Goldman Sachs Talks
Drew Gilpin Faust, President Emerita of Harvard University
David Solomon, Moderator
Recorded: April 8, 2024

Drew Gilpin Faust: My father use to say to me, "Why be difficult when you can be impossible?" And for me, making trouble was necessary to survive.

David Solomon: We're really delighted this afternoon to have Drew Faust back here at Goldman Sachs. You all know that she served as the president of Harvard University from 2007 to 2018. And currently, she's the Arthur Kingsley Porter University professor. She's the founding dean of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. Before Radcliffe, she was the Annenberg Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. But most importantly -- most importantly -- she served on our board of directors from 2018 to 2024.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Most importantly.

David Solomon: Not necessarily most importantly but most importantly to us. But it really is nice to have you back in the building and back here. You're the author of

several books, the most recent of which we'll discuss today, which is called *Necessary Trouble: Growing Up at Midcentury*, a memoir of her high school and college years during which you not only traveled behind the Iron Curtain at the height of the Cold War but also participated in the Selma-to-Montgomery march in 1965. And so you've got a very, very fascinating perspective on that chapter in our history. So let's first start by welcoming Drew Gilpin Faust.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Thank you so much.

David Solomon: So let's get right into it. And it's always good to start at the beginning of a book. And I'll just start with the title, okay? You say that in the book that you asked for permission from a civil rights icon to use a famous phrase of his. Can you tell us who it was? Why you decided to use his words? And what you were trying to capture as you framed this book?

Drew Gilpin Faust: So the book is called *Necessary Trouble.* And for many of you, that my resonate, good trouble, necessary trouble, words of John Lewis, who was a hero to me from the time I was in college and saw him have

his head beaten in on the bridge, marching from Selma to Montgomery.

I got to know him a bit while I was Harvard president, and as I was writing the book, I came to think this would be a perfect title. I was searching for a title. And I thought it would be a perfect title because the book's about growing up in Virginia in the 1950s and '60s in a segregated society where my mother told me that it was a man's world and the sooner I figured that out, the better off I'd be.

And so I was in open revolt from the time I was very small as she tried to make me into a lady and a good Southern lady and also to introduce me to the segregated ways of the society that she and all my relative and everybody around me in my white world took for granted. And my father used to say to me, "Why be difficult when you can be impossible?"

And for me, making trouble was necessary to survive, to resist what I saw as the very unhappy lives of my mother and grandmother and to find a path that I could follow with satisfaction and joy in my life. So when I was finishing my term as Harvard president, John Lewis in 2018 -- skipping

forward rapidly here -- in 2018, John Lewis gave the talk at my final commencement as a gesture of friendship because we'd collaborated on various things during my presidency. And he got up as he began his remarks and turned to me and said, "Thank you for making necessary trouble." And I was so honored to have been addressed in that way by him that the words came to me as a possible title, but it seemed presumptuous of me to take those words somehow. And I was worried about it.

So just two months before he died, I had a phone call with him and I said, "Would it be okay if I called my book *Necessary Trouble*?" Well, John Lewis was one of the most gracious, generous human beings who ever lived, and he said, "Of course, of course. I would be honored if you'd call your book that." So the book is called that. I think in one way to honor him, as an homage et him in a sense, but his life is what honors him. Far be it for me to say I could honor John Lewis anything beyond what his life honored him.

David Solomon: Extraordinary.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Yes, but I was very grateful to be

able to borrow these words.

David Solomon: Can I touch on your mom, since you raised that? I know you begin the book with what has to be for any person a devastating moment in your life, at 19 years old, the death of your mother. And you later said that, quote, I'm sure she loved her children, but I'm not sure she liked or enjoyed us. Talk a little bit more -- I mean, you hinted at this, but talk a little bit more about your relationship with your mother and the impact it had on you.

Drew Gilpin Faust: The book begins with a description of her death, which came in the eyes of all of us children we thought at least very suddenly on Christmas Eve in 1966, when I was a junior in college. And I'd just had a huge fight with her the week before, demanding that I be allowed to do something that she thought was not proper. I wanted to go visit a boyfriend in Connecticut before I came home from college. She said only under certain circumstances if she heard from his parents that they were going to be there to chaperone us. I said, "What century is this, you know?" And I just threw this fit and went anyway.

