

Sports Icon and Humanitarian Billie Jean King is Simmons College's 2014 Commencement Speaker, May 9



BOSTON (February 27, 2014) — Sports icon and humanitarian Billie Jean King will deliver the [Simmons College 109th Commencement](#) address Friday, May 9, at the Bank of America Pavilion in Boston. King won 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles, and mixed doubles titles in her legendary tennis career but is perhaps best known for defeating Bobby Riggs in the much billed "Battle of the Sexes," a historic match that changed the playing field for gender equality. King will serve as the keynote speaker for the 10 a.m. undergraduate ceremony. A separate ceremony for Simmons College graduate schools at 2 p.m. features keynote speaker David Weinberger, Ph.D., an expert on the intersection of technology and human interaction who currently co-directs the Harvard Library and Innovation Lab and is a senior researcher at Harvard's Berkman Center for the Internet & Society. (Note: Simmons will be streaming live video of both Commencement ceremonies on its [website](#). The college also will be live tweeting from the ceremony at [@SimmonsCollege](#) and [#Sims14](#). King is a 2009 recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, and has been named one of the "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century" by LIFE magazine. Most recently, King was named a member of the U.S. Presidential delegation to the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. King successfully fought for equal prize money for male and female tennis players, and helped open opportunities for all professional athletes. On the long list of King's

groundbreaking achievements are: founding of the Women's Tennis Association, the Women's Sports Foundation, and Women's Sports magazine; along with co-founding World Team Tennis. She is the author of *Pressure Is a Privilege: Lessons I've Learned from Life and the Battle of the Sexes*, and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1987. The afternoon speaker is Weinberger, a specialist in the intersection of technology and human interaction. In 1999, Weinberger and three friends created the website Cluetrain.com, which explained the Internet as a social place where people interact and share what matters to them. Their work was turned into the book *The Cluetrain Manifesto*, which InformationWeek called "the most important business book since Tom Peter's *In Search of Excellence*." Weinberger followed this up with the book *Small Pieces Loosely Joined: A Unified Theory of the Web*, which focused on the Internet's significance; and *Everything Is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder*, a book that explains the profound changes in how we understand the organization of things in our world. *Too Big to Know* discusses what happens to knowledge now that it's becoming networked; it has won two international Best Book of the Year awards. During Simmons's Commencement ceremony, Simmons College Board of Trustees Chair Lauren Brisky, and President [Helen G. Drinan](#), will award King and Weinberger honorary doctoral degrees. The following individuals also will receive honorary doctoral degrees: **Dr. Madeleine M. Joullié** — An internationally recognized champion of women in chemistry, Dr. Joullié holds the distinction of being one of the first female professors to earn tenure in chemistry at an Ivy League institution. She is a Simmons College alumna and currently serves on the board of the Chemical Heritage Foundation. **Ruth Ellen Fitch** — A former president and chief executive officer at The Dimock Center, former partner at a top Boston law firm, educator, and champion for the underserved, Fitch blazed a path for future generations of young lawyers of color to follow, having been named Boston's first black female law firm partner while with Palmer & Dodge LLP. Founded in 1899, [Simmons College \(www.simmons.edu\)](#) is a nationally ranked university located in the heart of Boston with a focus on leadership development and a history of visionary thinking and social responsibility. It offers undergraduate education for women, and renowned coeducational graduate programs in nursing and health sciences, liberal arts, library and information science, social work, as well as the nation's first MBA program designed specifically for women. Follow Simmons on Twitter [@SimmonsCollege](#) and [@SimmonsNews](#).