

PENN BACCALAUREATE 2018

Penn President Amy Gutmann's Baccalaureate Remarks given in Irvine Auditorium on Sunday, May 13, 2018.

Baccalaureate Welcome

Parents, families and friends, welcome to Penn's Baccalaureate Ceremony. A special welcome, a special thank you, to the Class of 2018. You have challenged us; you have enlightened us; you have never failed to do your best and to do great things. Including for Feb Club! You are truly an awesome class!

Commencement on Franklin Field, tomorrow, is a big bang of a celebration shared with the world. Today's event is quieter but no less meaningful. It's an opportunity to let your spirits soar with lovely music, to learn from a leading public intellectual and to reflect. Our honored speaker is a celebrated author who thinks deeply about how to live morally, ethically and comfortably in today's world. Andy Crouch is a partner at an organization called Praxis that works as a creative engine for redemptive entrepreneurship.

The baccalaureate is the perfect setting to reflect in this spiritual way. It's an ancient custom, linking us with centuries of university graduates, stretching all the way back to Medieval Oxford. As the times change, so too do our traditions. Back then, the graduates were required not just to listen to countless lectures in Latin—but also to deliver them in Latin.

Today, that particular requirement is officially waived. Instead, our time together now underscores the value of friendships formed, the importance of family who made your success possible, and the caring Penn community that will continue to be a cherished part of your lives. This is a fitting capstone to your experiences at Penn.

The remarkable Class of 2018 has learned and grown and advanced in so many ways in the past four years.

Yours is a class filled with spectacular singers and dancers, artists and inventors, and with amazing Ivy League Champion athletes. In countless classes and student groups, you've engaged for good in our community and around the world. And, of course, there was Hey Day!

You boast among your class Fulbright and Rhodes Scholars, Truman and Churchill Scholarship recipients, a Davis Projects for Peace awardee, and a recipient of the Charles B. Rangel International Fellowship. Among you as well, there are six winners of the President's Engagement Prize and a President's Innovation Prize Winner.

Over the next year, they will assist vulnerable populations in Chicago; help create an ethical and efficient recycling supply chain in India; improve health education for children and their caregivers in Mexico; and work on creating a revolutionary treatment for the second-leading cause of blindness in the world: glaucoma.

By any measure, your Class is already proving itself to be a potent force for good in the world. Here today, we share our thanks for everything you mean to achieve in the years ahead. You have great dreams; you are greatly prepared to fulfill them.

Members of the Class of 2018, friends and family: Today and forever more, you have a home and an extended family here at Penn.

Let us join together in celebrating and applauding what you already have achieved—and all the good you surely will do. We also wish you every joy along the way. Congratulations and enjoy.



Penn Chaplain the Rev. Charles L. Howard, Penn President Amy Gutmann and Baccalaureate Speaker Andy Crouch at Irvine Auditorium on May 13.

Baccalaureate Address given in Irvine Auditorium on Sunday, May 13, 2018 by Andy Crouch, partner for theology and culture at Praxis, an organization that works as a creative engine for redemptive entrepreneurship.

The Path from Safety to Flourishing

President Gutmann, Provost Pritchett, Chaplain Howard, families, friends, honored guests and members of the class of 2018:

Of the many marvelous traditions associated with commencement season, the baccalaureate service is, at least in our time, one of the less familiar and one of the more fascinating. At first glance it bears a significant resemblance to the commencement ceremony itself—the academic robes, the procession, the solemnity and the speeches. But the contrasts are striking.

Tomorrow you will be assembled on a grand field—today we are in this beautiful but still more modest hall. Tomorrow you will be seated as a class, with your families peering from their seats to spot you in the ranks—today most of you are seated close enough to touch your families and loved ones. Tomorrow, not just you but the faculty will wear caps, a traditional sign of academic accomplishment—today our heads are bare, or, if our tradition requires it, covered in a different way. Tomorrow's ceremony is perhaps not strictly required for graduation, but it is almost universally observed (and from the point of view of your proud parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, it's compulsory), whereas today's is entirely optional. And yet here we are.

The contrast between tomorrow's ceremony and today's is actually a glimpse into a deep human drama—perhaps the deepest human drama: the tension between authority and vulnerability.

