

Senior Fellow Robert Stone presented Summers with a replica of Harvard's charter of 1650, "under which the President and Fellows of Harvard College exists as the oldest corporate entity in continuous operation in the Western Hemisphere." (The original document was displayed, framed, on an easel on the stage.) "Had we gathered here but five weeks ago, I might have said to all of you that education and discovery, the core activities of our University, stand among the pursuits most vital to our society and its future," said Stone. "Much has changed in the past five weeks. But that much has not. The cause of learning, of scholarship, of mutual understanding, of ideas that inform wise and responsible action—that cause is more crucial now than ever."



JIM HARRISON

The president began to sketch his vision for the University in an address (see below). The assembly sang "Fair Har-

vard," accompanied by the band. The Reverend Peter J. Gomes, B.D. '68, prayed to God: "In this moment of high endeavor and great expectations, fix thou our steps



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that we stagger not at the uneven motions of this world. Give grace to the living, rest to the dead, courage to the anxious, patience to the weary, and to this

foundation, dedicated to truth and nourished by a steadfast providence, grant us the blessings of a useful and hopeful future, a place in which we seek not only greatness, but goodness, not only vision, but virtue."

Then the mighty chorus sang the first verse of "America the Beautiful," and for the second verse the assembly joined in:

"O beautiful for patriot dream/
that sees beyond the years/
thine alabaster cities gleam,
/undimmed by human tears!"

Clockwise from left: Undergraduate Council president Paul A. Gusmorino '02 urged Summers to seize the opportunities before him. Richard E. Oldenburg, president of the Board of Overseers, presented Summers with the College keys, symbols of authority representing truth and knowledge. Senior Fellow Robert G. Stone Jr. then presented Summers with a facsimile of the Harvard charter of 1650, the last of the insignia of the office of president.

"The Adventure of Our Times"

The installation address of Lawrence H. Summers

MEMBERS of the University community, friends of Harvard from far and wide: we celebrate today a ritual generations older than our nation—a joyous ritual, a solemn ritual—that reinforces our sense of tradition and community.

To begin, we acknowledge all who have come before us, all of those who have built Harvard from a small school in a cow yard centuries ago to the vibrant University of today. We are truly blessed by their efforts.

I want especially to recognize one person's leadership. Neil Rudenstine stood in this place 10 Octobers ago. His vision, his dedication, his care, have left Harvard far stronger than he found it. Neil, thank you!

Neil and I both know what President Edward Holyoke, who by the way was not an orthopedist, and lends his name to the chair on which the Harvard president now sits, said in 1769: "If any man wishes to be humbled and mortified, let him become President of Harvard College."

Humbled, yes; mortified, I hope not; excited and exhilarated, for sure. I pledge my energy to Harvard's work.

Today's gathering is about more than any individual or any office. Harvard's distinction, and its promise, flow from all who are here. From this entire community, from all those who read books, who write books, who shelve books. From all who do their part in the constant quest to make a great University a greater one.

I will do my best to hear Harvard's many voices, and to respond. I admire President Eliot, but not for me his view that a Harvard president should be measured by "the capacity to inflict pain." Nor, I hasten to reassure you, his predilection for the hour-

and-three-quarter inaugural address.

And much as I admire the movie *Love Story*, I do not believe that being president means never having to say you're sorry.

The Torch of Truth

WE MEET NOW in the shadow of the terrible and tragic events of September 11th. These events give fresh meaning to Franklin Roosevelt's words from this stage 65 years ago. Said Roosevelt: "It is the part of Harvard and America to stand for the freedom of the human mind and to carry the torch of truth."

And so, in our present struggle, we do our part, we carry that torch, when we show support for the victims and their families; when we honor those who defend our freedom and the calling of public service; when we stand as an example of openness and tolerance to all of goodwill; and, above all, when we promote understanding—not the soft understanding that glides over questions of right and



wrong, but the hard-won comprehension that the threat before us demands.

We will prevail in this struggle—prevail by carrying on the ordinary acts of learning and playing, caring and loving—the extraordinarily important acts that make up our daily lives. And we will prevail by recognizing anew that each of us owes it to all of us to be part of something larger than ourselves. And here we are.

Today we recommit ourselves to the University's enduring service to society—through scholarship of the highest quality, and through the profound act of faith in the future that is teaching and learning.

A World of Ideas

GREAT UNIVERSITIES like this one have become more worldly in recent years.

