Since 1992, the Law Center has selected a student speaker for each small section diploma presentation ceremony. This year the selection committee, consisting of students from each first-year section and the LL.M. program, solicited entries from prospective graduates and held auditions. The superior quality of the speeches made the selection of one individual for each section extremely difficult. Consequently, the committee members invited each student to submit their work for publication so that it might be shared with you. The result is the volume you now hold. We hope you enjoy it.

We are pleased to publish the contributions of the following students:

Scott Robert Arsenault
Mara Martha Burr
Alan David Cates
Daniel M. Cramer
Alejandro Sahagún Cueva
* Eric Lawrence Ehrenberg
* Craig Edward Etem
Michael Morgan Godsy
Donna Renee Henry
Ashu Kalra
Christopher James Lopata
* Kimberly Susan Manthy

Leslie S. McAdoo-Brobson
Evelyn S. Pan
Manisha Dilip Patel
Richard Gregory Phillips
John Curtis Pierce
Thomas Patrick Reilly
Anita Carole Taff-Rice
Rodolfo Ignacio Tancred
* Adam Scott Tanenbaum
* Michael Steven Valihora

Jeffrey Paul Weaver
* Karen A. Zeineddin

* Indicates Commencement Speaker
Section Two Commencement Speech
Scott Robert Arsenault

The Longest Journey

I have never stood where I am standing right now, but many, many times I have sat where you are sitting. And of all the times I have sat out there, I have never remembered a word of what was said up here. But I have always remembered who took too long to say it. So I promise this will not be the President's State of the Union Address.

I have something to confess: I am a bit thunderstruck by this day, this Graduation of ours. I would say I am speechless, but, well, I have these cards right here in case I forget anything. I would even venture to say it is an August day, except... the Registrar just reminded me that this is, in fact, May.

I am from a small town in Maine called Bangor. If you have not heard of it, do not worry. They have not heard of you either. It was there I first learned that opportunity has a dark edge to it. My father died when I was young, but before he died we spent our summers pacing a certain wet and blustery beach he teaching me how to skate a kite across a gray Maine sky and me, well, doing it pretty badly. I called them our "Kite Days." My father taught me that even if you are from Maine, it is still possible to soar high. The real trick, as anyone who has ever flown a kite knows, is to get that kite to the ground without breaking its nose or its spine or crashing it neatly into the sea.

When we were not flying kites, my father read to me. The writers he introduced me to are many; writers like Homer, Shakespeare, and Emerson. At that time, my bedtime stories were not by Posner, Tushnet, and Eskridge. These writers who my father introduced me to were the voices that emphasized autonomy, man as a journeyer and a pilgrim, one separate and apart from community. These were the sorts of ideas ringing in my head and probably in many of yours as we all ran away to college and then to Georgetown. I was young, and like that silly kite, I wanted only to distance myself from everything I knew so well.
My grandfather once said, "We all want to be so very far away." And for me, for a time, anyway, that was true.

It sounded like a good idea at the time. Lots of things do: Commercial Law, for example. And it took me a while, seven years in fact, to recognize the folly of my flight. You can't escape the gentle tug of that kite string. Home is always with you and always waiting for you. I found that out recently. Like many of you, I went through that grueling interview process yet again last fall. During one of those interviews with a Washington law firm a young associate who had recently completed a federal clerkship in northern Maine was surprised and excited to learn that I was from Bangor. "But," he said, "I have one really important question I have to ask you." I braced myself. "When I was in Bangor, I met a little white-haired lady who works at a bank and could not stop talking about her son, the Georgetown Law Student. She was so proud of him. Do you know this woman?"

Mom.

I discovered that even here, hundreds of miles away from Maine, I could not escape the reach of home. In fact, some of my friends would even say my mother got me my job.

In my home state, a family's status is measured by its generations. An unspoken social code dictates that birthplace is hardly enough to claim Maine as your home; the true measure is time. As the oldtimers say, "If your cat had kittens in the oven, you wouldn't call them biscuits." Once a Mainer, always so, I guess. E.M. Forster called this flight one from home but doomed to end, finally and always home again, the "longest journey." I certainly brought my history of family and of place to college and here to Georgetown. It is who I am. It is who we are. We have all brought our ties with us.

Now, three years later, I realize that opportunity's dark edge is a lot like a beachside wind: it buoys thinkers aloft and it keeps them there for a good long look at the land and the sea surrounding that beach; but we are still tethered, tethered by a fine white line to the people and places who matter most to us. Our Graduation marks a high point; it is the highest into the sky we have reached; but I like to think of it as a time to pause, too, a time to take inventory and check the strength of
those kite strings. We are all of us about to scatter to the winds: away from friends and families and colleagues, people we love and who love us.

You know, if I had a dime for every time a fellow student told me over the last few months that they could not wait to graduate, I would not need a bar loan this summer. But as each of you leave here today to begin your lives, lives as lawyers, lobbyists, senators, representatives, judges, and advocates (for we will be all of these things, and more), remember to check your own tie to Georgetown. For all of us have a string leading back to this school. And like so many kites on a wet, Maine beach, our ties will cross again.
LL.M. Commencement Speech
Mara Martha Burr

On behalf of the LL.M. graduates, I want to welcome you to the 1996
commencement ceremony. I want to take this time to thank, on behalf of
all the LL.M. students, our family and friends who have been so
supportive and caring during our time at Georgetown. Success is rarely
achieved alone and for all of you who have been so patient and kind and
cared enough to put up with us, even during exams, you earned this
degree as well.

When I came to Georgetown to pursue my LL.M., I had many
expectations. I expected to work hard, to be challenged by my
professors, to be pushed by my fellow students and, ultimately, to find
the path I was to follow in my career. What I did not expect was to
meet and befriend some of the most extraordinary people I have ever
known. The size of Georgetown Law School gives the impression that it
is an anonymous place for students, where just making it through the
bureaucracy is a victory. Yet that is not the Georgetown I know.
Georgetown, for me, in this one, short year, has been a real community
and a home away from home. The students come from every corner of
the world and every walk of life, and yet we have all found something in
common. From the first night at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, I knew
this experience would be quite different from my undergraduate or law
school experience. There was this inexplicable bond between those of us
with certain colored name tags; it distinguished us a LL.M.s, and
perhaps a bit more.

Over these few months that bond has grown and made us into
more than just colleagues and classmates. We are friends. No matter
what the problem, we came together to solve it. When anyone needed
help, it was always available, no strings attached and no questions asked.
When I experienced difficulty and needed support from these great
people, it was given immediately and unconditionally. I am forever in
awe of the kindness and compassion shown by people who only knew me
for a short period of time. You see, this was not the exception, this was
the rule.
I know some of you out there are saying to yourself, "But this is a law school and you graduates are all lawyers." Perhaps you have not found lawyers to be as I describe the 1996 LL.M. class at Georgetown. So, to all of you, please look around because these are the people who should represent the legal profession, not the lawyers you have heard so much about in the media. The 1996 LL.M. class at Georgetown represents many different people with varying interests and fields of study: International and Comparative, Tax, Securities, Labor, and General LL.M.s. We all have a different story and reason for being here. Some came right out of law school, some have come from their professional careers and some just want to change their career path. No matter what the desire or hope, I know that all have found Georgetown to be a special place with great professors and even greater students.

I expected to have great opportunities and do great things while I was at Georgetown, but I never expected I would find so many great people and so many wonderful friends. The last thing I expected was how difficult it is going to be to say goodbye. I know that my experiences this year have changed me forever and I hope that perhaps each and every one of you can say the same thing. I hope that your experience at Georgetown was every bit as extraordinary as mine and that you remember this very special time forever.

My time at Georgetown has reaffirmed my faith in the kindness and compassion of people, even a bunch of lawyers. Maybe it will be possible for all of us to remember the decency, kindness, and compassion shown to us this year and apply it to our actions in the future. Hopefully this experience has made us all better people instead of just better students or lawyers. If so, then indeed our future and the future of our profession is very bright.

As we leave here today, with our LL.M. degrees, may we take time to remember to push ourselves to be better people each and every day and not just better lawyers. May each of you be blessed in your journey and may the world long remember your good works on this earth.
Section Two Commencement Speech
Alan David Cates

Hello! I would like to open by saying how pleased I am to be here today. I could say that it is because I am getting this wonderful chance to talk to you all for a few minutes. Of course, if I said that, I would be lying. Do not be offended. While I am indeed honored to be addressing you, this appearance is more important because it means that my time here in the District of Columbia, home to most things that are evil in the world, is now over!!! I can once again return to my beloved California, the land of Sun, Fun, Fire, Flood, Earthquake, and the ever-popular hegemonic domination of the Disney Corporation. However, as long as I am here, I would like to offer a few thoughts on our fun-filled two and two-thirds years here at the Georgetown garden of earthly delights.

We can look back at our lives before we came to law school by examining those little pieces of creative writing we each composed before our admission to this glorious institution. You remember, the once all-important personal statement. I am sure that many of us wrote moving essays about why we would like to go to law school, so that we could have the chance to serve the legal needs of the poor and oppressed, only to find that we have met the poor and oppressed and they is us. After all, if being more than $100,000 in debt and jobless is not poor and pretty near oppressed, then I do not know what is.