So I come home, and my mother is unwell and soon is taken to the hospital, has surgery, and dies. And it was shocking and horrifying, but as I thought about it and particularly looking back as I wrote the book, my mother was extraordinarily thin. She was about five-feet-nine and weighed about 90 pounds. And I think in retrospect she was an adult anorexic, and I think it was part and parcel of her unhappiness and her deep dissatisfaction with the constraints on her life, which gave her in her social milieu and the expectations around her no choice but to devote her life to children and husband.

And in my interpretation of it, she kind of erased her own self until literally physically she erased herself. And so I fought with her from the time I was a tiny child about wearing little lace clothes and doing girl things and not being allowed to do the things my brothers could do. And so we were always at loggerheads. She had very strong ideas, and she asserted them.

But it was very difficult. I don't think we ever -- I mean, I know we didn't. We never resolved that conflict.

David Solomon: Do you have any sisters? Or were you the only --

Drew Gilpin Faust: I'm the only girl, three brothers.

David Solomon: Three brothers. So that dynamic at that point in time, also, was very different.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Yes. And when my --

David Solomon: Definitely a double standard.

Drew Gilpin Faust: For sure. And when my youngest brother was born, he's eight years younger than I am, I was eight years old. So I go to the phone and to pick up the phone and someone's on the phone saying, "Your mother just had a baby." And I wait with bated breath. I was so relieved it was a boy because I thought, if it's a girl, I have a lifetime of negative comparisons to look for because I was so at odds with what I was supposed to be. And I thought if I had this ideal little sister, it's going to be miserable. I figured that out at eight. So that I think is an illustration of the collision course we were on.

David Solomon: The attention. I want to go back because you were talking about, you highlighted that you grew up in a segregated society, but you said you didn't really appreciate the level of inequity until you had an epiphany in 1957. Talk a little it about that. You wrote a letter to someone very important. Who was it? What did the letter mean to you? Talk us through that.

Drew Gilpin Faust: I was driving home from -- being driven home from school in 1957 by an African American man who worked for my family, who drove us children around and did various things around the household. I lived on a big farm. He would help out with some of the issues on the farm. And I heard on the radio a conversation about integration of schools. And this was not long after *Brown v. Board* had mandated that schools be integrated. And Virginia's white establishment decided that they would advocate for closing the schools rather than integrating them. Just eliminating public education, which they did in several counties until courts made them open them again.

So I was hearing all this debate about this surrounding a governor's elections in the aftermath of the implementation

of this program called massive resistance. And I had this realization -- I was nine years old -- that my school was white on purpose. It wasn't by accident. That this was a law of the state that my school be all white. And having for however many years -- nine years -- said to myself it's not fair, it's not fair, as I was told to do or not do things that my brothers were not required to do or not do, I suddenly realized this was really not fair. This was much more unfair than the petty issues that I'd been dealing with as a girl in a family of three brothers.

And so I said to the African American man who was driving, "Is this true?" And he said nothing. And I said, "If I paint my face black, I couldn't go to my school tomorrow?" He said nothing. And that was revealing in itself. And so I went down and I sat down, and I wrote an irate letter to President Eisenhower, demanding that he integrate the schools. It's reproduced in the first page of my book. You can see the little letter.

I told myself my whole life that I'd written this thing, and about year 2000 I decided, if I wrote this letter, it's probably in the National Archives. I'm a historian. I should have figured that out sooner. So I wrote to the

National Archives, and they found the letter.

David Solomon: They found the letter.

Drew Gilpin Faust: In the Eisenhower Library, in Kansas. So I was able to reunite myself with this very bossy letter from a nine-year-old girl to the president about integrating the schools and how important it was.

David Solomon: You talked about other inequities of the society you grew up, and you mentioned a report card you got in the second grade. The headmaster of your school was ambivalent about your performance. I find that shocking based on what I know about your academic credentials and your engagement certainly on our board. But this headmaster had a surprising piece of advice.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Well, he was ambivalent because I was such a good student, David.

David Solomon: Oh, okay.