Commencement is about *authority*—which I would define as “capacity for meaningful action.” Indeed, all of education is about acquiring that capacity, which is so distinctive to human beings as a species: the capacity

to act not just instinctively and in the moment, but meaningfully and as part of a long history. Authority is part of the glory of being human—and it is right that we celebrate the milestones as we develop authority along the way, from our first words and first steps to our first degree.

But there is another equally important human reality, another thing that sets us apart: *our vulnerability*, which I would define as “exposure to meaningful risk.” We human beings are, in very real ways, more vulnerable than any other creature—less capable of survival on our own in the wild world, more conscious of our smallness and finitude, more capable of love but also more capable of grief. “When I consider the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have set in their courses, what are human beings that you are mindful of them?” the psalmist asks. That consciousness of smallness, before the universe but even more before the universe's maker, is just as distinctively human a quality as our moments of greatness.

These two qualities, authority and vulnerability, mark every human life in some combination. And indeed, it is when they are combined that we are most flourishing and most truly alive. The moments of greatest satisfaction and triumph in our lives—athletic competition, musical performance, parenting, any real achievement—all involve some element of meaningful action combined with some element of meaningful risk.

(continued on next page)

Baccalaureate Address by Andy Crouch (continued from previous page)

But we also live much of our lives in some other combination of authority and vulnerability. A healthy human life actually begins with neither much capacity for action nor much exposure to risk. Call it *safety*, and to the extent your parents were able to do so, they insulated you early on not just from vulnerability (they put up gates at the top of the stairs and covered up the outlets) but authority as well (indeed, babies love to be swaddled, bound up tightly in a blanket, where they can become calm and alert).

But as you grew, your parents gave you more and more capacity for action. My own daughter is graduating from high school this year. I remember letting her walk with her older brother to the elementary school a few blocks away—then seeing her get on the bus to middle school—and then, a few years ago, obtain her driver’s license, the literal authority to drive a car, which our insurance company seems to think confers a great deal of vulnerability. The path from safety to flourishing is what every parent, at their best, hopes for their child, and it combines increasing authority with increasing vulnerability.

But along the way, certainly by middle school, all of us experience another combination: vulnerability without authority—the *suffering* that all human beings experience eventually. In this condition, we are exposed to risk, but have no capacity to act. Sometimes it comes in acute and urgent forms, other times in chronic forms. Sometimes it affects us as individuals; sometimes a whole community or people. Vulnerability without authority is the most painful part of being human—and undoubtedly the most universal as well.

And once we’ve experienced it, if we have the option, we start to dream about its opposite: authority without vulnerability, which I would call *control*.

Even though we know that our greatest flourishing has come with risk, once we acquire a certain amount of authority we are overwhelmingly tempted to use that authority to minimize risk—to move towards control, or perhaps back towards the safety where we began.

Alas, I regret to inform you, on behalf of the universe, that you cannot have control. It’s a mirage. All we care about most is beyond our control—not just the vast cosmos, but even the small world of our closest relationships. To try to gain control, or to regain safety, will ultimately require you to violate the very nature of the universe. All the violence in this world is done by those who sense their control slipping or their sense of safety threatened.

Here is the problem: The more authority we acquire, the more we are tempted to seek control or safety. You have already felt this—this pull to take the predictable, which means controllable, path of success. Or perhaps it’s the successful path of predictability. You will feel it ever more strongly in the coming years. There are few things more predictably successful, and perhaps successfully predictable, than an Ivy League degree. All of us are primed to maximize authority and minimize vulnerability, and you now have a credential in hand to show that you are quite good at that quest.

But here is the secret, often kept hidden from even the brightest and the most promising—especially from the brightest and most promising: From now on, almost every truly worthwhile thing in your life will come from pursuing vulnerability, not from pursuing authority. It will come from risk, not control. Your most meaningful relationships; the most significant contributions to your field of work; all true leadership will be a matter of

becoming a steward of vulnerability, not merely a wielder of authority. Don’t let our robes and titles, our signs of authority, fool you—the leaders on this stage know that the very heart of any serious work is serious risk. Indeed, healthy authority is only acquired in order to be able to take on meaningful risk on a community’s behalf.

