

## **The Honorands of The 2005 Commencement**

### **Alan Lightman Doctor of Letters**

A 1970 Princeton graduate with a Ph.D. in theoretical physics from the California Institute of Technology, Alan Lightman is a scientist and writer whose work enriches both science and literature. Throughout his early career at Cornell and Harvard, and as a research scientist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, Lightman wrote poetry, fiction, reviews, and essays about science and the human side of science. He served as professor of science and writing and senior lecturer in physics at M.I.T., where he headed the Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies and helped to create the communication requirement for M.I.T. students. His books include *Origins*, *Einstein's Dreams*, *Good Benito*, *The Diagnosis*, and *Reunion*. Lightman is the recipient of the Distinguished Arts and Humanities Medal for Literature (Germantown Arts Alliance), the Gyorgy Kepes Prize in the Arts (M.I.T. Council for the Arts), and the Andrew Gemant Award of the American Institute of Physics (for linking science and the humanities). Lightman's scientific research has appeared in journals of physics and astrophysics and has earned him membership in the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and was named a Literary Light of the Boston Public Library in 1995.