Drew Gilpin Faust: I was doing really well in school, and the preceding summer I'd read some enormous

number of books. I can't remember what. And we were supposed to, at the end of the summer, list all the books we'd read. So I came in with this tome of titles that I'd read. And so he said on my report card at the end of the second grade year I should read fewer books the coming summer, that enough is enough. And I just -- when I found this report card, as I was going through accumulative family mess in order to write this book, I read it and I just thought he wouldn't have said that a little boy, you know? This was a girl who was kind of going off the rails, being too smart and too good a student and devoting herself too much to her intellectual pursuits. And so it was a shock to me to read it and to think that was the kind of world that the 1950s represented.

David Solomon: Well, I mean, the differences. It's really -- I mean, I don't think about the 1950s as being that long ago.

Drew Gilpin Faust: That's because you're only 62.

David Solomon: I know. But still, you know, I was born in 1962, but still it is interesting because it obviously, there's been enormous change but it's not that long ago.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Well, you know, that's really the reason I wanted to write this book because it was another world in so many ways that I think so many of you would not recognize. And I wanted to make sure that young people knew how different it was and how much things have changed. I think there can be a certain despair, "Nothing's ever changed." A lot has changed --

David Solomon: A lot's changed.

Drew Gilpin Faust: -- since I was a kid.

David Solomon: Yeah. You know, when you were 13, you enrolled in Concord Academy, which is an all-girls boarding school. And you mentioned a moment when the headmasters, one Elizabeth Hall, took you aside and said something that had, quote, an enormous impact on you. Who was she and why did she have such a big impact?

Drew Gilpin Faust: So Mrs. Hall was a woman who was just undaunted by almost anything, and she drove a tractor around the school in order to build a skating rink. And she climbed up on ladders and fixed things. And she

dismantled an old meeting house in New Hampshire and brought it, board by board, down and resembled -- not all by herself but she was a full participant in all of this. Reassembled it as a chapel on the Concord Academy campus.

She got up and gave inspiring speeches. It just seemed she could do anything. And she ran the school, and the school was kind of a world of women. It was a girls school then. And I saw such a contrast with the women of my mother's social circle, the parents of my elementary school friends. This was a woman who could do anything and proceeded to try to do everything. And so it represented for me a different kind of model of what a woman could be.

And getting out of Virginia and going to New England I think was part of that. She she was was just -- she was unto herself. But she was inspiring, and she took me aside one night and said -- I can't remember what I'd done that hadn't pleased her. I mean, I hadn't done anything terrible, but she just thought I could do more. I could do better. And she gave me a pep talk. And I thought, wow, she noticed me and she's so accomplished. Maybe I could be accomplished, too. And it had a big impact.

David Solomon: Had a big impact. Well, in the summer of '63, you did something that I think at the time must have been really extraordinary. You went to West and East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, in a Ford microbus with six other high school students and I assume -- it says two leaders but I assume they were two adults.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Well, one was a college student and one was an adult.

David Solomon: Okay, so a micro adult.

Drew Gilpin Faust: A micro adult.

David Solomon: But why did you take this trip? What prompted you to take this trip? And give us some of your impressions of what it was like to be behind the Iron Curtain in 1963.

Drew Gilpin Faust: I think I was pressed to do this by the experience of the fall of 1962, which was the Cuban Missile Crisis. And sitting on an empty classroom one evening at Concord Academy with six or seven of my

friends, talking about how the world was going to end and what would we most regret having missed when the world ended the next day or in a couple of days.

I came across this flyer that just was in a pile of summer opportunities that described a Quaker-affiliated trip to Eastern Europe that was meant to put students in contact with students on the other side of the Iron Curtain in service of international peace, hands across the Iron Curtain. And I decided I really wanted to go. And this trip was eye opening in so many dimensions. One of them was it was really the first time of the nine people in this little minibus, the two adults and the others, three were African American. And I had never been in such close proximity in an environment of equality and community with African Americans. Even Concord Academy was largely segregated even though it was in New England and in the early '60s. And so this was transformational for me.

And then the experience of being in Eastern Europe was as well. We went across the -- went through Checkpoint Charlie, through the wall. We wondered, as we went, why are we doing this? Everybody in East Germany seems to want to get out, and we seem to want to get in. We had

this little moment of anxiety as we went through the wall.