Up until now, authority has been the quest of your life. From now on in your life, vulnerability is the pearl of great price.

And that is what this service, this baccalaureate service, is for. We are here bare-headed. We are here reading sacred texts that call us to meekness, mourning and poverty of spirit. We are reminded that “we are not a machine”—built by and for control—but a work of art. We are reminded of our desperate need for compassion and mercy; called to renounce the violence that is the result of the quest for control; called to walk softly and carefully and thankfully.

Not all of us call this *worship*, but for those who do, this is what worship is for: to call us to deeper vulnerability, and also to equip us for it. If there is in fact a divine reality with authority far greater than our own, then participation in that divine life can grant us truer and deeper authority than any degree will ever confer. But God’s authority also authorizes far greater risks than we would ever take if our lives are held only in our own hands.

And perhaps it is true, as I believe it is true, that God not only is the source of all meaningful action, but is also the One who took on the most meaningful risk. And if that is the case, if God took on the full risk of humanity and even the ultimate vulnerability without authority, which is death—and if death could not hold the most deeply human being who ever lived—then we can live our lives with a far more radical vulnerability, as well as far greater genuine authority, than we ever could have imagined.

For many generations now, commencement ceremonies have ended with an iconic moment: thousands of graduates throwing their caps in the air. After so much formality and sobriety, so much demonstration of authority, there is a moment of sheer, unguarded, hilarious vulnerability. I have a feeling that, thanks to risk management consultants (vulnerability reduction consultants), university administrations do not entirely endorse this practice these days, and you’ll decide for yourselves whether or not to toss your cap. But you’ll want to.

And at that moment tomorrow, whether or not you physically toss your sign of authority in the air, I hope you’ll mentally toss it. I hope you’ll make a resolution—that you’ll live your life capless. Not clutching to the authority you’ve gained, as well deserved as it is, but tossing it heavenward in wild abandoned trust. That from now on your life will be more about vulnerability than authority, more about risk and faith in the true God than in pursuit of the false gods of safety and control.

In the movie *The Incredibles* there is a fearsome fashion designer named Edna Mode. Her principal design directive for superhero costumes is, “No capes!” She knows that capes are superfluous and ultimately dangerous tokens of superherodom. I’d like to alter Edna Mode’s dictum by just one letter: “No caps!” No caps. Just a life of ever greater risk and trust, until your very life itself is caught at the end by the one who has known you since you were knit in the womb, in whose great grand story all our vulnerability, and all our authority too, finds its true home.



Photograph by Marguerite F. Miller

Penn Commencement Address given on Monday, May 14, 2018, by President Amy Gutmann at Franklin Field.



Amy Gutmann

Think Uniquely, Stand United

To the amazing Class of 2018: You look fabulous!

To our Trustees, our faculty, and the parents of our graduates: You look so proud! As well you should be.

Parents! You also look ... relieved! You've earned that, too. Congratulations to you all!

Everyone: Look around. From a distance, this appears to be a sea of black-robed sameness.

But let's take this opportunity to conduct an experiment. I ask all of our graduates at this time to please stand up.

[The graduates stand.]

Let's see just how much sameness lurks underneath, below the surface. And don't worry—this exercise will not include disrobing! Graduates: Today, on the surface, you all look a lot alike. But differences are hidden under-

neath. So, everyone with bare knees—all of you wearing shorts or skirts beneath your robes—please be seated.

[Some graduates sit.]

To graduates with covered knees: If you are wearing a wristwatch, remain standing. Those of you without watches, please be seated.

[Fewer graduates remain standing.]

To our knee-covered, time-conscious graduates: You are unique in other ways. Please be seated, unless you are wearing a Power of Penn t-shirt. If you are wearing a Power of Penn t-shirt, please remain standing.

[A solitary student remains standing (whom we have arranged in advance and who appears on the Jumbotron).]

Well now! Hello there! So ... what shall we talk about? You can wave to your family and friends.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is Makayla Reynolds, who graciously agreed to help me out this morning.

Please give her a hand. Makayla, thank you. You can sit down now.

Why did we just do this exercise? Good question! Because my message today is this: Too many people in this world would have us stand apart from one another based on our differences. And too many others, for the sake of sameness, would have us deny our individuality.