When I was looking back at my own personal statement, I found most of it to still be true. Its main topic was my assertion that I would much rather be a musician than a lawyer. Though, golly, if the law school would have me, I guessed that I would deign to make an appearance. Another part of my personal statement dealt with my purported interest in the conflict of the rights of the individual versus the rights of the collective group. Who, the heck, was I kidding? The only conflict that I am interested in now is the upcoming one between me and my loan companies when they discover that I have no way to pay back all the money that they have fronted me.

You know, I remember those heady first days that we were here. I myself was one of the first proud residents of the Bernard and Sarah Gewirz Student Center. By the way, I am sure that you have all
taken note of the funky names of our buildings at the Law Center: the aforementioned Bernard and Sarah Gewirz Center, the Bernard McDonough Hall and the Edward Bennett Williams Law Library. I do not know about you, but I find it interesting that the best names that we could come up with were those of Big Eddie Williams, who was a mob lawyer, and two guys named Bernie. Anyway, as I was saying about those heady first days, I thought law school was wonderful. Every day it seemed some organization wanted to give us free beer out on the G Street Quad. What a Country! Indeed, at the time when I was asked by a friend to tell him how law school was, I described it as basically an all you can drink keg party, only with a $25,000-a-year cover.

Law school was glamorous and fun. It was sort of like being a character in a TV show. About TV shows, do you all remember L.A. Law? That show was near the end of its long run when we were applying to law school. I am sure that more than one of us was influenced to take up the law by the fascinating lives of the characters that populated the McKenzie firm. I discovered recently that this image has followed me all these years. You see I was examining my transcript and it came to me that I had emulated one of the McKenzie firm characters: I have become Benny! However, I digress.

Back in first year we discovered that the other great benefit of living at Bernie and Sarah’s place was that we were mere moments away from Hugh Kelly’s fabulous Irish Times Bar. For the uninitiated of you, the Irish Times is actually quite a famous place. It was there, over two or so pitchers of beer, that the esteemed former senator from Oregon, Mr. Bob Packwood, reached the compromise that was to become the Tax Reform Act of 1986. If you do not believe me, check out page 68 or so of the most popular book on income taxation used here at the Law Center. In its recounting of the process that led to the ’86 Act, it cites the Times by name! Also, Speaker of the House Gingrich has said that the Irish Times is his favorite bar in DC; though, to be honest, I have never actually seen him in there.

I eventually found myself in a relationship with the Times something like that of Victor Kiam and the Remington Corporation. He liked the product so much that he bought the company. I drank the product so much that they made me an employee. For the last two years
or so I have been a bouncer, euphemistically know as a doorman, at the
Times. And, I will tell you, I have learned more important legal stuff
there than I ever learned two blocks west over at the law school. After
all, at any given moment in the Times you can generally find more
lawyers hanging around than there are at Judiciary Square. It was at the
Times that I learned some of the important skills useful in a lawyer’s
daily life. I learned Legal Interpretation. Which, in this context, means
the fine art of knowing how relaxed one can be in letting people into the
bar without getting fined by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. I
learned some of the niceties of document discovery and examination.
That is, I can spot a fake ID from a half mile off. I also learned the
twin arts of Rambo Litigation and Negotiation. Rambo Litigation is used
where you have one intoxicated person that you have to throw out of the
bar. Negotiation is used when you discover in throwing out said person
that he has ten big, irate friends. Finally, I developed a keen
understanding of the important practice of Professional Courtesy. That is
when bartenders at other clubs find out that you are in the business and
your bar bills drop precipitously. The funny thing is, what have been
my very best interviews for real, honest-to-God legal jobs have arisen
from contacts that I made at the Times. Go figure.

Unfortunately, my time is almost up. However, I would like to
offer you one more word of wisdom from the bottom third. Do not
forget in a few months, when you are out there at the McKenzie firms of
the world, that there is a real world out there, too. Keep in mind that it
is full of people who do not give a damn about how you draft those
interrogatories that you are working on. And, thank God that they are
there.
Section Three Commencement Speech
Daniel M. Cramer

Twenty-eight years ago, almost to this very week, Robert Kennedy was assassinated. His death, along with the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., just a few short weeks earlier, ended what many considered to be an era of great heroes, great leaders, and great leadership.

Our generation is often asked why we don’t have heroes of our own. Why aren’t there any great leaders anymore? Why do we look backwards—to the sixties, to the civil rights and the anti-war movements for our inspiration? Who are our Bobby Kennedys and Martin Luther Kings and Malcolm Xs and John Kennedys? Who are our leaders?

Today as we graduate, we can answer these questions. Because the heroes today aren’t presidents, or members of congress, or politicians. The leaders today are not protesting wars, or leading a national movement, or drafting legislation. No! Today’s heroes and today’s leaders are out there in the communities that we are all about to enter. Today’s leaders are school teachers, coaches, and principals; priests and pastors and rabbis; community activists; city council members; small business owners; literacy counselors; drug counselors; and social workers.

And, as we graduate law school, we have a tremendous opportunity to expand the list of leaders. To make lawyers a part of that list—to make our much maligned profession a profession of heroes and leaders. All of us, whether we going to a law firm or a public defender’s office or the government. Whether we are going to be public lawyers or private lawyers or not practicing law at all. Whether we are liberal, or conservative, or moderate. All of us have the opportunity to go into our communities and become one of today’s leaders.

We can lead, as Sister Helen Prejean said a few weeks ago at Georgetown, through helping the poor; we can lead through volunteering some time or working full time; we can lead through a synagogue, church, or local youth group; we can lead by working on a campaign or helping a small business. And finally, of course, we can lead through the law. As Section Three graduates, we know that the law is so much
more than rules and cases and statutes and economics. We know that the law is a tool. It is a tool we can use to lead--at home--in our communities.

So, as we think about graduating, let’s think about leadership. And as we think about graduating, we should recognize that we have a tremendous advantage—and that advantage is each other. Three years ago, we went through our first year of law school together. That is a bond we will always have—an experience we will always share. So, as we graduate, let’s do so not just as classmates in school, but as classmates forever. And as we graduate, let’s not only celebrate what we have already accomplished but let’s also celebrate what we are going to accomplish as individuals, as leaders, and as the Section Three, Class of 1996.
Everything Had a Time and a Moment at Georgetown

It was a time to apply and to be worried,
It was a moment to be accepted and to be calm.

It was a time to meet people from different countries,
It was a moment to realize how similar we all are.

It was a time to socialize,
It was a moment to study hard.

It was a time to feel alone,
It was a moment to pray to God.

It was a time to fall in love,
It was a moment to say, "I have to go . . . ."

It was a time to play with snowballs,
It was a moment to not want to know about cold weather anymore.

It was a time to say goodbye to all our loved ones,
Now it is a moment to share graduation with all the ones we love.

This time is only the first day of the rest of our lives.
There is going to be a moment in our future to realize
How transcendental was Georgetown in our lives.
Section One Commencement Address

Eric Lawrence Ehrenberg

It is an honor to have the opportunity to speak today. I would like to begin by asking you to raise your right hand and please repeat after me:

"I" "State your name" "Do solemnly swear" "To label my books" "1 of 3" "2 of 3" "etc."

I wish to say thank you, on behalf of all of us, to our friends and family for helping us make it through law school. Many of my friends have said to me, "You’re graduating already? That sure went by fast!" Many of you would agree that law school has gone by fast, much in the same way that a three-year root canal seems to fly by.

Despite my warnings, my brother is entering law school in the fall. I have made a list of lessons I learned in my first year at Georgetown to help him through and I would like to share that list with you.

- First, never wear a Boston Red Sox hat to a property class unless you know how the team is doing.

- Second, always sit in the third row center, look attentive, have a plain-sounding name and you won’t get called on that often.

- Third, if you do get called on, do not say that you are not prepared. Instead, pretend that the question is completely unclear, that English is your third or fourth language or, if truly unprepared, that the battery in your hearing aid just died out.

- Finally, make back-ups of all take-home exams, especially in those first-year courses in subjects whose titles rhyme with "forts."
There is another thing I have learned in law school: whatever the law actually says, lawyers can twist it, turn it, interpret it, misinterpret it, clarify it, confuse it, shape it, use it, or abuse it. The most valuable lesson law school has taught me is that language in a statute or a case is only clear if it supports your side.

What I hope we take from this is that we, as almost-lawyers, have enormous power. Beyond acquiring the license to bring cases, we are gaining the ability to influence the law. Every case we will bring has implications for future litigation. I have a lot of faith in the members of this section that as lawyers we will use this power to make things better. "Better" has many meanings depending on your beliefs. "Better" may mean clearing the court dockets by designing efficient legal reforms. "Better" may mean working to improve the conditions of the poor or the homeless. "Better" may mean promoting employee rights or employer rights. "Better" may mean advocating for a woman's right to have an abortion or an unborn child's right to life.

Whatever you think "better" means, you must not practice law in a vacuum. You must work to make a difference. Practice law not only to support yourself and your family, but to improve the legal profession and society as a whole. It is an abuse of the privilege we have all worked so hard for to see law only as a source of income, and not as a system that enables society to function. It is our responsibility to improve that system. I urge you to make at least a part of your career goals to make things better, whatever your definition of the term.

