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How much influence has Yale had on my life? Slight, I suspect. I was well-read when I arrived, but Yale allowed me to cover English literature thoroughly, as well as to become familiar in detail with the American cinema. I am now rereading Troilus and Criseyde, and the Middle English I learned, it turns out, never went away. A relative couch potato as an undergraduate, I now bicycle to work and take glorious weekend rides over Mount Tamalpais and the Bolinas Ridge to the Pacific shore. Could I have taken this up because of some deep, residual humiliation at the posture photo that may He moldering in a storeroom in the gym?

Like, I hope, many of you, I am happiest about and proudest of my family. My wife, Susan Lundy, whom I met while we were both getting our doctorates at the University of Iowa, has gone through several careers (teacher, adoption recruiter) before more or less settling down as an entrepreneur: her insurance brokerage has been in business for nearly fifteen years. My son, Greg, now ten, has become expert in soccer, a sport 1 didn’t know existed when I was his age. This year (1993) his class placed first in a national contest for the most effective and innovative project to protect the environment, and he has been traveling to award ceremonies over the past few months, learning more about local politicians than a child should have to know. But Yale plays no role here.

I have had the pleasure of serial careers (by choice and chance rather than necessity) since my graduation from Yale. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Iowa were kind enough to pay me to read, think, and research. I followed with several years teaching and as Director of Undergraduate Studies in the photography and cinema department of Ohio State. The Midwest lost its charm in Ohio, so we moved to the one section of the country where we had not yet lived, the Pacific Coast. I worked in advertising for Disney (as well as doing technical chores on several independent film and video projects), along the way was introduced to computers, and now design and write applications for PCs. I hope the metamorphoses and the learning will continue, but if they do, they will no doubt occur without connection to Yale or its other graduates.

So my relationship to Yale is an impersonal one. In the years I contribute to one of its innumerable appeals for funds, I view it as a major liberal arts college in a time when a liberal education is not highly valued. In the years I refuse to donate, I view it as a fabulously wealthy institution that trains the children of the rich. I doubt if these views can be or ever will be reconciled. But I still keep in touch with some friends I made as an undergraduate, and 1 look forward to seeing them sometime again, even if it must be at a giant fund-raiser.