And we saw a society that was highly repressive. We had a minder who followed us everywhere and tried to make sure that we didn't meet with people illegitimately or see anything we weren't supposed to see. But we did see things we weren't supposed to see because one of these adults was a person who had emigrated from Germany at the time of World War II. He was Jewish. He had left Germany. But he knew many people who lived in East Germany. And so we'd have these connections and interactions with unapproved East Germans.

Our minder lost his job after we left.

David Solomon: Oh, wow.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Because he had permitted this to happen. But he was constantly trying to represent the philosophy of East Germany to us and defend East Germany. And I got a real -- because he was so adamant, I think I got real insight into the logic that kept that society glued together as long as it was. It wasn't exclusively force. I mean, there was a lot of force, and we saw places where

people had been shot. We had young people come up to us and say, "Would you help me escape?" And we never knew whether that was legitimate or whether they were trying to entrap us.

There were no African Americans in East Germany, and people would come up with the African Americans in our group and try to touch them and touch their hair and ask them things like, "Will your skin color wash off?" So it was like going to a completely different world in every possible way.

Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were less oppressive, a bit more open. Yugoslavia being the most open of the three.

David Solomon: Right.

Drew Gilpin Faust: And a lot of spirited -- we went to a youth camp for a time where young Yugoslavians were helping build roads to bring the country up to a standard of living that was more competitive. You got more of a sense of buy-in to the Yugoslavian experiment. But of course, every country that I've just mentioned no longer exists.

Yugoslavia splintered in a terrifying way, in a tragic way, and it was all the death in the Balkan Wars. Czechoslovakia is of course Czech and Slovakia. And East Germany is now reunited. So those countries were all unstable in ways that we've only seen play themselves out in the decades that followed.

David Solomon: Yeah. So the next summer you chose to do something very different. And I assume in some way there was some impact on this experience that set you on the next experience. You joined a group of 15 high school and college students, three adult leaders, and traveled the sights in the South to learn more about the cause of civil rights in the South.

Drew Gilpin Faust: So this came out -- the person who'd organized this Eastern Europe trip contacted me a couple months after we got back, and he said, "You know, I don't know why I'm taking everyone to Eastern Europe. We have so many things going on in our own country that are so divisive and so troubling. I want to take a group of students down to the South next summer and see if we can have conversations across lines of difference in the South."

Well, that was the original impetus, and we did meet with a number of white segregationists. However, we were a mixed group, racially, and were staying with members of the Black community who were active in civil rights. I remember in one place we were was Orangeburg, South Carolina. And the family I stayed with there, the nine year old had been arrested 12 times for protesting and doing civil rights activities. So we more or less just joined in with the Black families and people that we were staying with and that we met through these Quaker ties.

And so it was a summer that was a pretty dramatic one in the South. It was this Freedom Summer in Mississippi. It was right after the Civil Rights Act was passed, and so we'd spent a lot of our energy testing the implementation of the Civil Rights Act that said you cannot have -- you cannot deny service to Black people in public accommodations, which had been the case beforehand. So we would go to the A&W Root Beer in a mentioned group and see if we would be served and just generally try to kind of test the limits of the enforcement of the Civil Rights Act.

David Solomon: And this was all shortly before the civil

rights march from Selma to Montgomery, which you decided you had to join. And it sounds like you had a fascinating experience around that. One thing you highlighted was the National Guardsmen.

Drew Gilpin Faust: So I -- after the summer that I just described, I went off to college. And in the spring of my freshman year, I saw John Lewis have his head bashed in on national television and in this horrifying way that made me think, if this goes on in my country, I have to do something about this. I can't live with myself. I think partly it was I had known -- met so many young people the previous summer who themselves had been activists and who might well have had their heads bashed in on television. I felt very proximate to what was happening because of my previous summers' experience.

And so I cut my midterms and said to my boyfriend, "Come on. We're going to Selma." And so we got in -- we borrowed a car and drove from Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, to Selma. The incident David was asking about, we were driving down to Selma and it was a march. The John Lewis head bashing march happened, and then this was a subsequent march that was meant to say, "We're going to

get there anyway," even though the first march had been turned back.