In fact, what makes us unique and what unites us are not starkly opposed. Uniqueness and unity are the twin pillars of a strong pluralism.

We thrive when we combine unity of shared values with our unique perspectives on life. It has never been more important that we think uniquely while we stand united.

This message is driven home daily by stories from around the world and stories right here at Penn.

One Penn story began in Sudan, where civil war raged, killing millions. People lost everything. The chance to become educated came only to the very lucky few.

One of them was Dau Jok, proud 2014 graduate of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dau's father was killed in the Sudanese civil war. His mother fled with his family to Des Moines, Iowa.

Dau's unique perspective was forged by profound loss and the struggles of creating a new life in an alien country. His distinctive experiences may seem defined by vast differences. But exactly the opposite is true.

This spring, Dau was part of our annual Silfen Forum, joining leaders like Joe Biden and Jeb Bush to discuss refugees and immigration. It was Dau who cut right to the heart of the matter when he asked his fellow Penn students and alums: Are you speaking the values that you and I share?

Dau's message was clear: We all must speak the values we share.

So often, we are told that our differences divide us. But it is our unique life stories, brought together and joined as a whole, that constitute our common strength. We must speak out and say to the world that unique in our experiences, we are united in our values. And we must communicate

those values at every opportunity.

From South Sudan, to snowy Iowa, to Franklin Field, we need to speak the values we share.

I will speak them now. We cherish: Liberty not Chains, Opportunity without Limit, Love without Condition, and Learning without End.

Those are inspiring and universal words to live by. Let's take Dau's message to heart and say them aloud.

I'll start if you'll back me up.

Let me hear you say:

Liberty not Chains. [Audience repeat.]

Opportunity without Limit. [Audience repeat.]

Love without Condition. [Audience repeat.]

Learning without End! [Audience repeat.]

Amen!

And so we stand united against hatred and cruelty, though our paths differ. Each of us has our own creative views on how best to advance liberty and opportunity, love and learning.

Uniqueness and unity are not opposed, as I learned early in my own life.

As many of you know, I was the first in my family to graduate college. When I began the journey from my home in rural New York to an Ivy League campus, I honestly didn't know what to expect. But I wanted to fit in.

So, I saved up every penny of my summer job money to buy a suitcase full of new formal clothes. Belongings in hand, I headed off to an unfamiliar new world.

My very first day, a classmate who would become a good friend took one look at the clothes I'd packed and she said to me—in no uncertain terms—"These all have to go!" I traded them in for two pairs of Levis and a couple of T-shirts.

Okay, so a rocky start. As a scholarship student, I had a work-study job in the early mornings before class. All my new friends had a habit of staying up late. Very late. So, of course, I was determined to keep up by staying up late as well.

At the time, I thought being perpetually sleep deprived was a condition unique to me. Anyone here happen to share that condition?

Here's the takeaway: When I first arrived, I focused on how different I felt—as a first-generation, low-income student—and how much I wanted to fit in. Then, one day, I tried a different approach.

Arriving back on campus from spring break, which I spent at home with my wonderful widowed mom, I was carrying the very same suitcase. Again, it was full—not of who I thought I should be, but of who I actually was.

It was jam-packed with home-cooking lovingly prepared: Mama Bea's light-as-air cheese blintzes, secret-recipe stuffed cabbage, corned beef nice and lean, and jumbo chocolate chip cookies that could make you cry—for joy!

My friends had never tasted anything quite like it. Nor had I ever tasted anything like their life experiences.

We shared something over that meal and many more to come that went far beyond my mom's blintzes. We shared our own unique recipes for life.

What I came to understand was that our differences are in fact our strengths. Strengths that, in turn, advance what you and I and all of Penn are trying to achieve, together.

The Great Seal of the United States reads, *E Pluribus Unum*: From Many, One. Graduates, during your time here, you have come to know the Red and Blue version we hold so dear.

E Pennibus Unum: From Many Penn People, One Penn Family.

From all 50 states in the Union and more than a hundred countries, from all walks of life, the Penn family lives and learns, engages and enjoys one another.

You have grown together in this constantly illuminating swirl of uniqueness, as you have stood together—inspiringly—for the values we all share.

