conflicts in such faraway places as Korea and Vietnam.

Most of my adult life was spent fighting the Cold War. It has also been my great thrill and privilege to see it all come to an end. Now here we are, in 1993, again as in 1946—a war behind us.... But this time we are a little older; we must be a little wiser. We must be less willing than we were 47 years ago to believe that history has ended. And this new chapter of history that has just opened is making Kafkaesque demands on our view of the world, on our sense of what is real and predictable and what isn't.

The world map no longer has nice, neat lines separating friends from foes. It is pocked, instead, with the sores of a dozen tragic places—with a host of once and future Iraqs, Somalias, Bosnias, and North Koreas. In this turbulent new era where power is more diffused, where we are grappling with the sudden reemergence of nineteenth-century conflicts, we are once again seen as the great, vigorous, can-do nation on which the world is pinning its hopes. The world is depending on the power of our democracy, on the power of 250 million Americans to do what's right. We have the responsibility to respond. As Winston Churchill said from this platform fifty years ago, "The price of greatness is responsibility." And we will be judged in the future classrooms of Harvard by

whether we rise to that responsibility. We will be judged *kindly* if we throw ourselves with all our creative vigor *first* into the industry of America—into creating for ourselves the prosperity that brightens lives and underwrites the progress of our culture. The restoration of our own economy must be the foundation stone of our role in the world. We will be judged kindly if we renew the values of our communities—values of service, of family, of compassion, of wisdom. We can't aspire to greatness unless we begin with a foundation of values. And we will be judged kindly if we respond to this new world with a new strategy, a new vision of our national security.

We have designed a new strategy based on a world not of Cold War but of the hot, violent sparks of ancient regional passions. One key to our post-Cold War defense strategy is to maintain our overseas military presence, to reduce it but not abandon it. We must not reduce our forces to such a level that we can only deal with *one* major crisis. We must never be at the mercy of an opportunist who is tempted by our preoccupation in one conflict to hold us hostage somewhere else. Responding to...crises means maintaining a quality, combat-ready force that can go anywhere in the world quickly and fight when it gets there. It means forces that can act unilaterally but, more likely in the future, can also act as part of a great international coalition such as the U.N. It means a force that can participate more fully in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Nothing gives your warriors greater satisfaction than to use their skills not to destroy life but to relieve human suffering.



Powell: Will we rise to our responsibility?

Believe me, we *are* paying a peace dividend.

But we've got to be very careful. We're downsizing, not demobilizing. We must not, we cannot, undermine the quality, morale, and capability of [our] volunteer force.

And if we decide to use our military forces, we must translate those political goals into clear military objectives. We must never forget the ends we are seeking in our preoccupation with examining the means we might use.

Certainly the military has problems. We don't always meet the high standards we set for ourselves. We will continue to encounter challenges to our traditions and policies, and we will take them on and solve them. We took on racism. We took on drugs. We took on scandals such as Tailhook. And we found answers that made us stronger and even more relevant to the society around us. We will do the same with the controversial issue of homosexuals in the military.

I believe we are near a solution, [and] I can assure you the decision will be faithfully executed to the best of our ability.

Most of our GIs will never walk Harvard Yard. Few have parents who have attended a Commencement such as this. Yet they stand with me here today not as strangers but as your fellow Americans dedicated to the same *veritas* represented on Harvard's crest.

From the rich intellectual loam of this place will grow tomorrow's leaders.... Be proud when you leave here. You deserve to be very, very proud. You have earned your place in the good fight—the fight for truth, the fight for the spirit of *veritas*. It is *to* that spirit that I commend you as you make your way through life. And it is *in* that spirit that I wish you and this magnificent institution a thriving and fulfilling future.