As we were driving south, we heard that President Lyndon Johnson was going to call out the National Guard this time to protect the marchers so there wouldn't be another bloodbath. And we felt this huge sense of relief. We were about in South Carolina at that point, thinking, okay, this isn't going to be as frightening as we had anticipated.

And we got to Selma and parked our car to rush over to the meeting point for the starting of the march. And I was walking along the sidewalk in Selma, and these two National Guardsmen came towards me. And I sort of thought, "Oh, good, these are the people who are taking care of us." And as they were walking by me, one just reached out and slammed me in the breast and just kept walking. And I was so shocked. I mean, I wasn't badly hurt or anything, but it just knocked the air out of me. And I just thought, "Oh, yeah, Alabama comes first and national is second. And they may be nationalized, but they're going to have their resentments nevertheless." And this Nationals Guardsmen decided to take his resentment out on me.

I was clearly not from Selma. I was one of those outside agitators, and he was not happy about that.

David Solomon: Yeah, he was not happy about it. Shortly after that, you attend your first antiwar rally in Washington, D.C., in the mid-60s. And you certainly attend a bunch of antiwar rallies, and it's been something that over the next five years you became a significant participant in these antiwar protests. Talk a little bit about how you thought about that, why it was so important to you, and how your impression of it changed kind of through the journey of the rest of that decade.

Drew Gilpin Faust: I think two aspects of the situation with the Vietnam War were very moving to me. One was the notion that had animated me in so many ways through my whole life, which it isn't fair, it isn't just, this is a war that's wreaking havoc on a population that doesn't deserve to be treated this way. So there was the gesture of concern for what we were doing in Vietnam and to Vietnam.

Also, the draft was a very real presence in the lives of anybody who was in college in those years.

David Solomon: At the time, yeah.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Bryn Mawr and Haverford College were coordinate colleges at that point, so I knew many Haverford students -- all the Haverford students I knew actually were struggling with what they were going to do about the draft. Were they going to go to Canada? Were they going to serve in the military? Were they going to go to jail? Were they going to --

David Solomon: Were there still educational deferments when you started at college?

Drew Gilpin Faust: There were. But when they graduate --

David Solomon: Yeah, when they graduate, yeah.

Drew Gilpin Faust: -- they had to go. Unless they did certain particular lines of study. You could be a doctor under something called the Barry Plan, postpone your service, but then you had to do your service later. You went to divinity school, you could get out of it for a certain

period of time, but overwhelmingly, people had to go.

And so the late-night conversation topic was, "What are we going to do about the draft?" And it mobilized students who felt that the war had come home in a sense. It involved their lives in a very direct way. And so the unfairness of, "Why should I go die in Vietnam?" motivated a lot of antiwar protesters.

So I went to many, many, many antiwar protests in Washington and in Philadelphia, but I was always a peaceful protester. And when the antiwar movement began to splinter and the more violent part of it emerged, I did not join that part. And I had many college friends or some college friends at least who did. And one very good friend of mine joined the violent part of the movement and then disappeared into the Weather Underground for a number of years. And that was the way the '60s were. There were a lot of people who kind of tipped over the edge in one way or the other into violence, into drug use, into various other dimensions of the culture change that was overwhelming that particular college generation.

So I always remained a peaceful protester, a frustrated

peaceful protester. Perhaps the Quaker links of my earlier involvement had an influence as well.

David Solomon: Yeah, it was an interesting period and I want to get to a little later in the decade, 1968, for example, which was a really interesting year if you think about Johnson not running for reelection, Martin Luther King being assassinated, Robert Kennedy shortly after. I think today when people talk about divisiveness and issues -- and we've got a lot of them today -- but a little bit of a history lesson. It was a lot messier, a lot messier back then.

Drew Gilpin Faust: And that was my senior year of college, so it was as if we were being launched into this world that seemed to be disintegrating. Johnson saying he wasn't going to run again was a huge, astonishing shock. And then just, what, four days later, Martin Luther King's assassinated? That was such a blow. And it was followed by violence in the cities, many cities across the nation, of a sort that --

David Solomon: Was Kent State in 1968?