You exemplify what *E Pennibus Unum* truly means—what the Penn family really stands for: Liberty not Chains, Opportunity without Limit, Love without Condition, and Learning without End.

As you go forth today, your great task, the life's project we all share, is to take this well-learned lesson—think uniquely, stand united—out into our society and our world. Speak the values we share. Speak them—when needed, sing them from the rooftops—with the unique voice that only you possess.

And now, I ask everybody to stand together. Proud families and friends, University leaders and faculty, stand with me as one, and show our profound pride in this unique and united Class of 2018.

Remarks by Jennifer Pinto-Martin, Viola MacInnes/Independence Professor of Nursing; Professor of Epidemiology, Perelman School of Medicine; Director, Master of Public Health Program; Director, Pennsylvania Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities Research and Epidemiology; Executive Director, Center for Public Health Initiatives and incoming Chair of the Faculty Senate.

Knowledge for Social Change

President Gutmann, Provost Pritchett, Trustees, honorary degree recipients, faculty colleagues, families, friends and most of all, you, you wonderful graduates of the class of 2018:

Welcome to this day of new possibilities! As the Chair of Faculty Senate, I have the privilege to address you today as you leave the safe and familiar walls of this beautiful campus and head out into the world. How incredibly exciting! This is a time when this country and this world desperately need your energy and your commitment to build a better future. As Benjamin Franklin said, “The noblest question in the world is, what good may I do in it?”

And there is so much good to be done. The challenges we face are numerous and the solutions demand energy and commitment. You have that in spades! We hear from you again and again—when you speak up in class, when we engage in one-on-one conversations with you, when we overhear conversations among you and your peers—that you yearn to make the world a better place for all—and most important, you believe it is possible.

You could do worse than to model yourself after old Ben, a man of immense talent and a true commitment to bettering the world. As several of our own faculty state in their book whose title *Knowledge for Social Change* I borrowed (with permission, of course) for my own speech today, Franklin had a lifelong categorical imperative to “do good” and believed that “knowledge functions as wisdom and power to do good only when we use it to engage in action oriented, collaborative, real-world problem solving.”¹ Let us just remind ourselves of a few of his accomplishments:

1. He established the Union Fire Company, one of the first organized fire-fighting groups in the world, in 1736.

¹Benson L, Harkavy I, Puckett J, Hartley M, Hedges R, Johnston F, Weeks J. *Knowledge for Social Change*. Temple University Press 2017, p.19.

2. He helped found the first hospital in the U.S., Pennsylvania Hospital right here in Philadelphia.

3. He introduced the lightning rod to colonial America and saved many a village from massive fires.

4. And my favorite, he was an avid swimmer throughout his life and invented swim fins when he was just 11 years old!

So channel his passion for making life better for all and strive to work together to solve the complex problems we face today. This University, under our President’s leadership, has at its core, a respect for and belief in the power of cross-disciplinary collaboration, and we have challenged you again and again to embrace this approach. Just this year the President’s Engagement Prize winners tackled issues such as such as infectious disease in children in Mexico, access to furniture for vulnerable individuals in Chicago, diverting waste from landfills to recycling centers in India, and treating glaucoma. You are undaunted and determined, two essential qualities that will serve you well, but most of all, you are optimistic. This is the quality that will take you far and will ensure that you succeed.

You are at the peak of your powers today and you have the education from one of the world’s finest institutions in your pocket. So remember Ben’s question: “What good may I do in this world?” And go out and make us proud!



Jennifer Pinto-Martin

Photograph by Eddy Marengo



Photograph by Marguerite F. Miller

Penn Commencement Address given on Monday, May 14, 2018 at Franklin Field by Andrea Mitchell, CW'67, chief foreign affairs correspondent, NBC News; host of "Andrea Mitchell Reports," MSNBC.

Be Curious, Open-Minded and Engaged—Never Stop Learning

President Gutmann, Chairman Cohen, Reverend Clergy, Faculty, Parents, Families, Friends and partners and the combined classes of 2018!