More and more of us directly engage with the problems of the day.

Whether whispering in the ear of a President or helping museums preserve great art; whether establishing legal foundations for civil society in distant lands or advising on the ethics of life-and-death medical decisions; whether planning cities of the future or finding better ways to teach children to read—the people of the University make contributions every day.

This is good and it is important. That we serve in this way reflects the immediate and practical utility of the knowledge developed and taught here.

But the practical effectiveness of what we do must never obscure what is most

special and distinctive about universities like this one: that they are communities in which truth—*Veritas*—is pursued first and last as an end in itself—not for any tangible reward or worldly impact.

Whether reading great literature, or discovering new states of matter, or developing philosophies of ordered liberty, it is the pursuit of truth, insight, and understanding that most defines enlightened civilization.

Indeed, when the history of this time is written, it will be a history of ideas—and of the educated women and men whose intellect, imagination, and humanity brought them forth and carried them to fruition.

It will, in large part, be a history of what has come forth from campuses like this one.

Creative Tensions

I WILL SPEAK in a few minutes about some of the specific challenges that Harvard faces in coming years.

But I want to say a word first about the singular success of universities as social institutions. Though they are sometimes derided as remote or not relevant, universities, and Harvard in particular, have an extraordinary staying power, as we are reminded by this ritual, in a volatile and changing world.

Why?

The answer may lie in some of the creative tensions that are at the heart of the academic enterprise.

The university is open to all ideas, but it is committed to the skepticism that is the hallmark of education. All ideas are worthy of consideration here—but not all perspectives are equally valid.

Openness means a willingness to listen to ideas—but also the obligation to sift and test them, to expose them to the critical judgments of disinterested scholars and a discerning public.

We must be neither slaves to dogma nor uncritical followers of fashion. We must exalt neither novelty nor orthodoxy for their own sake.

Our special obligation is to seek what is true—not what is popular or easy, not what is conventionally believed, but what is right and in the deepest and most rigorous sense advances our understanding of the world.

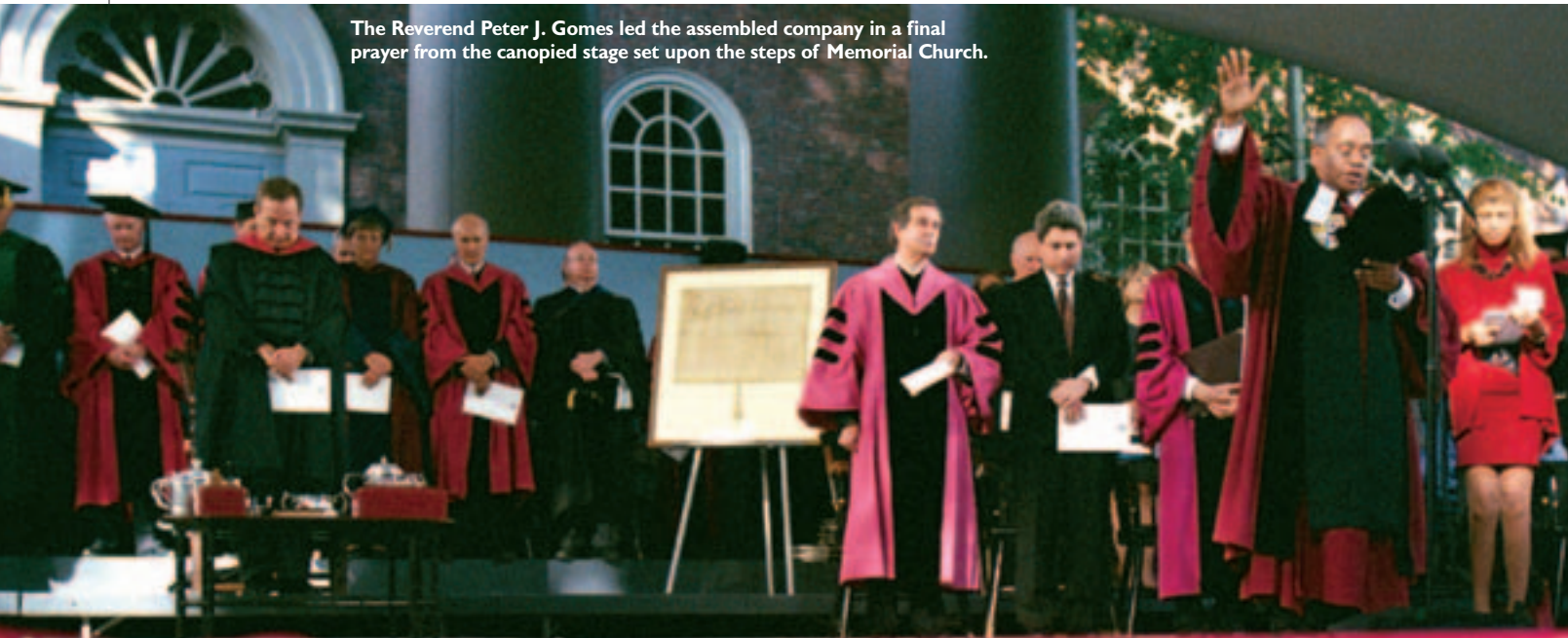
Universities are places of ideas but also places of idealism. We owe allegiance to the dispassionate pursuit of truth. But universities—and certainly this one—have been and should always be places of passionate moral commitment.

