

02138

THE WORLD OF HARVARD :: PREMIER ISSUE 2006

SPECIAL SECTION

The
Harvard
100

The Most
Influential
Alumni

Harvard, Unstuffed

She's Harvard. So Are You.
(Discuss.)

ALSO

The Million-Dollar
Admissions Game

How Larry Summers
Got Hired...and Fired

It Takes a Professional Pundit
to Keep the Border Safe

Lauren Greenfield's
Raw Take on Girl Culture

✿ ACTOR, PRODUCER,
AND ALUM
RASHIDA JONES

84

DANIEL PIPES



Director, Middle East Forum; Author
Location Philadelphia, PA
Age 57
College A.B. 1971
GSAS Ph.D. 1978

ONE OF THE FEW scholars who can claim to have predicted the 9/11 attacks, Pipes works from the premise that militant Islam is the greatest threat to democracy since fascism and communism. Sounds the alarm in a deluge of opinion columns, books, and speeches; his influence on the administration's rhetoric has been increasingly evident since the foiled London plane bombings in August, which moved **President Bush (2)** to denounce "Islamic fascists." **Though often pigeonholed as a neocon, Pipes scoffs at the idea of a "war on terror,"** arguing that Western societies nurture terrorists by refusing to name the enemy in their midst. His post-9/11 comment that "all Muslims, unfortunately, are suspect" set off a storm of debate over racial profiling. A student of medieval Islam, Pipes saves special scorn for his former colleagues in Middle Eastern studies, characterizing the field as "an intellectual Enron."

HOWEVER... Pipes's Campus Watch program, which attacks academics he considers anti-Israel, has been accused of McCarthyism.

GOOGLE HITS 2.9 million for "Daniel Pipes"; 1.38 million for "militant Islam"



85

RUTH J. SIMMONS



President, Brown University
Location Providence, RI
Age 61
GSAS A.M. 1971, Ph.D. 1973

THE FIRST AND only black president of an Ivy League school, and the first woman to hold the top job at Brown, Simmons **has earned uniformly high marks in an increasingly daunting and contentious role.** The moment the back-patting following her appointment ended, the hard work began; Simmons, the 12th and youngest child of East Texas sharecroppers, was up to the task. The former president of Smith College and an expert in French literature, she's known as a forceful administrator. Has instituted need-blind admissions, improved financial aid and funding for grad students, expanded the faculty, and launched a \$1.4 billion capital campaign. The mere mention of Simmons as a possible successor to **Lawrence Summers** as Harvard president set off alarms on College Hill. A columnist for the *Brown Daily Herald* wrote, "Simmons is beloved by the Brown University faculty, alums and students, and her departure would be devastating to Brown's reputation, future and morale."

GOOGLE HITS 63,600 for "Ruth Simmons"; 56 for "first black Ivy League president"



86

DAVID HALBERSTAM



Author; Pulitzer Prize-winning Journalist
Location New York, NY
Age 72
College A.B. 1955

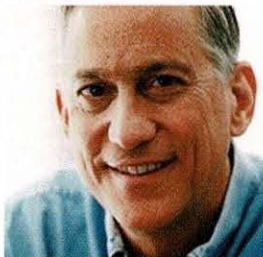
IT'S THE RARE writer who is as adept at explaining the troubled patriotism of the architects of the Vietnam War as he is at deconstructing the New England Patriots, but at this stage, Halberstam can write about whatever he damn well pleases. The "best war reporter of his generation," in the words of *Black Hawk Down* author Mark Bowden, Halberstam towers over the nonfiction landscape. Made his name with Vietnam War reporting and the best-seller *The Best and the Brightest* (1972), then expanded his oeuvre to include the media, American history, and an Olympian range of sports, in the process forging a distinctively evocative storytelling style. Just as important, he **introduced what he called the "backup catcher theory" of journalism—the idea that a second-string backstop has more telling insight into a team's workings than its star.** That philosophy informs much of today's nonfiction, from *Freakonomics* to everything Malcolm Gladwell has ever written. Halberstam isn't resting on his laurels, either: He's polishing up his fifth book since 2000, on an early and pivotal battle in the Korean War.

GOOGLE HITS 400,000 for "David Halberstam"; 56,800 for "narrative journalism"



87

WALTER ISAACSON



President and CEO, Aspen Institute; Author; Vice Chairman, Louisiana Recovery Authority; Chairman, Teach for America
Location Washington, DC
Age 54
College A.B. 1974

A CONSUMMATE networker and multitasker, Isaacson has left his fingerprints on a wide range of the more important cultural institutions of the past quarter-century and **has influenced the influential in every sphere from journalism to government.** Catapulted to the top at *Time*, where he reinvented the newsmagazine just in time to ride the '90s boom, then tried (with considerably less success) to rescue struggling CNN. Now uses his formidable intelligence to shape public discourse from the helm of one of the country's foremost think tanks. As the Louisiana Recovery Authority's point man in Washington, is applying his political talents to rebuilding his hometown of New Orleans. Somehow found time to write best-selling biographies of **Henry Kissinger** and Benjamin Franklin; Einstein is on the way.

GOOGLE HITS 200,000 for "Walter Isaacson"; 844,000 for "Aspen Institute"



88

PETER SELLARS



Theater and Opera Director; Professor of World Arts and Cultures, UCLA
Location Venice, CA
Age 49
College A.B. 1980

THE AUDACIOUS avant-garde director **marries art and politics, high culture and low, recasting classic works in modern form** on stages all over the world. "I think he's one of the great artists on the planet," longtime collaborator **John Adams (89)** told the *Chicago Sun-Times* last year. Over the years, Sellars's productions have famously challenged audiences. His *Marriage of Figaro* was set in a Trump Tower apartment, the female lead of his *Don Giovanni* shot up heroin during an aria, and his recent production of Mozart's unfinished opera *Zaide* reset a story about Turkish slavery in a contemporary sweatshop full of illegal immigrants. He's courted outrage since he was an undergrad: In 1980 he staged and starred in a production of *King Lear* on the Loeb mainstage that prominently featured a Lincoln Continental; the *Crimson* review began, "Peter Sellars has balls."

HOWEVER... Sellars's interpretation of *Zaide* moved the *New York Observer* to say that over the past 30 years, "Mr. Sellars has gone from being an engaging imp to a moralizing scold"; *Variety* went with "excruciating."

GOOGLE HITS 288,000 for "Peter Sellars"; 2.3 million for "Peter Sellers"

