REMARKS TO OPEN BOWDOIN COLLEGE
219
th CONVOCATION
SEPTEMBER 1, 2020
CLAYTON ROSE
DENIAL
I want to begin by thanking my faculty and staff colleagues for all of your amazing work over

help each of us live a meaningful life, to help us each find success and satisfaction in work, and
to be able to participate meaningfully in civic life. The idea of the liberal arts has its origins in
Antiquity and is an education intended to prepare one to participate in civic life and to be
productive and engaged citizens in the debates and decisions of the day.

For generation after generation, a Bowdoin education has provided our students with the
ability to think critically, to reason, to learn, to be nimble intellectually, and to communicate
thoughtfully and persuasively. We develop the ability to ask hard questions, and the skill and
disposition to avoid assuming that just because it’s on the internet or said by someone on TV
that it is true. This is what we have done at the College for a very long time. And it’s this liberal
arts education that is exactly what is required to have the skills and disposition to understand
and overcome the ugly and dangerous manifestations of denial.

The stakes have never been higher. We have never needed Iiberally educated people more
than we do now. And I would suggest that we have never needed Bowdoin, and the many other
schools like Bowdoin, more than we do now.

To our new students, I would ask that you 1 286.13 to communicate