

Hi. I couldn't really decide what to say, but I wanted to speak here so I tried to think about why I wanted to speak to you today, if I didn't have anything to say. Then I realized I wanted to please my parents and impress my friends, maybe even pick up a girl. But then I thought that the vote for student speaker would look really rigged if I didn't say something at least superficially insightful.

SO here goes: ya ready?

Graduation Speeches are stupid.

That's it. That's my insightful moment.

I learned this at my college graduation. I can honestly say that after 4 years I don't remember a word that was said.

Recently I had the "pleasure" of attending my sister's college graduation. I actually listened to those speeches - unlike most of my family. Which means most of you aren't listening right now.

One of the talking heads mentioned the absurdity of the traditions – like the mace and the silly outfits oh I'm sorry silly regalia. And yet as she pointed out it was these stupid traditions that make us human and that honor our lives.

As law students we have learned this well. Tradition is of course large part of the law. And so in the spirit of entering the legal community and embracing tradition I thought I would do my best to embrace this tradition here tonight by talking to you.

I assure you it is a very stupid speech.

It is stupid because I cannot possibly convey to you the joy that law school was. I cannot possibly convey to you the pain that law school was either. And despite great achievements like surviving brickman's contracts or nailing a sterk exam

And despite funny moments when Silver blew the train whistle or shupack fell off the podium, the second time

Yes, despite these moments my law school experience would bore you. If you are looking for that kind of thing rent the paper chase or pick up a copy of 1L, that is if you are literate. I'm not going to waste your time with that.

So then I thought, I could deliver a rousing motivational discourse on what I hope for my classmates and the future of the world. We being the world's future leaders and all. But lawyers are more like knights than kings and to preach about keeping your sword clean seems counterproductive. Besides in a world community where ethics have been replaced by the dollar I think the irony of such a speech would be deafening.

And who am I to tell you how you should live your life as long as you aren't bothering me.

I guess that's the problem though huh? The bothering part. There sure are a lot of bothered people. I guess that's good for lawyers though. So congratulations everyone.

Fortunately American ingenuity has created a great calibrator – something to determine which bothered person is right. No professor love its not mediation. No, it's the all mighty dollar.

With this simple piece of green paper held in my hand, held in due course even, but with this paper I can buy and I can sell. I can buy apples and I can sell oranges – these two fruits once as different as apples and oranges, converted to the dollar on the open market, can be compared Money is the only objective system of valuation known to man and that is why we will bother others to get it.

And that is why with that same dollar bill held in my hand I can buy and sell most of my fellow graduates.

Isn't that great, you all reared them and raised them and now just when you thought they were off on their own, they have sold their souls to the company man.
The apple doesn't fall far from the tree now does it.
And god bless the company man How can I count his blessings upon me?
I hundred and thirty five thousand dollars.
That's a lot of diesel jeans.

And we are proud of these people.
I am proud of these people.
They worked their asses off and they will continue to work to their asses off until they make partner. I envy these people. That's right – Jon Koevary you are my hero.
All that work with 2 toddlers.
And there are plenty more babies out there. I feel like someone in this school was popping every other week.
Those are the future leaders of America.
Those are the minds still shaping.
Our minds are shaped.

And then yet we are young. You in the audience you are mostly still young. Our minds are still shaping and in every moment we make a decision. In every moment you make a decision.
Thank you for not deciding to leave when I said this speech would be stupid.
I think thus far it has been pretty stupid. But no stupider then any of this graduation ceremony will be. No stupider then sitting in classrooms listening to someone read a textbook.
In fact in some ways less stupid because I've dropped the pretenses.
Let's drop pretenses. In fact let's drop past tenses too.
Let's just live moment to moment day to day enjoy life.

Why is it that everyone in this room always seems to be working for tomorrow. Why is tomorrow so exciting to us as Americans?
I'll tell ya - We have this hope this passion this desire to make the world a better place.
Sometimes we forget about it, we litter, we forget to recycle, but somehow we all just hope the world is going to fix itself.
There are those among this class that are working to make it better. No not the future district attorneys and civil rights defenders. They will certainly do their part to make it better. But so will the capitalist consumerist corporate counselors I sarcastically lambasted a moment ago.
They are part of this world. They make decisions every day just like you and I do. They too decided to stay when I said this speech would be stupid.
Who are any of us to judge them?
Their part is this crazy amazing wonderful entropic island of life is as incomprehensible as any of our lives.
We may be mercenaries and cogs in greasy corporate machines but we do so only because our society forces us to. We love money. Of course we do. There is nothing wrong with that. It is the great callibrator and as Calvin taught us and Communism reminded us human beings will never be satisfied by merely being equal.

People want greatness. To achieve greatness there are those in this society that will hurt others along the way and there are those that will help. There is the destroyer and the creator. There are the fraggles and the dozers. And the beauty of the American legal system, it controls that process. It confines it to space where both have a voice. And that voice is bought with money. God bless the system of law that recognizes the power of money. God bless the system of America that allows us to objectively value ourselves. That allows us to decide what is valuable. That allows me to choose an apple over an orange. *That allows me to choose what is right and what is wrong by how I choose to spend my money. God bless those who choose right from wrong.*

God bless my classmates for they are now a commodity.

It is now incumbent upon them to decide what of themselves to sell. And no choice we make will be wrong unless we fail to recognize that we made that choice.

That if any of you have still not thought about walking out on this stupid meaningless speech then forget about you ..

Every moment is yours don't waste it.

And finally ... don't worry if you are wasting it. Because some of those stupid meaningless moments like when Brickman cracked a smile or Leslie swore will sometimes be the ones you remember the most. In fact they will always be the ones you remember the most.

In the last three years I have learned a lot of crap but I have learned the most crap about myself. And I realized that is why I love learning. Because everything on this planet is so intertwined that everything you learn is ultimately about yourself. And I'm a narcissist.

And so I bring this speech to a close and remind you that this speech was really about me and my need to value myself by pleasing my parents and impressing my friends. Hopefully my efforts will work and my parents will keep the money flowing. And maybe I'll even pick up a girl. And if any of you were bothered by anything I said. Good because some of what I said was pretty abhorrant. Don't take it too seriously though, I certainly didn't. But if you were really bothered then take me to court – I'm about to know 250 good lawyers. Thank you for listening. And if you weren't listening well don't worry it was a really stupid speech.