At my undergraduate commencement, the President of Cornell University concluded with an old Gaelic blessing. Although it sounds better coming from him, an old Gaelic man, than me, a non-Gaelic, I'd like to conclude with it anyway.

*May the sun shine gently on your face,*

*May the wind be at your back,*

*May the road rise to meet you,*

*And may the Lord hold you in the hollow of his hand.*

It has been a true pleasure working with so many kind and talented people. I wish you all success, peace, and happiness.
Section Two Commencement Speech
Craig Edward Etem

Three years have passed. For me and, I hope, for many of you, three
amazing years. What I wish to share with you today is what made those
years terrific; what made that period a time my family and I will always
treasure.

When I left a 13-year career to come to Georgetown Law
Center, I was more than a little apprehensive. I was uncertain how I
would fit in with the "regular" students. I was worried about the
stereotypes of lawyers, and (having read One-L), I was scared to death of
the Socratic method. Taking the last first, my (or should I say our?) fear
of the Socratic method did not pass quickly. But the classroom
experience eventually had an impact, as well as providing some fond
memories. I would like to recall just a few:

- There was Professor Ernst hoping to get out of the
  "mosh pit" by the end of the first semester. Of course,
  Mike Sawyer and I had to ask what the "mosh pit" was.

- And there was Professor Oldham pumping his fist in
  the air as Barry sang about Lord Mansfield. By then,
  even Mike Sawyer and I knew who Lord Mansfield
  was—although now we would like to forget.

- And finally, there was reading along with Professor
  Goldberg's lecture, even the jokes.

I do remember those moments, but the one I remember the best
and the one I think of now is a class at the end of our first semester of
Property. Professor Ernst asked us to take a moment to reflect on, and
appreciate, how far we had come in such a short time. Let me ask you
to take a moment to do that same thing.

Another of my concerns, when we started together here was
you. And now I find that the thing that made my time here so
worthwhile was you, my classmates. Although I can not remember too
much about my first few days at the Law Center, I do remember thinking how impressed I was with you. Not that you were smart, I already knew that, but with how well rounded, how interesting, you were. Even more impressive was the number of you who were intent on devoting your legal careers to working in the public interest. But I was puzzled by such positive impressions. I found myself wondering what an interesting and entertaining group of people these first-year law students were. And then wondering what happens to them during the course of law school that makes them into immoral lawyers. From today’s perspective I think I finally have some answers to that question.

The first answer to "what happens to them?" is "nothing." It seems to me that if you have the qualities I look for in a friend when you arrive at Georgetown Law Center, you will have those qualities when you leave. So, in that respect, nothing has happened to most of you.

Of course, another answer to the question, "what happens to them in law school?" is "quite a bit." I recall a first-year contracts class in which Professor Oldham was hectoring a student for not being precise in his choice of words. You can be sure that Professor Oldham would no longer be able to make that claim about a member of this class. Considering how gun-shy most of us were, how we dreaded the thought of being "up" in one of those first-year classes, it must seem quite amazing to those first-year professors to see how adept you have become. I think that, with respect to the law, your professors would agree "quite a bit" has happened to you.

And finally, the thing that scared me the most about leaving a job to come here was that I was also leaving friends and coming to the unknown. Of course, now I look back and wonder about what I was worried. Because now I think that I will not sit in the G Street Quad arguing with you about the Constitution; nor will I play basketball with you on a Friday afternoon; and I will not Rollerblade through the streets of Washington with you; or even spend an hour studying with you. But I will miss you.

I suppose the ultimate point of this speech is to tell you and your family and friends that I liked you when I met you. And I still do. I
respect you too much to try to suggest how you should manage your lives or your careers. With the help of our families, we will all find our way. But I do want to tell you that it has been an honor to be your classmate and your friend. Good luck to each of you.
Section Two Commencement Address
Michael Morgan Godsya

Congratulations!

It is official now: you are wicked smart. You now have the paper to prove what your ego has been saying all along. But before we get any further carried away, we ought to take a break from our self-congratulations for a minute and think about repaying an enormous debt. I am not talking about student loans; I am talking about the really big debt. For the next minute or so, I am going to presume to talk for all of us. You might as well go with it; we do not have time for rebuttals or addenda. So why don’t all of you turn around, make eye contact with your parents or spouses or children or aunts or uncles or brothers or sisters or friends or, of course, significant others.

On behalf of myself and my now former classmates, thanks. Thanks for putting up with psychological pathologies you never suspected we had. Thanks for trying to understand the catch-all provision to the hearsay rules. Thanks for putting up with our increased argumentativeness, our unsolicited legal opinions, our editorial comments on every conceivable news item, and our late hours. Thanks for enduring a never-ending series of postmortems on how our on-campus interview went. Thanks for letting us huddle together at parties to talk law and thanks for dragging us away from the huddles before we became total bores.

Thanks for at least acting like you cared about the O.J. trial, the Menendez trial (I and II), the Goetz trial, or the Baldus study, or Marion Barry’s entrapment defense, or the relationship between the Commerce Clause and Ollie’s Barbecue. Thanks also for not pointing out all the times we failed to act like we cared, particularly when we forgot to care about you. We are much obliged. We hope we can repay the favor.

That is all I am going to say for the rest of you. You are on your own to make good from here on out. I actually have something else to talk about.
What I really want to talk about is snakes and mostly one snake. Now, I am not talking about the snake that brought us our first client in Civil Procedure; nor am I making a backhanded comment about "Slink" Donahoe. I am actually referring to the snake that Chris LaPuma put on stage last year, the one that bore an unsettling resemblance to Barry Littman. The Serpent. The most subtle beast of the field.

Now, even though we do not like them, as a rule, people tend to think snakes have their acts together. They never get caught looking confused and you have to admire, really, the fact that they manage to thrive without arms or legs. Milton says this awe we have is why Satan picked the snake to do his dirty work. They are so smart, so slick, that if one talked to you, you would tend to give it the benefit of the doubt. And, let’s face it, style counts: there is a reason Eve was not tempted by a three-toed sloth; there is a reason the serpent worked.

Something about the story of the serpent has always bothered me, though. I can understand why someone, even a serpent, would be punished if he actually did something wrong; but I have to wonder in this case, when the serpent clearly had nothing like the necessary mens rea, why did he get such a harsh punishment? I mean, if we were all subject to the same kind of punishment for doing the will of others, those of us going into practice had better learn how to dial our phones with our noses. Milton is no help here; he claims God went after the serpent on Eve’s say-so, because the Serpent was "unable to transfer/The Guilt on him who made him [the] instrument/Of mischief . . . " In point of fact, the Serpent never said a word. Milton then summarily says the serpent was "justly . . . accurst, [and] more to know/Concern’d not Man . . . ."

But there is more to know, and it does concern us. You see, the rest of the beasts of the field were very upset about how things turned out for the Serpent. It is not that they were particularly fond of him; it is just that they were worried that they, too, would end up having to learn the art of slithering for no fault of their own.

The unicorn was particularly outraged. He railed against the injustice of the curse in words so moving, so captivating that everyone forgot to write them down. Too bad. As you know, events played out
later in such a way that he wasn’t able to develop his thesis. As a result, arguments from unicorns are not taken very seriously these days.

The weasel, taking the example of the unicorn’s fate to heart, directed his criticism elsewhere. He thought the Serpent should have said something in his own defense. He even suggested the catchy line, "The Devil made me do it," thus inventing both the criminal insanity defense and the civil doctrine of intervening causal agents.

Some of the animals had a more generous attitude toward the Serpent, and actually praised the wisdom of his silence. They pointed to God’s tendency to indulge in a bit of smiting every once in a while, and they noted, God can be a very damaging cross-examiner. Moreover, as the dung beetles noted, there are worse things than crawling on your belly eating dust.

For aeons, the animals’ debate went on this way: he should have presented a defense, or he was right to take the fifth. Finally, they managed to convince the Serpent to tell his side of the story.

This is what he said: "For a long time, I kicked myself, that is, I wanted to kick myself, for not speaking up, like Weasel suggests. Then, I gradually got tired of blaming myself, and, like the dung beetles, I tried to make the best out of a bad situation. But now, I have a different feeling. Now, I’m glad I had a part in the job. I was the one who got to say, Ye shall be like gods, and know good from evil. Even if they weren’t my words, the sound of free will, of knowledge, will always be the sound of my voice to humans. It is true that humans and I do not get along; in fact, we have had some terrible times. Yet even if they regret ever having laid eyes on me, they are wiser for the misery I brought to their lives.

"They will pass that wisdom on, and when they do, they will do it with my inflections. And so, you see, I am with them always. They cannot escape the experience they had with me. And I think, now, some might choose not to escape, knowing now what they do. So stop your debating as to how I should have conducted myself before God. I do not mind the curse so much anymore. It was a price worth paying."
At the risk of saying the most obvious thing in the world, may I submit that law school can occasionally be a pain in the neck. I will admit it: I cursed it, frequently, and I’m not ashamed to admit it. After all, it is not fun to fear humiliation in front of your peers on a daily basis. It is not particularly fun to read cases. It is painful to question your own intelligence, your own judgment, or your choice of profession, particularly when you find yourself questioning them over and over again. And when we thought about how much all of this was costing us, it was hard not to think that somehow, we had been tricked into doing this. Who beguiled us? It wasn’t really Andy Cornblatt. It was the promise of being like gods, or at least appellate judges. When we got here, things took a quick turn away from the divine. And yet who here comes away from it unimproved? And who disputes the value of the improvement?

