

ARTS & SCIENCE PROGRAM 35th ANNIVERSARY TALK
DR. SARA MENDELSON, 15 OCT. 2016, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

Thank you.

I would like to dedicate this 5-minute oration to Dr. Wilson (thus paying her back for having persuaded me to get up here and make a fool of myself...).

Dr Wilson – perhaps as close to a perfect human being as anyone I have encountered in my working life. What I'd like to single out for praise on this occasion: the way she has energetically – indeed relentlessly – promoted *three core values*.

I believe these core values make the Arts & Science program the splendid institution it is today.

First core value: developing the skill and then the habit of critical thinking.

Not only basis of any intellectual endeavour. Basis of life itself.

For what is life but a series of decisions to be made, of problems to be solved?

Second core value: connectedness of all human beings – simply because we are all human.

Third core value – which follows directly from core value number 2 – a concept which in Judaism is called “Tikkun Olum”. Translated literally = “fixing the world”.

I think of the Arts & Science program as a kind of “Tikkun-Olum” collective – whether the “fixing” goes on in Africa or Asia or South America

— or right here in our own back yard.

And for this, I want to thank each and every one of you: directors, instructors, staff, and students.

I am so proud of you!

I'd also like to tell you how honoured and privileged both Alan and I feel to have shared in such a noble enterprise.

So fare forward!! It's great to see you all!