I am overjoyed and overwhelmed, and above all, humbled. This is an honor I never could have imagined. No award, no recognition has ever meant as much. I think of all the years I've clapped and cheered watching Penn graduates march down Locust Walk for this ceremony, a procession that never fails to bring me to tears. And then the excitement of hearing poets and Presidents, world leaders and global thinkers address our graduates. To say nothing of Bono and Denzel and Lin-Manuel—making me feel at this moment like that long-forgotten Vice Presidential candidate for Ross Perot in 1992, Admiral James Stockdale, whose first words on the debate stage were: "Who am I and why am I here?" Even worse, I have a confession: I almost didn't graduate more than a half century ago. As commencement drew near, I had failed to complete my gym requirement by passing the swim test. Yes, it was required. So I had to spend the last few weeks before commencement in the pool. It seemed like a waste of time, but decades later, I got caught in a rip tide off of Great Point on Nantucket Island. I had to tread water as I got carried out to sea for what seemed like an eternity before being rescued. I wasn't sure I was going to make it, but I was prepared. Prepared at Penn.

I am here because when I arrived as an unformed sixteen-year-old freshman this great University gave me choices—at a time when it was not self-evident that women could strive to compete as equals. Penn is now vastly different than it was in 1963: fully co-educational, diverse, even more intellectually vibrant, and physically beautiful. I'm proud of our stellar faculty, our architecture, our green spaces, all of the physical improvements. But most of all, I'm here to celebrate you.

You are what makes our University great: your intellectual capital, your research, your discoveries, your community service, as you have, we hope, forged lifelong friendships and become proud Quakers.

In thinking about what wisdom I could offer your class today, I am struck by how many of life's adventures are the result of accident, not design—if you are prepared to take advantage of the serendipitous. That means having the tools, the knowledge imparted by this great University, and the confidence to take chances. Explore new paths. Chase your dreams.

I often think about how different my life would have been had I not wandered down the third floor corridor of Houston Hall in the fall of my freshman year to follow the sounds of classical music, and discovered what was then the studio of WXPB. In those days, our FM station was entirely student-run, programming classical music, jazz after midnight, folk music on Saturday nights—and news! After years of studying the violin, I'd come to Penn, having realized that I was a good, not great, violinist. No matter how hard I practiced, I would never, to paraphrase the old joke, get to Carnegie Hall. But I was a pretty good English student. I had loved writing since becoming the school news reporter for our hometown newspaper in the 6th grade—and had fallen in love with history and literature thanks to encouraging teachers in high school. So exploring my interests in a liberal arts curriculum was an inviting alternate aspiration. And then, on that day early in the fall of my freshman year, I discovered broadcast news.

Which brings me to my first lesson: Be curious. Do not presume to know who you might become, because you never finish becoming.

I look back on those early years in the College of Liberal Arts for Women with gratitude, and with thanks that the College for Women no longer exists. It was an artifact of a different era, as were the separate rules for women we found so constraining: the curfews, the dress code, the rules that did not apply to the men. It was an oppositional time over Civil Rights and, later, Vietnam. The early strivings of what was to grow into the women's movement. A decade both transformational and turbulent, marked by violence throughout: the killing of an American President only two months after my class arrived on campus—the murders of three civil rights workers in 1964 and, when we were young graduates, the murders of Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy in 1968.

Our generation had some clear cut issues—changing laws to improve Civil Rights, dealing with Vietnam. The generations before had the Great Depression and World War II. Today, we are living through a period that feels equally challenging and disorienting. But now, the challenges are subtler, even more complex—the social dilemmas affecting race, ethnicity, gender. Problems new laws can address, but not always fix.

And today, political norms are under attack from all sides, what the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan used to call "defining deviancy down." The New York Senator, a great debater, also coined the phrase, "You are entitled to your own opinions, but not your own facts." But in today's politics, facts are described as "alternative," and truths are often relative. Devices that we thought would liberate us can at times weigh us down. Social media that enable us to forge connections can instead be isolating. We can feel overrun by the velocity of information bombarding us day and night. And in a country more divided than at any time in recent memory, too often we retreat to our corners, becoming all too comfortable relying on news media that confirm our opinions, rather than challenging our preconceived notions. But you have the capability, the education, and the spirit to tackle these and similar issues—in a world with three times the number of people as when I graduated so many years ago.

So my next lesson: Be open-minded. Never stop learning.