We cultivate what is special and intellectual here, but we must also nurture the value of generous public service to society beyond these walls.

This takes on a special importance at a moment like this, when we have an opportunity to awaken a new generation to the satisfactions of serving society.

And not just as individuals do we serve, but as a university we serve. Most impor-

The Reverend Peter J. Gomes led the assembled company in a final prayer from the canopied stage set upon the steps of Memorial Church.



tantly, always through our teaching and scholarship, we must avoid temptations to take on tasks beyond our scope and our capacity.

But we can—and we will—meet our obligations to members of our campus community and to the communities in which we reside.

Perhaps the most important creative tension in our University is this: we carry ancient traditions, but what is new is most important for us.

Our most enduring tradition is that we are forever young.

Our historic buildings always house new students. We venerate our past but we succeed and endure only when the University renews itself in each generation.

Renewal does not just mean doing new things and growing larger. It means moving beyond activities that have run their course, being selective and disciplined about the most critical paths to pursue, and nimbly and rapidly responding to the opportunities created by a changing world.

Harvard is strong today. To keep it strong we will need to maintain that careful balance that has sustained us so long, between openness and skepticism, between the imperatives of thought and service, and between tradition and innovation.

Challenges Ahead

NOW IS THE TIME to consider Harvard's challenges for a new century. We come

together at a moment when this University is extraordinarily fortunate in all that it possesses: physically, financially, and most of all intellectually.

But we will—and we should—be judged not by what we have, but by what we do, not by what we accumulate, but by what we contribute.

Undergraduate Learning

FIRST, we will need in the years ahead to ensure that teaching and learning are everything they

can be here, especially at the very heart of the University—Harvard College.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said late in his life that he was “set on fire” in his freshman year here by reading and discussing the essays of Emerson.

We are exceptionally fortunate in the students who choose to come here. To do them justice, it is our task to set their minds on fire.

We must help them to find what intrigues them most, press them to meet the highest standards of intellectual excellence, and start them on a lifetime quest for knowledge and truth.

This has many aspects:

It means assuring that the *academic* experience is at the center of the *College* experience.

It means strengthening and expanding our distinguished faculty to embrace new areas of learning.

It means thinking carefully about what we teach, and how we teach, recognizing that any curriculum, course of study, or form of pedagogy can always be improved.

And what is most crucial is this: Whether in the classroom or the common room, the library or the laboratory, we will assure more of what lies at the heart of the educational experience—direct contact between teacher and student.

I speak from experience. A moment ago, [HAA president] Karen Kelly mentioned her freshman Ec 10 section—the first class she took at Harvard and the first class I ever taught. Karen, as we sat in my office talking about elasticity, I don't think either of us imagined that we would be here a quarter-century later. I don't know if you and your classmates learned anything much in that class, but I do know that I learned very, very much.

Coming Together

SECOND, we need to come together as a university—a community of scholars and students—doing different things but united by common convictions and common objectives.

Every tub may rest on its own bottom, but all draw on the reservoir of knowledge and tradition that Harvard represents. And the strength and reputation of each depend upon the strength of all.

We will not sacrifice the flexibility and innovation that autonomy promotes. But we will assure that Harvard, as one university, exceeds—by ever more—the sum of its parts.

