

Your Honour, Madame Minister, Mr. President, Honoured Guests, Fellow Graduates, Ladies and Gentlemen...

I feel privileged to stand before you and deliver my address. We are all partners in our educational journey—an enterprise so varied for each one of us, yet so similar. We have mutual memories that we all took part in within the physical and intellectual space of those four years, here at The University of Winnipeg. Some of those memories are still vivid with emotion, and some have begun to grow faint with time. All of us invested energy, money, and countless hours into our education. We are now all faced with the dreaded question: “All this...what for?” We are all filled with hopes and anxieties, wondering whether this biggest investment of our lives will yield a return. I offer a resonant “yes.” The rewards are manifold.

For most of us, the decision to obtain a university education began because we were curious about how certain things work. The need to question and probe led us to seek particular subject majors. When I was a little girl, I took apart my clock to see what mysterious mechanism hid inside. I didn’t become an horologist—I became a Historian—and the excitement of discovery was the dominant force of my university experience.

Metaphorically speaking, the education I received from The University of Winnipeg offered me the reward of seeing the workings of the intricate currents, dials, and pendulums of our culture. Whatever you studied: our education gave us the necessary tools to construct a compass in order to better navigate our world. We, the class of 2006, are shaped by the uncertain climate of an accelerated, fragmented world. A world marked with the threat of mass destruction, and the false convenience of the latest pill as the answer to the latest woe.

We have the duty to at least try to navigate this world responsibly with kindness, wonderment and a healthy dose of skepticism. We have the advantage of using the compass that we have fashioned out of our university experience. Such industriousness and bravery is demonstrated by the faculty, staff and friends of the university honoured here today. We all must draw inspiration from these individuals. The challenge, as I see it, now lies in our being able to apply what we have learned. Here is where our educators’ roles will be reinforced.

We have the good fortune to be the graduates of The University of Winnipeg. As a transfer student from another province I had the occasion to compare. Here at a smaller university, I received attention and personal guidance from my professors. This guidance allowed me to become a better student and a better person.

I would like to thank those professors who, through their superb instruction, took my education to the next level. Prof. Topper, thank you for your astute sense of humour. Prof. Keshavjee, thank you for the bottomless passion and ideas. Prof. Burley thank you for delving where no one else would dare. Prof. Majzels, thank you for the amazing challenge of being forced to face ourselves as women, as human beings, within the typed

pages of our papers. Also, I feel proud to be graduating in the presence of President Lloyd Axworthy who for the past two and a half years energized us with fresh initiatives.

With that, I also want to thank my family: Mom, Dad, Sylvia, David, and Romi—without you, none of this would have been possible.

I would like to conclude with the words of Winnipeg poet Jon Paul Fiorentino. His words best capture the breathless intensity of a breakthrough necessary to make a step forward:

“Dream.

Cut the tether

There.

Trill.

Let reverb last.

Plunge...”

Fellow graduates, now more than ever, is the time to dream and time to make new memories. Its time to take the plunge and make your mark. And, above all, please enjoy, and be proud of, your accomplishment.