We have eaten of some kind of fruit, not the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, but a lesser fruit, the fruit of the knowledge of just and unjust, of politic and impolitic, of honesty and something less than honesty. And when we think back on how we were taught some particularly hard lesson, we will hear a particular voice. We may not like how that voice sounds, as we re-hear it pronouncing the Erie doctrine, or promissory estoppel, or, of course, the rule against perpetuities. But we are stuck with it, sadder, perhaps, certainly poorer, but wiser for the experience.

The best part is, the more we disliked it, the more it will push us forward. After all, we try to get as far away from snakes as we can; and when we hear of someone, say, reaching into a snake’s cage without gloves or tongs or proper training, our first reaction is "Why would anyone do something so foolish?" We don’t want to be so foolish.

Of course, we also have shared this experience. It gives us a common language, one that will allow us to relive our shared misery in a special way. How many of you could not help but think "Lucy Lockett" just now?

I am almost done now. I have only two things left to say. First, "Have good, wise lives, all of you"; and, once again, congratulations.
Greetings friends, family, faculty, and honored guests.

Well, Section Three, little did we know when we volunteered to be part of the "experimental curriculum" that we would, to paraphrase Martin Luther King, Jr., all learn to live together as brothers else perish as fools, be tied together in a single garment of destiny, caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. Or, in other words, we survived three years without anyone being squashed like a bug.

Far from it. From the first year to this, Section Three has proven to be the closest and most supportive group of students the law school has seen. Unlike the lawyer trapped on the deserted island with Mother Theresa who responded to his rescuers question as to why he survived and Mother Theresa didn't, "She didn't find the water hole", we helped each other find the water hole, and the state code books, and the outlines for courses like Democracy and Coercion.

That's just one of the things that makes Section Three special. In fact, as we often lamented first year, there were and are few things about us which aren't special. The members of this section have not only given to each other, but have made unparalleled contributions to this community and the community at large. Our 72 percent participation in the class gift campaign is a testament to this, but I would humbly submit, we are the class gift. Without us, who would have enlightened second- and third-year classes as to their erroneous baseline assumptions or how feminist legal theorists would deconstruct their arguments? Without us, who would have volunteered for Georgetown Outreach at such a high level that we needed coordinators for the coordinators of our first-year public service project? Without Section Three members, who would have headed or been on the executive boards of over half the student organizations on campus? And, without us, who would have worked to redesign nearly every important law center program from journals to financial aid?
I, however, am proudest not of what we have accomplished, but what I know we all will accomplish in the future. First of all, for those of us who worried that by taking courses like Bargain, Exchange, and Liability and Legal Justice we would be laughed out of job interviews, almost all of us are gainfully employed. And although Section Three does harbor its share of corporate lawyers and firm associates, many more have chosen not to follow where the path (or money) may lead, but to go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. We will soon be defending, prosecuting, writing, teaching, performing fellowship projects of our own design to help the homeless. The members of Section Three, Class of 1996, bring something to the law more than a superior mastery of Goldberg v. Kelly: great hearts, questioning minds, and dedicated spirits.

We have embraced the central lesson of Section Three: that the law is not what is, but what could or should be, and that the best lessons are those that are lived.
Section Three Commencement Speech
Ashu Kalra

It is a pleasure for me to be given the opportunity to convey some of my thoughts about the Section Three experience. This is by no means an easy task. People from the other sections have labelled us as the weird section, the touchy-feely section, the experimental section, the section where you learn about everything but the law. How much of that is true, I can’t say for certain. But, one thing I do know is that we were different than the others. After all, they didn’t have to think of a creative way to explain to interviewers what the heck Bargain, Exchange, and Liability was or why there was no Civil Procedure on our transcripts.

But, as different as our section was from the others, we, too, had many differences amongst ourselves. There are, however, things that we seemed to have in common; things for which I look back to our section with much pride. Things such as our involvement, commitment to public service, and our diverse personalities.

If there is one thing to say about us, it is that we were involved. This involvement was evident in the law school and in the community. We reflected a commitment of being involved wherever that commitment may have led us. Whether it meant volunteering while in Washington, going to New York or California or even Mexico to follow our desire to stay involved.

Section Three’s commitment to public service also separated us from the others. Whether it was in the beginning, like tutoring children at Martha’s Table in our very first semester here, or at the end, like recently beating out all other sections in our graduation challenge fund, Section Three never hesitated in showing how committed, as a group, we are to giving back to the community or to law school programs who desperately need help to achieve greater goals.

The combination of involvement and public service could be seen throughout our three years here. Whether it was our involvement in Georgetown Outreach, the huge successes achieved in raising money for
EJF fellowships, coaching a moot court team to a national championship, or getting a shy high school kid to overcome her fear of public speaking; we had an impact that will last longer than our short tenure here. An impression that I hope will inspire future Section Three'ers to do even better.

I think the one thing that is most memorable about our first year is the variety of personalities that made the year interesting, to say the least. Who was that strange looking woman giving Gottesman back his car keys the morning after the EJF auction? Or, what about the threat of being "squashed like a bug" loudly commanded while Wasserstrom looked on in disbelief? As I went through my last two years here, I appreciated the diversity of personalities even more, as I realized what the other side was like in class.

There have been many changes in our lives over the last three years. Some of us have less hair, while others have more wrinkles. Some of us will be devoting our time to public interest employment while others will be going into the private sector. Regardless of where our paths lead, I hope we can carry with us the differences that made our section special. I hope that all of us can continue to remain involved in the community and devote time to public service. For money may be something that can maintain our daily lives, but compassion and service to our fellow men and women is what keeps us alive. The differences we demonstrated as a section in our community involvement and public service while in law school showed that we were thoughtful and conscientious students. Our continued involvement in serving the public throughout our professional careers will show that we are truly thoughtful and compassionate people and citizens of this nation.

I hope that as you start your new life you can continue the tradition of giving that our section exemplified and God Bless you wherever your future may lead. Thank You.
Section Three Commencement Speech
Christopher James Lopata

Section Three Verse

Good afternoon to friends and families,
Welcome to graduation day.
I hope you grin at the stories I spin,
In celebration of the 27th of May.

Law school is like an award-winning film,
The players are all truly super.
So here’s the cast, but don’t be aghast,
As I relate a few of the bloopers.

There once was a professor named Gottesman,
Who happily sent beer to his spleen.
He was thrown into a funk as he got quite drunk,
And lectured next class with a drag queen.

Abba tunes rang out on a Friday night,
At a 1970s party our first Fall.
The lights shined, the music whined,
As new couples kissed under the disco ball.

Dean Tushnet would assign hundreds of pages,
Our binder was nine inches wide.
He thought it conceivable that the material was readable,
He was mistaken like the Sicilian from Princess Bride.

And there was the strange boy Danny Ernst
Who taught Property using an economics box.
Folks tried to assess as we studied trespass,
"How is news like a fox?"
There were lively discussions between us and them,
    Kent v. Tushnet, David v. Wasserstrom.
And people were psyched as we read Charles Reich,
To learn that Anita Allen agreed with Tanenbaum.

    Who remembers that beautiful Spring day,
    When we went to Purdue's class *slightly* drunk?
She said for goodness sake, why the bathroom breaks,
Before she realized that our bladders had shrunk.

    Sy Wasserstrom taught us Democracy & Coercion,
    Do you remember his claim to fame?
He taught us law in McDonough Hall,
As he tried to learn everyone's name.

    To Laura, Eliana, Gary and Julia,
    To Sczerina, Stephanie, Laurie and Scott.
I can't name you all, the list is too tall,
You've been there when things got a bit hot.

    If I had only saved all of the notes,
That I passed between friends during class.
The stories therein would make you grin.
We could write some Danielle Steel trash.

    We braved the fears of interview season,
    In those hotel rooms across the street.
We looked so cute in our navy blue suits,
    Trying not to sweat in D.C.'s heat.

    Some of the boys had long hair,
    Just a bunch of freaks on the loose.
We got it chopped, right off our top,
And replaced it with a law firm noose.
Actually, most of us are looking forward
   To the path that lays ahead.
Always be sensible, forever stay ethical,
   Never woo your client into bed.

Good luck to all over the course of the summer,
   As you prepare for the bar.
Try to stay cool, as you study by the pool,
   The finish line isn’t that far.

That’s my verse, for what it’s worth,
   I apologize for any disjointed rhyme.
Through sweat and tears and lots of cheer,
   You’ve all made Georgetown a great time.
Good morning, Graduates, Faculty, Family, and Friends. We are all here this morning to celebrate the accomplishment of a goal that has consumed the last four years of our lives, and one that shapes the futures of all of us.

Before we step into the future, and embrace the challenges and rewards that face us, I wanted to take a minute to look back, to reflect over the last four years and what they have meant to us. We are very blessed to be a part of the evening class of 1996. We are a class of extraordinary accomplishment, limitless talent, and unbounded caring. I have learned as much from the examples of my classmates as I have from the academic experience.

