## JAMES J. SCHWEITZER

4625-1/2 B MacArthur Boulevard, NW, Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 333-0382

In September 1965, a few days before I landed in Room 47, Vanderbilt Hall, my dad, Austin, took me aside for a little fatherly chat. Actually, he just wanted to give me a heads up: the next four years, he told me, would be among the best of my life, and I should make every effort to enjoy them and appreciate my time at Yale. Several years later he confided that he felt I might have taken his advice a little too much to heart. Austin had a wonderful sense of humor and was pretty laid back about your standard college high jinks, but a few early trips to the Executive Committee and a senior year rustication (for “the extremelydangerous and disruptive character of your actions while intoxicated,” according to a letter from Morse Master John Hall) were about his limit.

Austin was surely right about my four years at Yale, but perhaps not for the reasons he had hoped. Twenty-five years later it’s not great intellectual challenges, stimulating class discussions, or stirring lectures that I remember. Scholarship was not my primary interest. Townies, beer, and football 10A were, although not necessarily in that order.

It was a truly wonderful four years, though, and not just because the townies were plentiful, the beer was flowing, and we had Brian and Calvin. I learned about excellence in people and lifelong friendships. For me, the classroom was Olivia’s, road trips, the Morse dining hall, car hopping on Chapel Street, the seventh floor of the tower, Mory’s, the Bowl. The great thing about Yale a quarter century ago was that you could be a total gooRoff and still get a great education, just by being around your classmates. Not only that, you could learn how to shoot a water balloon through a plate glass window.

In many ways the years since Yale have been a logical extension of my time in New Haven. That’s not to say, to quote Dean Wormer’s remark to Flounder in Animal House, that I’ve gone through life fat, drunk, and stupid. Only that I’ve taken the predictable course for a political science major with my checkered background. I went to law school and became a lobbyist, a career in which I could fully utilize my talents for constant schmoozing, expense account meals, and endless receptions.

This was not my mother’s plan. Diane had the Jewish seat on the Supreme Court in her sights, but I showed no more aptitude for legal scholarship than I had for undergraduate studies. Given my mother’s fragile state of mind where I was concerned, I thought it best to suffer through the three years at University of Virginia, rather than bail out, which had been my initial thought. Armed with two degrees and not a clue otherwise, I then returned to D.C., where I had grown up. I’ve been here ever since.

After a brief stint with the federal government I went to work for the Governor of Puerto Rico as his counsel in the Commonwealth’s Washington office. I was hired by Jose Cabranes (Yale Law ’65), then the head of the office, later the General Counsel of Yale, and now a federal judge in Connecticut and a Trustee of the Yale Corporation. Jose made it plain that I was hired solely because mine was the first Yale resume he’d seen (obviously it wasn’t my qualifications or my intimate knowledge of Puerto Rico, which I’d never even visited). Anyway, that was my first experience with the benefits of a Yale degree.

I had done volunteer work in a number of political campaigns, with a common theme—all my candidates lost. The Governor of Puerto Rico was no exception, and after four years he met a similar fate. Through a roundabout series of connections, I wound up on Capitol Hill, working for a Congress- woman from New York, Liz Holtzman, first as her legislative director, then as counsel to the Subcommittee on Refugees and International Law when she became Chairwoman. The work was fascinating, but the hours were backbreaking; purely by chance every major refugee crisis of the era (Indochinese, Cuban, Haitian, Iranian, you name it) seemed to erupt on my watch. The problem was solved when, in 1980, Holtzman ran for the Senate and, true to my form, lost.

I remained on Capitol Hill for another nine years, working for Peter Rodino, the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, as counsel to the full committee, and then for his successor (due to retirement, not defeat, for a change), Jack Brooks. I principally did investigative work, most of which was interesting, all of which was frustrating. Included was several months assigned to the Iran-Contra inquiry, a debacle of monstrous proportions from the Congressional side.

After that I was finally ready to leave for the private sector, and I joined a friend from my Judiciary Committee days in a law firm of the D.C. variety, i.e., a lobbying operation. I find the work much like the Hill—occasionally interesting, often repetitive and frustrating. In this town, that’s not surprising, since I’m essentially doing exactly what I was doing when I was on the Hill, although I’m now pitching what I used to catch. I’ve often thought of moving on to something else (as a prelude I’ve cut my hours back substantially this year), but I’m not certain what else I’m qualified to do. Call it Austin’s revenge.

On the family front, Austin and Diane are both gone, and I remain single. Perhaps what I am most grateful for a quarter century after we graduated is that I now have a family of wonderful friends of nearly thirty years standing— Willie, Reeko, Duncan, Yarm, Donaldo, Fred, Reed—whom I see and talk to regularly, and dozens of others whom I keep in touch with occasionally through visits or the Alumni Fund. Although I’m not married. I’ve certainly had plenty of weddings, courtesy of my classmates—any number of two-timers and, of course, Collier, probably in double figures by now. Courtesy of Rick and Laurie, I also have a godson, James Cameron Larkin.

Every fall a group of us rent a Winnebago in D.C. and head north for either the Princeton or the Harvard game. Classmates fly into D.C. or meet us in New York or New Haven. I eagerly look forward to this annual excursion. It’s a reminder of some of the best years of my life.

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