Drew Gilpin Faust: That was '70. That was later.

David Solomon: '70? Okay.

Drew Gilpin Faust: But the violence in urban areas, in Washington, D.C., people were fleeing the city, trying to get away from the violence. And then right after my graduation, like a week after my graduation, Bobby Kennedy was shot. It just -- it was unimaginable. And then the Democratic Convention that summer, again, rioting in the streets in Chicago as --

David Solomon: Serious rioting in the streets.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Serious rioting in the streets. So the place of violence in American life in that year and really urban riots throughout my college years, it seemed that the nation was in violent upheaval in a very frightening way.

David Solomon: By the way, it was. It was.

Drew Gilpin Faust: It was. It was.

David Solomon: It was. And especially when you have a

perspective of thinking now, you know, much, much, much, much more so than now. Much, much more so than now. I kind of skipped over because I wanted to ask you about Bryn Mawr, which you talk about as an intellectually stimulating place, but you also talk about limitations. What was it like? You continued from Concord to another all-girls school. Talk about Bryn Mawr and kind of your take on that.

Drew Gilpin Faust: So I just want to establish a little fact here, which is people have said to me, "So why didn't you go to Princeton like your father and your brother?" Because Princeton didn't take women when I was going to college. So just remember that this is also not -- I mean, here's a living person who was not able to apply to a whole bunch of schools that now can't remember that they were exclusively male.

And if I had gone to Radcliffe, which was the women's part of Harvard, I wouldn't have been allowed in the undergraduate library. So there were women at Radcliffe as part of Harvard, but they had different access to different aspects of the university community. It's just hard to remember.

David Solomon: I chair the board of a small liberal arts college, not as prestigious as Princeton or Harvard, but that has completely forgotten that for -- it's been around for over 200 years. But it's completely forgotten that, for most of those 200 years --

Drew Gilpin Faust: It was all men.

David Solomon: -- up to 1982, it was all men. Yeah.

Drew Gilpin Faust: So I went off to Bryn Mawr College which was -- it still is but it was even smaller then. It was tiny, but it had a reputation for being really intellectual. It had a tiny college with a graduate school of all things. And it was, again, this world of accomplished women, this time, scholarly women, who were doing research and had PhDs and were accomplished writers and thinkers in their areas of study. And I think that was inspiring for me.

And Bryn Mawr told us, "You can do anything because you're just as good as, if not better than, any man. So we're going to ready you to compete with men and crush them," basically was the -- they didn't quite put it that way,

but that was implicit.

And yet I realized and other members of my class also have talked about this in the years that followed, there was never a sense of, "We're going to change you to be able to change things for women in general." Instead it was, "We're going to make you so good that, when you go out into that man's world, you'll win." And so it wasn't really a feminist message. It wasn't a "change the world for women" message. It was a "go out and take the world as it is and conquer it."

And so for a lot of us, when we did graduate, we weren't ready for the hurdles. We'd been taken so seriously as undergraduates. We weren't ready for the realities of the world as it still existed around us, if that makes sense.

David Solomon: Yeah. Talk about your first job. You went to work in government.

Drew Gilpin Faust: So my first job was in government, and I went to work at the department of housing and urban development, which was then only a couple of years old. And I was very interested in cities because of all this

upheaval in cities. And that seemed to me a place where we needed to improve American life.

My professors and a lot of my friends in college thought, "Of course she'll go to law school." I knew I didn't want go to law school. I knew if I went to graduate school, I wanted to study what I wanted to study, not torts or all the things you had to take to be a law student. But I did think I needed to get out of universities for a while and see what the real world looked like.

So I worked at the department of housing and urban development for two years. And that sent me right back to graduate school and in History. And I decided that universities were where I wanted to spend my life, and so it was a good experiment. I learned a lot. I became much less naive about how government works than I had been when I started. Don't think I did much to improve American cities, but nevertheless.

David Solomon: In the epilogue of the book, you say, quote, freedom had been a pressing concern for me from the time I was a small child and first launched battles with my mother about clothes and hair and girls' roles. But

freedom had become a great deal more than just not being treated differently than my brothers. Expand on that.