We have all faced personal trials during the last four years, but I wanted to share a very private experience with you, because of what it taught me about who law students really are, and what depth of caring my classmates are capable of sharing. In October of my first year, I started a six month regimen of chemotherapy. I had a demanding job to begin with, what seemed to be overwhelming responsibility as a law student, and steadily grew challenged by the physical demands of the treatment. I was convinced that I would fail at law school, and I was ready to drop out. My classmates would not let me give up, however, and I thank God for the study group who took me under their wings and would not let me go (Tracy Dougherty, Kate Gonzalez, Sanjay Mullick, and Mark Robinson). They very unselfishly put aside their own needs, and demanded that I learn everything that they knew about contracts, torts, and civil procedure. They brought me through my first year with flying colors, and would not let me give up on Georgetown or myself. Although I have gone through several rounds of treatment, each time I have found the same generosity of spirit and encouragement in my classmates. Every time, one of you was there to lift my spirits, to ease my burden, to give of yourselves tremendously and unselfishly. These, ladies and gentlemen, are the souls who are graduating today to become the lawyers of tomorrow, and I am very proud to stand beside them.
As a class, we have many professors and administrators to thank for forming us as the legal leaders of tomorrow. Although I would like to thank each individually, there are a few who stand out in our experience: Professor Phil Schrag, and his faithful example, Lucy Lockett, who imparted wisdom, not just knowledge. Chris Fuller, who was accused of torturing us, but who made us legal scholars all the same. Father Robert Drinan, whose example is our inspiration to change history, rather than allowing ourselves to be changed by it. Ms. Barbara King, who was always tough, but fair, and who was passionately devoted to seeing each of us succeed. Dean Areen, Dean Bellamy, and the entire faculty for their leadership and example. You have all guided us and inspired us to greatness.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the people who are most responsible for all of us standing here today, our families and friends. Our spouses who packed our dinners, watched the kids, and did double-duty on laundry and dishwashing so we could study late into the night; our parents who not only stood behind us through the last four years, but who raised us to believe that we could achieve our goals and live up to our promise; and our friends, who have listened to endless hours of scintillating legal discourse about tax laws and decedents’ estates, and who still invite us to the movies although we have declined their invitations countless times in favor of a few weekend hours at the library. And a special thanks to our classmates, who have made the academic and personal experiences of law school so rich for what they have brought to the classroom and the Irish Times.

I would like to leave you with this thought by James Allen: “The vision that you glorify in your minds, the ideal that you enthrone in your heart ... this you will build your life by. This you will become.” I eagerly await to hear of your visions, your successes, and to watch and rejoice at how you will all shape the world in the very near future. Godspeed and God Bless.

Dedicated to Mom, Dad, Mark, Elizabeth, and Steve, who are the greatest blessings in my life; with gratitude to Ms. Susan Findling Fleig for her generous assistance and support.
Section One Commencement Speech
Leslie S. McAdoo-Brobson

An Honorable Order

More than a century ago, in his book *The Devil's Thoughts*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge penned these lines:

*He saw a Lawyer killing a Viper*
*On a dunghill hard by his own stable*
*And the Devil smiled, for it put him in mind*
*Of Cain and his brother Abel.*

The popular view of lawyers hasn't changed much from Coleridge's era to ours. We have all heard the numerous lawyer jokes which indicate that the public views lawyers as corrupt greedy charlatans, human beings as shallow as the television personalities on *L.A. Law*. But my vision of being a lawyer is not Arnie Becker, rather it is Atticus Finch, Clarence Darrow, Thurgood Marshall, Sarah Weddington, Edward Bennett Williams. I admire these lawyers. I am inspired by them. To me they demonstrate the finest qualities that lawyers can possess: integrity, passion, humanity.

I came to law school, as many of you did, to realize that vision. But the practical realities of the last three years: grades and papers, law review, moot court, clinics, have sometimes nudged the ideals of lawyering to the side where they have lain slumbering. Today it is time to rouse them once again and to think about who we should be as lawyers.

No matter which area of law we choose to pursue, whether in private practice, corporate counsel, a JAG officer, public interest advocate, government employee, or in the criminal defense bar, we should always remember that we are members of an honorable order. Honorable because, as lawyers, we serve a noble role in our society. As lawyers, we prevent the many from oppressing the few. We protect the fruits of enterprise and genius. We prevent the government from convicting those unjustly accused. We ensure that the industry of our
country runs, not just efficiently, but fairly. We secure our most sacred values: the ability to speak our minds openly, to worship the God of our own choosing, and to challenge the actions of our government. We keep our people free.

While public opinion may or may not reflect the nobility of our profession, we should. If we strive to make that nobility a reality in our careers, we will be worthy of those who inspired us, and perhaps we can inspire others. Today as we reach the end of our sojourn here at Georgetown, let us consult again the inspirations that brought us here. Let us go forward, as they did, in the finest tradition of our craft, with truth on our lips, courage in our hearts and justice as our goal.
Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I promise I will not sing a song about Contracts and although today we are a long way from Lucy Lockett and in-depth discussions about the quality of ribs at Ollie’s BBQ, I for one am glad we are back together. In the way that war forges friendships among soldiers, the first year of law school brought all of us together. So I am especially glad that we are leaving as a group. We have all been through the same meat grinder, a process that took a diverse and motley crowd, including people like me, a girl from Indiana, and Michael Sawyer, a boy from Alabama, and made us lawyers. For that reason, we will always have something in common with one another.

But what I want to talk about today is how we are different and why that is far more important. Around you are future prosecutors and defense attorneys, corporate and public interest lawyers, judges, teachers, and policymakers. But we are also musicians and actors, athletes and volunteers, mothers, fathers, and spouses. Every law student’s challenge, and the one I put to you today, is to remain a human being in your careers as lawyers. Some will say that this is an impossible task, but we know that is not true. It is not easy to stay human, of course.

First, the law is an all-encompassing career. What is the longest time you have spent with another law student before you all started talking about the law? Parents, haven’t we become royal pains in the behind since we came to law school? Well, of course, we have because advocacy is a difficult habit to break.

Second, the law is a relentless career. There is always law to do in our litigious society and lawyers’ workloads seem to get more and more burdensome every year. Many of us can look forward to working through the night quite a few times in the coming years and to seeing less of our friends and family. Because the law is both all-encompassing and relentless, remaining a regular person requires constant vigilance and spirit. It requires us to realize that we need to leave work early, or even just on time, once in awhile and go to the park or go dancing or just go
home. And when we do, we should remember to listen to, not argue
with, and enjoy the company of the people we find there.

• I hope that Sheila O’Connor continues to find strength and
  satisfaction in her running.

• I hope that Michael Bradley will still go home at the end of
  the day and play the trumpet.

• I hope that Chris LaPuma’s successful interest in writing for
  the stage will endure always.

• I hope that Jennifer Bagley and Craig Etem will look forward
  to spending mornings, evenings, and weekends with their
  beautiful new daughters.

• I hope that J.P. Devine will always remember to take
  Saturdays off for a hike in the woods or to dance to the
  Saturday Night Fever soundtrack when no one else is home.

• And I hope Jon Lichterman playfully bursts into the meeting
  room of his office on his first day of work, just as he did on the
  first day of Civil Procedure.

I know that these are the things we would do naturally, as part
of our human makeup. No little piece of paper, or biweekly paycheck,
need change any of that.

I wish you all the best, Section Two, and Congratulations.
Fellow members of the 1996 Class of Section Three, distinguished guests, friends, and family:

Good Morning and Congratulations!

As I sat down to prepare my address to you, believe it or not, I was at a loss for words. What does one say to a group of self-selected "experimentees"; to a group who has seen me at my worst, at my best, my most vulnerable, and my most confident? What does one say to a group of friends with whom I have shared such a singular experience?

"HALLELUJAH," we made it!!!

Though it may be hard to believe, it has been three years since we waxed philosophical about chickens, and foxes, and panthers. Remember the days when we would talk *ad infinitum* about politics, the common law, race, and religion? We even used a wrench. At times, days would pass like years. Now, it all seems to have gone by so fast. I have wondered from time to time how to define Section Three. And now, standing here before you, I come to this conclusion: Section Three is an intriguingly complex mesh of some of the best people I have ever met.

Despite our diverse backgrounds, varying levels of experience, and occasional differences of opinion, we have all shared many memories. We have also shared at least one goal: To make it to this day. Three years ago, we were a bunch of individuals who were not quite sure what to expect of our immediate future. Here we are today, perhaps still not quite sure what to expect of the coming years. But, now we are no longer just a bunch of individuals. We are a collective group of reasonable people who would agree on the answer to the quintessential question: What is justice? Right? Well, consensus has never been our strong point. But that is what I believe has made knowing all of you so rewarding. And though in the past few years we have each had our own missions, our goal has been a common one. We
achieve that goal today and now possess the power and the knowledge to pursue our missions. I have faith that we will accomplish our missions just as well as we have earned this day.

As I look out among you, I am awed. In this room, we have future judges and politicians, district attorneys and public defenders, professors and maybe even a president (and, I am sure she’ll be one of the best our country has had). For some, the law is not what they expected. For others, the law is exactly what was expected. Either way, it is a frightening thought; and whatever individual paths we take, it will be our duty and destiny to help society find its way through the maze. I have no doubt that the minds in this room will leave a lasting impression on the law. I am proud to be among you and wish you all the successes you deserve.