How to find the truth? Use the skills you've learned here at Penn. Evaluate your sources, test your theories. Be smart consumers. In this heated environment, honest, fearless journalism is essential to sustaining our democracy, perhaps more necessary than at any time I can recall since the Civil Rights movement. But to fulfill our mission for you, the public, we must demand more of ourselves, and you must demand more of us. We must guard against errors, and avoid hyperbole. Make sure we do not jump to conclusions or parrot conventional wisdom. And as new media proliferate, and lines are blurred between hard news and entertainment, those of us performing traditional journalism have to stick to our core mission: providing a reality check, a factual baseline against which to measure a storm of tweets.

In this regard, calling us the "enemy of the people" or "fake news" is calculated to diminish our authority, to make it more difficult to challenge false narratives—even as our politics become increasingly disconnected from facts. "Fake News" is hardly a new phenomenon: Wars have been started as the result of sensational headlines based on false narratives—as long ago as 1898, when claims that a torpedo, or some other external explosion, blew up the *USS Maine* in Havana harbor, killing hundreds on board. The cry "Remember the *Maine*!" quickly became the pretext for the U.S. to declare war against Spain. The cause originally unclear, almost a century later, another investigation discovered that the tragedy was probably self-inflicted, possibly the result of a coal bunker fire. But these days, "fake news" is also what people call news they don't agree with. And, it can be Information Warfare, such as Russian propaganda masquerading as legitimate news to exploit societal divisions and set us against each other. As consumers and purveyors of information it's on us, all of us, to figure out what is real, and what is not.

My final lesson: Be engaged.

As you follow your passions and discover new pursuits, be involved citizens of your neighborhood, your community, your nation and the world. Express yourselves, whether it is with a blog, or a book, a painting or a



Photograph by Eddy Marengo

Andrea Mitchell

(continued on next page)

PENN COMMENCEMENT 2018

Commencement Address (continued from previous page)

play, in a classroom, joining a movement, or even just playing a game. We all know the power sports have to bring us together. Just take it from our incredible basketball team, the first to make the March Madness tournament in 11 years!

Listen and learn, but don't just be an observer. There is never a permanent resting place for democracy or a free press—you have to work at it every day. If you know something is wrong, write that letter to the editor. Support a candidate of any political persuasion; be involved. Speak up. Gain strength from the example of the teenagers in Parkland who transformed tragedy into purpose. Feel empowered by the women and men who are no longer willing to tolerate the abuse of sexual predators. #MeToo and #TimesUp can teach us a kind of courage I never imagined as a 16-year-old freshman first arriving at Penn. It was pure happenstance that I walked down the third floor of Houston Hall that day, embarking on a path of discovery that became a career of never-ending adventure. All because of a little luck, and because I was prepared to take advantage of it. Prepared because of Penn.

Now it's your turn. I have no doubt that many of you will look back at your years here and realize it was full of such moments, moments that

at the time seemed to be happy accidents of your own. An afternoon with friends on the Quad, a late night ... that turned into an early morning of studying at Van Pelt. Maybe inspiration even struck you one evening out at Smokey Joe's Hey, who am I to judge?

You've had a superb education, but in truth it's only the first step on your journey. Your challenges will be great, but so will the opportunities. Your careers will likely veer in directions we have yet to imagine, toward occupations that have not yet been invented. Many of you will be leading the way in these transformations. But don't forget your roots here on this campus. They will nourish you as you grow and thrive. And remember—if you are rocketing through Space someday thanks to Elon Musk—the globe you see will have no borders. No artificial boundaries—just glorious vistas.

Finally, if you'll permit me a little sentiment, let me share what my mentor in journalism, Tim Russert, a great bear of a man from Buffalo, whom we lost way too soon, used to say as I rushed off to new assignments each morning:

"Go get 'em!!!!!"

Go get 'em class of 2018! You've made us all proud.

Thank you all so much. Thank you for the honor of my lifetime.



Photograph by Eddy Marengo

Carrying on a Penn Tradition

Penn President Amy Gutmann sat with Ben on the Bench before the 2018 Commencement on Monday, May 14. They were joined by (standing from left to right) Penn Trustee Chair David L. Cohen and the honorary degree recipients: Hamdi Ulukaya, Elihu Katz, Peggy Noonan, this year's Commencement Speaker Emerita Trustee Andrea Mitchell, Sylvia Earle, Yannick Nezet-Seguin, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and Freeman A. Hrabowski.