Drew Gilpin Faust: As I was writing this book, I realized that there was a kind of theme that went throughout it about freedom. And for me, as David just quoted, it was I want to be able to do everything my brothers can do. I want to be free from these constraints. Then I began to see the issues concerning race in America and the freedom struggle of the Civil Rights Movement and the just enormous idealism of that, with which I identified so strongly.

Then I saw constrictions of freedom in East Germany but an insistence on the part of our minder that East Germany was devoted to making sure there was freedom to as well as freedom from with health care and education and all the things that the State provided to enable people to be free to do things, not just have a notion of freedom that is removing chains.

And so this meditation on what freedom meant was a part and parcel with so many things that I'd done as a young person. But when I graduated from college and towards

the end of what I talk about at the end of the book is I feel as if this book is in a way my escape from Virginia, metaphorically Virginia. Escape from what I had intended to be. But then I had decided what was I going to use that freedom for? If I escaped from these constraints, my next challenge was going to be how was I going to use that freedom? And what was I going to devote it to? And what was I going to try to make my life matter for? And that's what I kind of end the book with that question, unanswered as the book ends.

David Solomon: I just want to ask you at a very high level, give us some of your perspectives on what's going on with higher education broadly and what's going on with college campuses broadly and how you're thinking about all that.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Well, it's been six years since I ended my presidency, so an awful lot has happened in the world since then. Earthshaking things. The pandemic, George Floyd, all kinds of changes. And so I'm at best rusty on all of this, shall I say? And you as board chair probably are closer to the action at Hamilton College than I am now. But maybe that could be seen to give me some

perspective.

One of the aspects I would comment on is just how different colleges are now from when I was in college in ways that we have to recognize make them complicated places. In 1970, which would have been two years after I graduated from college, among American adults over the age of 25, fewer than 10% had college degrees.

In 2020, that number is close to 40%. So we have really expanded the inclusivity of American higher education, and that has meant an expansion of the diversity of American higher education and the potential for conflict and difference, even as we hold up this ideal of talking across those differences. A noble, noble ideal I think that we should continue to strive for. But it's a tough one. And I particularly have thought about this in relationship to having been on campus at a time of war in my own youth and seeing campuses now in a time of war.

At Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges, just about everybody was from the United States. No one was fighting on opposite sides, literally fighting on opposite sides of the war that was going on. We now have students whose

relatives have been killed or kidnapped next to friends of the students from Ramallah who were shot in Vermont. And we're telling these people, "Sit down at the table together and eat dinner. Share the bathroom. Share a classroom and argue about these ideas." That is a big order.

David Solomon: That's tough, yeah.

Drew Gilpin Faust: It's really tough. And so part of what I feel about higher education right now is we're asking a huge amount of ourselves. And if we just look at what's going on beyond the walls of universities, too, in this society, it's so divided. So that is in part what we're seeing reflected in college campus.

David Solomon: Well, on that note, Drew, thank you. Thank you for coming back and spending the time with us.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Thank you.

David Solomon: Thank you for being here.

Drew Gilpin Faust: Thank you all for coming.

The opinions and views expressed in this program may not necessarily reflect the institutional views of Goldman Sachs or its affiliates. This program should not be copied, distributed, published, or reproduced, in whole or in part, or disclosed by any recipient to any other person without the express written consent of Goldman Sachs. Each name of a third-party organization mentioned in this program is the property of the company to which it relates, is used here strictly for informational and identification purposes only and is not used to imply any ownership or license rights between any such company and Goldman Sachs. The content of this program does not constitute a recommendation from any Goldman Sachs entity to the recipient and is provided for informational purposes only. Goldman Sachs is not providing any financial, economic, legal, investment, accounting, or tax advice through this program or to its recipient. Certain information contained in this program constitutes "forward-looking statements," and there is no guarantee that these results will be achieved. Goldman Sachs has no obligation to provide updates or changes to the information in this program. Past performance does not guarantee future results, which may vary. Neither Goldman Sachs nor any of its affiliates makes any representation or warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the statements or any information contained in this program and any liability therefore (including in respect of direct, indirect, or consequential loss or damage) is expressly disclaimed.