It was an honor to pass through the halls of Georgetown University Law Center with you. In parting, I leave you with a thought: Our time on earth is but fleeting, so while you can, dream the dreams, fight the fights, and bring justice to justice.
Section Two Commencement Speech
Richard Gregory Phillips, Jr.

The prison yard of the California State Penitentiary at San Quentin was designed so that every part of the yard could be seen from either a guard tower or a guard catwalk. There was a design flaw, however, which created a blind spot, a rectangle about five feet by ten feet in one corner which the guards can't see. The prisoners call this area "the slot."

Far more crime, violent crime, takes place in the slot than in any other part of the prison. Every day prisoners go into the slot. Every day they are beaten and robbed. It is not just potential criminals who go into the slot. Every day potential victims go there despite the very real possibility that they will be hurt. Yet every day they go back. Prison officials thought at first that the problem would take care of itself. Knowing the dangers of the slot, prisoners likely to be victimized would stop going there. Yet they go back. Not because they want revenge on their assailants, but because of an overwhelming need to find some place, in their yard and in their minds, free from the watch of authority. For all of its danger, the slot offers inmates a moment of peace. They can act, and think, outside the purview of the State of California.

On the first day of law school, the guard towers and catwalks of a new thinking started going up. We learned to compartmentalize, to detach ourselves from the humanity of a fact pattern, and find the legal cubby hole in which it fit. No longer asking "should there be relief?" we asked, "is there a claim?" The guards were watching, so we replaced the unadulterated thinking of the past, "Who should win?", "Why should they?", with an order, a regimen, a process. Initially, the slot was nowhere to be found.

The road was smoothed by the use of characters like Lucy Lockett, which made it easier for the remaining romantics to put the world around them into its proper compartments. The joy of learning that it did not matter what answer you came to in your final exams, so long as your reasoning was sufficiently orderly, was the final step toward the new thinking.
The fact that this diabolical indoctrination was the work of the likes of Jana Singer should not allay your fears. She was a catwalk too. She could laugh at the federal rules of civil procedure. Some of them she found distasteful, but she found a certain satisfaction in seeing how the guard towers and catwalks of the federal rules worked together to give order to the yard. She never failed to order our thinking in accordance with this master plan.

Do not be fooled by the likes of Dan Ernst, who put little old ladies and their large corporate neighbors into a box of four with merciless precision. Even the history of American legal was compartmentalized; to say nothing of estates and interests.

For all of our professors' attempts, for all of the consistency and integrity of the law, however, there is a slot, an area the guards can not see. And it can be as large or as small as you want it to be. It can be a brief respite from the orderly thinking of a large firm, or it can be large enough to overwhelm the guards. It can turn the towers and catwalks in on themselves, and its humanism can reorder the yard itself.

The slot is about the area our professors did not reach. It is about the part of our thinking which lies outside the purview of our legal education. And as we graduate, and start to think about the friendships and the experiences we are taking with us from Georgetown, we must remember one thing we brought with us when we came to Georgetown.

Whether in taking a fresh view of the law and our ability to influence it, or in performing public interest work, however you define it, or merely in keeping a vibrant and powerful part of your psyche that evaluates the world in humanistic, as opposed to legal, terms, Dan Ernst, and Jana Singer, and the others, were in fact pointing us to the slot, the area the law has not touched and cannot touch, so long as we have the bravery of the prisoners at San Quentin. The bravery to enter the slot, regardless of the consequences.

Congratulations.
Section Three Commencement Speech
John Curtis Pierce

After three years of law school, I think most of us would vote for an amendment to Oliver Wendell Holmes’s famous observation that the life of the law has not been logic, but experience. Many of us would add: “an extremely difficult experience.” After all, where else but at law school can one find a teaching method in which the people who know everything ask the people who know nothing all the questions?

But, while the process has been intense, it has also been largely one dimensional. We have spent virtually all our time reading decisions and codes and statutes, learning to analyze the cold, hard logic of the law. Of course, in Section Three we also know a thing or two about cognitive dissonance, the reabsorption of contract into tort and the inherent coerciveness of democratic government. (And, by the way, if anyone here could explain those things to me, let’s talk at the reception after the ceremony.)

But for the most part, even we in Section Three, who never saw an act we did not want to omit or an object we did not want to make a subject, have been steeped these last three years in the purely intellectual exercise of learning the law and of learning how to think as lawyers.

Law school has taught us to be legal technicians. I am sure Professor Purdue would be pleased to know that all of us are now, like Kent, “careful readers of the statute.” But we were all many things before that. Remember when we all sat in Gaston Hall on the first day of First Year to listen to Dean Arean list the accomplishments of the various members of our class? On that first day, we discovered that some of us were journalists, some were actors or musicians, some were great athletes, some loved to paint or sculpt, some were inspired by politics and government. Before law school, we did things that we loved to do. We had the time and the freedom to do them. And those things defined us.

We all chose to go to law school for different reasons and many of us, now that it is over, have learned to love the law. But I am sure that we all know people who, in their effort to learn the law, have
silenced some part of themselves that made them, somehow, more alive. There is an ancient Persian proverb that we should keep in mind today. It goes:

If thou of fortune be bereft,
And in thy store there be but left
Two loaves—sell one, and with the dole,
Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul.

As we sit here today, about to receive our reward for three years of hard work learning the law, it is worth remembering that the law can feed us many things: it can challenge our minds, it can provide a comfortable living, it can be used as a great force of social justice and of social change. But the law cannot feed our souls. We need hyacinths for that—or people or places, books or music, faith or friendship. We need those things, whatever they may be, to feed the parts of ourselves that are not rational or logical, that have no standards or rules, that cannot be read about in a book or written about on an exam or argued in court.

Let’s be sure, as we sit here today with thoughts of a new legal career fresh in our minds, that we remember and rededicate ourselves to the things we loved to do, the places we loved to go, the people we loved to be with before we ever took an eighty page, twenty-four hour, take-home exam or thought about the strategy of drawing lots on a lifeboat or understood that “nothing good can ever come from talking to a cop.” Let’s remember that, in a profession of rules and standards, they are the things that will ultimately define us and they are the things that will give meaning to our lives and our careers as we finally begin to apply the hard-won lessons of the last three years.
Section One: Commencement Speech
Thomas Patrick Reilly

These past three years have gone by very quickly--more quickly, it seems, than the three months I waited to hear if I would get into Georgetown. When I finally heard that they did let me in, I was very excited. I would be going to a well-known and well-regarded school. The day I got the acceptance letter I was working over Christmas Break from college in a department store selling ladies shoes and the woman I was working with noticed that I was a bit happier than a person selling ladies shoes probably should be. I told her that I had gotten into Georgetown Law and she said, "Wow, that is fantastic, that is terrific--where is that?" Well, she was happy for me either way.

When we first arrived here at Georgetown, one of the first things they told us about were loans, and the infamous $52 pizza. I thought they were talking about paying for a pizza with loan money. What I later realized was that a small pie in Union Station really IS about $52. And back in the comparatively busy first-year, lunch at Union Station was about as far out as we had time to go, unless you felt particularly daring and would walk the extra block to Armands.

We were busy being pretty lost that first year. In law school I expected to be called on to answer questions about cases and laws. I was surprised that I would also be called on to answer a question about what cows do at around 6 o’clock at night. I was even more surprised when Jodi could answer it.

Yes, first year was full of surprises. From Robin’s very expressive guttural reaction to a contracts case to the St. Patty’s Day Civil Procedure Drinking Game. And ought we to remember Mr. Beasly and his wife and his fiancee and his girlfriend? What’s Going On Here? Those of you who are laughing at that were obviously in class that day.

Second year and interviewing brought along its own memories. Who would have thought that the escalator on which we rode up and down all polished in our brand new interview suits would later be used by New York City policemen for late-night high jinks in their birthday suits. Interviewing introduced me to a whole new plain of cluelessness.
In one interview, the interviewer asked me if I was interested in nuclear regulatory work and I said, "Well, I come from a nuclear family." To this day I don't think he gets it.

Now family and friends in the audience may have little idea as to what I am talking about. It would not be the first time I did not make any sense to my family. It is obvious how much my family loves me and supports me and it adds to the great debt of gratitude I owe each of them that they have put up with all of my goofy law school anecdotes and complaints.

That is reflective of the notion that somehow, law school is separate from the outside world. Much has happened beyond McDonough Hall in three years:

- War raged in Bosnia and American troops were sent in to defend a very fragile peace.
- Just a few blocks from the law school, the Prime Minister of Israel shook hands with the Head of the PLO. Prime Minister Rabin would later be a martyr to peace in a region where people are now fighting as valiantly and successfully for peace as they once fought for the indefensible notions of hatred and violence.
- Russian missiles are no longer on automatic target for Washington, D.C. A development that led a friend of mine to tell his worried mother that Capitol Hill is a lot safer neighborhood now.

And, just as much has happened out there, much has happened to us. Many of us have started families: Liz, Lisa, David, and Matt have all brought tax deductions, I mean children, into the world. Our second and third years of law school have taken us all in different directions. Some have studied litigation, corporate law, international law, family law, and some have studied tax law, and to those people who studied all of those complex regulations and rules--two words: flat tax.