And the beat goes on....

Many musical moments made for a memorable Penn Commencement, including the Bagpipers who led the Academic Procession along Locust Walk to Franklin Field, along with the Penn Band; the National Anthem sung by Penn senior Meredith Brandt, C'18; and the singing of "The Red and Blue," led by the Penn Glee Club.

PENN COMMENCEMENT 2018

At Penn's 262nd Commencement, after the student procession entered Franklin Field— with nearly 6,000 graduating undergraduates and graduate students, the alumni procession—including the Class of '68, celebrating their 50th reunion— entered, followed by the academic procession— led by Leslie Laird Kruhly, vice president and secretary of the University carrying the University Mace adorned with the University seal and arms. David L. Cohen, chair of the Board of Trustees, made the Opening Proclamation. Meredith Brandt, a senior in the College, sang the National Anthem. Penn's Chaplain, the Rev. Charles L. Howard, then gave the Invocation. President Amy Gutmann gave remarks and Provost Wendell E. Pritchett announced academic honors. Jennifer Pinto Martin, Faculty Senate chair, gave greetings on behalf of the faculty. Honorary degrees were conferred on eight individuals including the Commencement speaker, Andrea Mitchell, CW'67, chief foreign affairs correspondent, NBC News. Candidates were presented by their deans and Beth Winkelstein, vice provost for education, and President Gutmann conferred the degrees.



Penn Chaplain Charles (Chaz) Howard, C'00, delivered the Invocation as President Amy Gutmann and Provost Wendell Pritchett listened. At the end of the program, he then delivered the Benediction.

Invocation for Commencement 2018

All things work together for the good...

Those first days on campus during NSO
Those long nights studying, writing, doing problem sets,
preparing for clinicals.
Sitting in awe under a brilliant professor,
Standing with joy at a Fling Concert or throwing streamers in the Palestra
All things worked together for the good.

Family members working so that we might be able to study here,
Friends, Coaches, Teachers and Mentors who saw something in us,
Ancestors suffering, enduring, protesting, and living so that we might be free... so that we might experience this day,
All things worked together for the good.

Even the aspects of the journey that didn't go as we'd hoped for or planned
The grades that weren't as high as we wanted
The internships we didn't get
Groups we didn't get into.
The colleges or other grad schools where we didn't end up matriculating...
All of those closed doors, sent us on the right path here to Penn,
to this morning, and to all that awaits in the future...
All things truly work together for the good.

And all the moving parts of the University...
Our 12 schools,
More than 100 majors, departments, programs and concentrations,
hundreds of student groups, teams,
Cultural centers, institutes, clinics, and offices
Served by nearly 30,000 faculty and staff members
All these different people work together for the good everyday here at Penn.
And now we gather this morning, oh Gracious One, to celebrate and to give thanks for it all.
We pray you bless these commencement exercises and these wonderful graduates from this amazing institution. Amen.

Benediction

Among the beautiful public art pieces throughout our campus are the iconic "Ben on the Bench," "The Broken Button," "The Peace Sign," and our famous "LOVE Statue."

There is another lesser-known work of public art here at Penn entitled "King Solomon"...

Go and find this sculpture, more importantly go find what it symbolizes...
Wisdom

For just as "Laws without Morals are useless"
Knowledge without wisdom is incomplete and dangerous.
But with wisdom you can indeed "advance knowledge for good."

Thus beloved members of the Class of 2018, congratulations and may you heed wisdom's call. Amen.

Photographs by Marguerite F. Miller



King Solomon (above), the 14.5-foot bronze statue by Alexander Archipenko, first came to Penn's campus in 1985 on extended loan from Jeffrey H. and Sivia Loria. They formally donated the statue to Penn in honor of Judith Rodin's inauguration as Penn president in 1994. It is located on 36th Street across from the Annenberg Public Policy Center, which was the site—from 1948-2003—of the old Penn Hillel building. This location gave the sculpture of the biblical king extra site-specific significance.