Discoveries are no longer confined by traditional academic boundaries. Many students no longer crave careers confined to a single profession or a field. Specific programs and initiatives have had and will have an important place in responding to these realities.

But real and ultimate success will come only as our culture changes—only when each of us in a single part of the University is genuinely part of Harvard University as a whole.

The University in this regard has a historic opportunity to create a new Harvard campus for centuries to come.

Think about how grateful we are right now for the vision of those who built the Business School's magnificent campus in what was once a Boston swamp, or helped create the Kennedy School from what was once a not very attractive train yard.

If we make the right choices—if we take full advantage of the physical opportunity across the river in Allston, an opportunity to create a campus that is several times as large as this whole Yard—we will have earned the gratitude of future generations.

Let us make these choices as a university, as a community, and let us choose well.

Ultimately we are a community, though, more of people than of buildings. As we work to strengthen this community, let us reaffirm our common commitment to being ever more open and inclusive.

We have come a long way. A century ago, this was an institution where New England gentlemen taught other New England gentlemen.



JIM HARRISON



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Today, Harvard is open to men and women of all faiths, all races, all classes, all states, all nations. As a result, we offer a better education to better students who make us a better university.

And yet, as proud as we all are that any student, as we so often stress, can attend Harvard College regardless of financial circumstance or need, I say to you that we should not rest until much the same is true of all of this great University.

Inability to pay does not constrain students from coming to Harvard College, and it should not constrain the most able students from coming here to Harvard to become scholars or doctors, architects or teachers.

Revolution in Science

THIRD, the scientific revolution now in progress demands and compels all of our attention.

Steps from here, scholars, individuals, sitting in offices, are able to fathom what happened in detail in the first billionth of a second of the cosmos, billions of years ago. They begin now to comprehend the deep structure of matter and the biological and chemical basis of life.

We are beginning to understand in a rigorous and clear way the inner workings of the human mind.

As a consequence of all this, as a consequence of science, we have seen life expectancy come close to doubling in the last century, from the mid forties to the long life expectancies that await the young people who are here today—and all of that was before what looks to be the century of biology and life science.

Still, we live in a society, and dare I say a University, where few would admit—and none would admit proudly—to not having read any plays by Shakespeare or to not knowing the meaning of the categorical imperative, but where it is all too common and all too acceptable to not know a gene from a chromosome or the meaning of exponential growth.

Part of our task will be to assure that all who graduate from this place are equipped to comprehend, to master, to work with the scientific developments that are transforming the world in which we will all work and live.

In a time when multibillion-dollar pro-

jects sequence the genome, in a time when scientific papers are written that have 300 authors, discerning how the University will be able to adapt its traditional structures to most effectively engage the adventure of science will be a closely related challenge.

Science does illuminate the human condition, but many of the most perplexing questions—including some generated by science itself—cannot be answered by science alone.

These questions will demand in the future, as they always have in the past, the kind of insight that can come only from philosophers, artists, historians, critics—from creative works, and those who study them, that illuminate the essence of who we are as humans.

Extending Excellence

FINALLY, OVER TIME, the converging phenomena of globalization and new information technologies may well alter—will alter—the University in ways that we can now only dimly perceive.

The Internet and other innovations in information technology represent the most dramatic change in the way that we share and we pursue knowledge since the invention of the printing press. The rippling effects of that invention took centuries to play out, and shaped universities and their structure for a very long time. And I have no doubt the same will be true of information technology.

As globalization continues, the opportunity to make a difference through our teaching and our scholarship becomes far more pervasive than ever before.

A century ago, Harvard was becoming a national university. Today, while strongly rooted in American traditions and values, it is becoming a global university.

We will, in the years ahead, need to think very carefully about tech-

nology, about globalization, and how we can contribute as much to as many as possible.

We will also need to assure that we do not compromise our high standards. Our goal will be to extend excellence without ever diluting it.

The Adventure of Our Times

IN THIS NEW CENTURY, nothing will matter more than the education of future leaders and the development of new ideas.

Harvard has done its part in the past. But that past will be prologue only if all of us now do our part to make it so.

We will face difficult choices. We will take risks. Sometimes we will fail. Indeed, if we never fail, we will not have participated as fully as we can in the adventure of our times.

Like all great universities, Harvard has always been a work in progress, and it always will be. In the words of the song we are about to sing, let us together renew this great University for the age that is waiting before.

Lawrence H. Summers

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