I really have enjoyed my time here at Georgetown. This year as a student prosecutor in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, I met many
practicing lawyers and they would ask me where I went to school. And in a very unlawyerlike manner I gave them a direct answer: Georgetown. Of course, after I get my diploma I will have to begin every answer to every question with the phrase, "Well, it depends . . . ." Now, when I told them I went to Georgetown, the response was unanimously, "That's a great school." They definitely were not saying that because of me. I think I must have said, "I dunno, I'll have to check on that" about a zillion times. It is too late to change grades right? They said it because they truly believed it.

I have come to agree. Georgetown is a very good place to study law. And I am not saying that because in the same way you do not put sixty thousand bucks into a car and then call it a jalopy. As cynical as I may be, and I think H.L. Menken described a cynic as a person, who, upon smelling flowers asks, "Where's the funeral?" As cynical as law school and c-span have made me, I truly believe Georgetown is an excellent place to study and learn the law. The school could be a lot cooler if it would just drop the "g" from the "What's Happening!" newsletter and make it just "What's Happenin'", but we'll see.

This is a great place to study not because of the buildings or the great library or because we are one of the twenty schools in the top ten, it is a great place because of the people at the school. It is because of everyone sweating in their robe right now and everyone in the audience beaming with pride for the graduate, everyone at the school, the students, faculty, staff, administration, public safety, campus ministry, facilities and the cafe-au-law guy, and the countless others that make the law school a pleasant place.

Georgetown Law celebrates 125 years this year. We were the first class to live at the law school, in Gewirz. Aside from letting you sleep until five minutes before class, it did help to foster a new sense of Georgetown Community. It provided an outlet to meet students in all sections and, in a way, we began a new tradition at an old school.

And now we are moving on. We came in as eager and clueless law students and are leaving, at least in my case, as eager and clueless lawyers. We enter a larger community of lawyers. Now lawyers have recently suffered a wave of criticism traditionally reserved for disease-
spreading insects. We hear the all-too-common refrain, "There are too many lawyers." I say, there are not enough good lawyers, and even fewer great lawyers. And that is what each of us can and will be, a great lawyer.

We can do it if and when we are confronted with doubts and troubled by seemingly insurmountable dilemmas. We remember this day and remember our colleagues, friends, and family who are proud of our accomplishments. As was said by greater orators than myself, "The anguish over how far we have to go is comforted by the knowledge of how far we have come." I do not have the cite on me.

So, "When we are challenged", as Abraham Lincoln said, "challenged to be honest or be a lawyer, resolve to be an honest lawyer." I am not sure what that means, but quotes punch up a speech and as I have learned in law school, even if you are not sure what something means just say what you think it means because nobody really knows what it means either. What I think it means is that when challenged and when faced dilemmas in our professional lives, take the course of action that would make your colleagues and your family as proud of you as they are today. Then facing the challenges ahead will be as easy as telling a professor what cows like to do at around 6 o’clock.
During my first year of law school, many people asked me what it was like. The best reply I could think of is that it is like having stomach flu. When you have the flu, you have a general level of discomfort punctuated by waves of nausea. In law school, you have a general level of anxiety peppered with periods of absolute terror.

Nonetheless, all of us have managed to make it through. To do it, most of us have ingested more cough drops, aspirin, and caffeine than at any other point in our lives. We have had less sleep, exceeded the speed limit, and eaten more pre-processed food from plastic bags than anyone would have dreamed possible.

We also discovered that law school is not just a course of study, it is a physical phenomenon. Four years has never seemed so long and yet there was never enough time. Entering law school launches you into a new space-time continuum in which time accelerates in direct proportion to the volume of tasks assigned. I am not mathematically inclined—I am in law school so I can avoid having to deal with numbers—but my rough estimate is that in this law school hypertime mode, you never have more than half of the time you really need.

But despite the difficulties, there have been a lot of side benefits to law school. Most of us have new-found juggling skills, we have a whole new set of muscles from hauling around thick law books, and we were able to use the world’s best excuse. Any time a salesman called my house, I merely had to say, "I’m in law school, I’m not interested." I immediately heard a dial tone. For those who were particularly obnoxious, I stopped them dead in their tracks by uttering the dreaded words, "I’m studying for law school exams." Poof—the problem vanished. I am not sure whether they feared I would snap and shoot up a fast food chain or just that I was unlikely to have any money in the near future.

Of course, we did learn some substantive law while we were here. For example, if we ever happen to be walking down Massachusetts Avenue and see two men both chasing the same fox, we
can now say with assurance to whom the fox belongs. We learned about penumbras, emanations, negative externalities and dicta. We might like to be in privity. We know that defendants cringe at the thought of *res ipsa loquitur*, but applaud *res judicata*. We learned about the rule against perpetuities, the rule for lenity and, of course, the rules of the blue book. And I am sure we will never forget the fertile octogenarian or the sad plight of Lucy Locket.

So, in recognition of your efforts in attaining this knowledge, I congratulate you. Law school has been more than just a course of study-it has been a lesson in perseverance and priorities. Law school is demanding and challenging for anyone, but especially for those of us in the evening division. Most of us have multiple obligations and we have had to struggle just to keep up with them all. We have had to sacrifice time with our spouses and children, our families and friends. And we have had to organize and schedule every minute to meet the demands of school and jobs.

While I applaud the hard work of all of my fellow students, I also want to recognize all of the people who helped us make it through. We could not have achieved this milestone in our lives without the patience and support of our families, colleagues, friends, and understanding employers who suffered through law student syndrome along with us. On behalf of all of my classmates, I wish to congratulate and thank all of you.
I cannot begin to tell you what an honor it is for me to address you on such a special occasion. I wish to thank the faculty and the students for choosing me as the speaker for this ceremony.

The Master of Laws program at Georgetown University Law Center is composed of lawyers with a wide variety of backgrounds and nationalities. This factor has made this experience much more than just an intellectual challenge. It has been also a very enriching multi-cultural and social experience.

We have come here in the pursuit of excellence and that is precisely what we have accomplished. Thanks to this gifted institution and all the people who integrate it. It has been a very difficult task and we have been exposed to the greatest intellectual pressures, but we have all managed to come out on top. I attribute this to a very adequate mix between students of the highest standards, being taught by an outstanding faculty in possibly the best scenario for the study of law. The product of that is what you see here today, the Class of 1996.

Now, some of us will stay and work in Washington, DC, others will go back to their home cities and many of us will return to our countries. But, no matter the path we choose or the place we are in, we will always have something in common, something that will make us proud. The Georgetown bond, and this will forever lead us in the pursuit of excellence.

Thank you very much.
Section Three Commencement Speech
Adam Scott Tanenbaum

Our Common Bond

So we end where we began -- together. We arrived here on different paths, and after today, we will again go our separate ways. But the time we spent together that first year, will continue to be our common bond. WE are Section Three, the crunchy, touchy-feely, no-textbook section. Even in those first days, we knew our section was different. Different because there was something more that we wanted from law school.

The black letter stuff was not enough. (Although, as we later found out, some would have been nice.) We wanted to know the why, not just the what. We sought to test our ideas, to challenge each other and ourselves. We were looking to do more than just practice law. We wanted to know how to change the world, if only in our own small way.

There was something special about our section. We came from different places, different backgrounds, different views. Some of us were scared to death, some took it all in stride. We were liberal and conservative, libertarian and communitarian. We each had our own visions of right and wrong, just and unjust. Together, though, we learned, and we grew. In Section Three, we thought a little harder, read a little more. (Well, actually, a lot more!) We searched a little further. We came to understand each other a little better.

While the others studied the mechanics and the black-letter law, we considered how it all affected real people. "What is justice?" The question still resonates amongst us. In the end, we found ourselves maybe just a little bit different, our ideas a little bit richer, our understanding a little broader.

Each of us, including me, changed at least a little bit because of Section Three. (At the very least, I now know it's chic, not "chick.") Our Section Three experience really did define us and the rest of our law school experience. By second and third year, some of us were able to more fully appreciate those professors who DID care if they learned our
names. Some of us found that we couldn’t help but continue to raise our hands and begin every comment with, “I feel that . . . .” Of course, we all realized professors were not referring to us when they said, "Those of you who had Con Law" or "Those of you who studied Estates first year." Some of us continue to fear being squashed like a bug. Me, I am still waiting to see if I can get another Georgetown Law professor to say, "I agree with Adam."

On a more serious note, Section Three became more than an experience; it became an identity. It is no coincidence that Section Three students were the leaders in the law school’s functions and organizations; the ones working on the law journals, the clinics, the trial and moot court teams. It is no coincidence that our section was the one with the most participation in the Challenge Fund. These facts are not coincidence at all; they are a product of our common bond. Our bond comes from our awareness that it is not just about the law. (Of course, we never did figure out what "it" was and whether any of us had it.) But, whatever "it" is, we understand "it" is about PEOPLE--living, breathing human beings. Section Three reminded us that they are our purpose. That purpose has become our bond.

So our unique education united us in purpose, and it gave us our common bond. But now what? Well, there is a whole society out there, desperately in need of lawyers like us -- lawyers not content with just doing the basics or just earning lots of money. That very society, OUR society, is hoping for lawyers like us -- the ones who push a little further, who do a little more; striving to serve others, not just ourselves. We have a responsibility to be in the arena, daring greatly. We have an obligation to lead as we continue to define and seek justice.

So now we leave, to do justice in our OWN ways according to our OWN ideals. For a brief moment our paths crossed, and we shared a little of ourselves. What we shared together will hopefully continue to enrich our lives and our pursuits.

I’d like to leave you with a short thought printed on a little plaque my mother gave me when I first left for college. I don’t know who wrote it, but it continues to define who I am and how I live. I hope it inspires many of you as well.
Excellence can be attained, if you . . .
Care more than others think is wise;
Risk more than others think is safe;
Dream more than others think is practical;
Expect more than others think is possible.

May each of us care, risk, dream, and expect more as we strive for excellence and seek justice. Our society is depending on us, and that will continue to be our common bond. Good luck and God bless.
Thank you all for being here to help us celebrate this day and gloat a bit over our own accomplishments. I am Michael Valihora, and I have the honor of speaking to you about the students graduating from the Master of Laws Program. I want to use my brief allotment of time to give you a sense of the people that are the LL.M. program.

The main distinguishing factor about LL.M.s is that we are not J.D. students. We already have our law degrees. There are numerous reasons people choose to do an LL.M. Some of us want to pursue study in an area that interests us so we can specialize, some came here from abroad to learn about the U.S. legal system, and some of us just could not find a job.

Although LL.M. students are generally a conscientious and hard working lot, I have heard stories about students going on spontaneous road trips to Atlantic City, New Orleans, and Paris. Perhaps they were doing field research about which bars they could be admitted to.

There is a group of LL.M. students that deserves special recognition. They are the people who did their degree part-time. They worked at their job all day and then came to school at night for a few hours each week. It could not have been easy for them or their families. They have an extraordinary degree of commitment.

There are various other 'sub-groups' of LL.M. students. There are programs for people specifically interested in tax, in securities (in my opinion they deserve special recognition just for studying tax and securities). There are also programs in international and employment law, advocacy, common law studies (for those who have come here from countries with a different legal system), and a general LL.M. degree for people who want to design their own program or just can not decide exactly what they want to do.

Another special group of students is the foreign students. As a Canadian, some people consider me a foreign student, while others just think I am from the 51st state. One of the best parts of this program has
been the people I have met from all over the world. Going to school was a lot like traveling. I got to meet a lot of people from other countries, learn about other cultures, and it was expensive.

LL.M.s are more than just interesting students, they are interesting people. I have made some wonderful friends here and I hope that all of us do what we can to keep in touch. My only regret is that I did not meet and get to know more of you.

It should be noted that it is not just the students that make the LL.M. program what it is. The faculty and staff at the Law Center are integral to the program’s success. We thank them for the work they have done and their help throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to thank my mom. Both literally, because she is here today, but also figuratively. From all of us to all of you who have helped and supported us in so many ways so that we could achieve this goal, to our families and friends, we thank you.
Friends, Faculty, Families, and Guests. Good Morning.

I am honored to be able to communicate with you on this momentous occasion. I am especially grateful to have this opportunity because, as some of you might remember, the last time we were in similar circumstances I gave a presentation that perhaps a few of you felt was controversial.

But, let me say, my friends, with appropriate apologies to the Bard, my purpose today is not to squash you but to praise you... and to challenge you to bear the responsibilities that we as future lawyers assume here today.

My friends, we live in an era where change occurs at a breakneck pace. The structure of our economy is transforming, the speed with which information travels around the globe is increasing exponentially, and the latest marvels of technology boggle the mind. Whether these changes are for good or bad is not for me to say in this forum. But the reality is that such rapid change tugs and tears at the very social fabric of our nation. Growing economic insecurity threatens the modicum of harmony that has been painstakingly built between people of different races, ethnicity, gender, and religion.

Because of our justified fear for our own futures we all too often unjustifiably turn on one another. Daily we are served up another party who is surely to blame for our ills. With the demise of the Soviet bloc, we have been forced to look internally to find a scapegoat. Of course, there are the traditional villains: racial minorities, people convicted of crimes, and religious minorities, particularly Jews and Catholics. But through our ingenuity we have added to the list: welfare mothers, old people consuming too many health care dollars, women, gays, religion of any sort, the rural poor, and many others.

Sooner or later, if it has not already, the finger of blame will swing in each of our directions and it will become our time to endure vilification and the potential of persecution. When that time comes, each
of us will seek the protection afforded us by one of the fundamental institutions of our nation—the rule of law. But we cannot unthinkingly rely on the law for protection because the law is like a great fire that warms and protects but also burns and destroys.

We know the law can enslave as well as liberate, that it can be a shield for oppression just as easily as it can be a sword for right. Our history is replete with examples of the law as the tool of oppression: slavery and class and gender discrimination have all existed in this nation with the sanction of the law. And our experience shows us that when the law serves these ends, it does not protect, it destroys by creating conflict and disharmony. You need not drive thirty miles from here to see green fields onto which the sweat and blood and lives of America’s youth were spilled in the middle of the last century to begin the atonement for the evil which was our constitutionally protected right to keep our brothers and sisters in bondage.

Let me say, though, I am not here as a prophet of doom. The difficult circumstances that confront us as a people are daunting indeed. I would not be communicating with you, however, if I could not offer you at least a partial solution. That solution, my friends, is—you.

We have been together for nearly three years now. And though we have had our differences, and I suspect still do, I would like to say, with all sincerity, that I have never been, nor do I suspect that I shall be again, so honored to be in company such as yours. Your collective intellectual capacity assures me that from this group of graduates today will come legislators, judges, legal scholars, leading practitioners and, dare we even hope, a law professor or two. But, with your extraordinary capabilities comes great responsibility. For after today, we, my friends, are no longer students of the law, we are its master. And so I challenge you, with your remarkable talents, to wield the law not as a shield but as a sword, to use the law to heal and not to injure, to ensure that the law is a fire which protects us but does not consume us. I offer you this challenge so that as we enter the new millennium, we can say with confidence, and not merely hope, that those who come after us will find a better place than that in which we find ourselves today.

Thank you and congratulations.
*Section Four Commencement Speech
Karen A. Zeineddin

Guests, faculty, family, friends, my fellow graduates, you will be happy to know I am not here to solicit you for the graduating class gift fund, or to ask you to pledge to the Equal Justice Foundation, or to sell you tickets to Home Court.

Actually, I wanted to start with an announcement I saw on the computers in the library (I'm not making this up) that there are Section Four Remedial Civil Procedure classes now forming! We might want to start the same thing for those of you who slept through Torts. I could fill my five minutes reminiscing about "Property with Shoeless Chused" or "Story Time with Sam Dash," but I have a few other thoughts. If I run out of things to say, I am sure Tim will speak up and save us all!

No, I am really just here to say congratulations! Today we enter the ranks of the most highly educated people in the world. After over 1200 hours of sitting in class—well, considerably less for some of you! After journals, clinics, moot court, student organizations, plenty of Metro time and, of course, some $60,000 plus interest, here we are. While today is our day to bask in our achievements, we also take on a great responsibility. Our predecessors have hidden the law away in thousands of musty old books and we are now the gatekeepers of justice. I believe we have a duty to make the law and the legal system accessible to everyone—not just those who can pay us lots of money! I know a lot of you will be working for big law firms, but you will still have the opportunity to help someone who needs you. We will all put in our pro bono hours in different ways, but you should give some of your time to do what is important to you.

I hope you will choose whom you help very carefully. Just because we are smart enough to argue any side of an issue, it doesn't mean we can not be persuaded more by one side or the other. We can be lawyers and still hold onto our own ideals. They say every party deserves a lawyer. The employer who discriminates needs a lawyer. The individual who files multiple meritless claims needs a lawyer. Someone has to represent them. You may say, "If I don't help them, someone else will." Well, I say, "If it is not in line with your values, let
someone else represent them!" Of course you need a job. You need the money. You need to eat and pay off your loans. But most of all, you need to be able to face yourself in the mirror every morning. I know some of you will not believe me, but money is not what is truly important. What is important is when you come to the end of your life and come face to face with your God or your higher power or just your own sense of morality. Will you be proud of what you have done? Proud of the way you have left the world, not just for your own children, but for all children?

From day one, Professor Spann taught us that the law is just a tool. "The law" is just a bunch of words on paper. By themselves they are often ambiguous, arbitrary, sometimes next to meaningless. It is we who breathe life into the law. It is we who shape and mold it into what we want it to be. What you do with the law is up to you, but remember it is YOU doing it. It is not some mystical thing out of your control called "the law." If you think employers should not get away with hiring only white males, don't help them do it. If you think the endless filing of frivolous claims has gotten out of control, don't keep filing them.

We are all here for different reasons. We each have a different path to follow and different goals and dreams. But we all came here for the same thing—to learn to think like a lawyer. But I hope we have not forgotten how to think like "real people." This will be the last time we are all together, but we will all take part of Georgetown with us. Whether what we take is good or bad is up to us. No matter where we each end up, we will all be Georgetown law graduates for the rest of our lives. I hope that we will each take that responsibility seriously and use the power and prestige of our Georgetown degrees to make the world a little better for everyone.