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**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2013 2:54 PM  
**Subject:** Reunion Report

Annick and I attended the two day "pre-reunion" in the Berkshires and the Yale 50th in New Haven. The former was attended by about 50 classmates, compared to about 450 in New Haven. I had known about 12 of the 50 in the Berkshires. In this smaller and more relaxed setting, it was much easier to have an extended conversation. We also had a private visit to the nearby Norman Rockwell Museum because the wife of one of our classmates, Jim Kelley, is the chairman of the museum's board. The museum itself is a very impressive operation, and it was fun to hear how Jim's wife had modeled several works by Rockwell as a child growing up in the same village as Rockwell.

Yale itself looked splendid. Nearly every building from our era has been restored and remodeled. Yale has purchased most of the commercial buildings and houses for several blocks around the university. All are in excellent shape, with no empty storefronts. There are several nearby new hotels, and all the streets have been replanted with healthy looking trees. Instead of looking like a dump, Yale and its neighborhood appeared exceedingly prosperous. Throughout the reunion, there were Yale security people in evidence, and the campus looked as clean as any Swiss public building. (I wondered if, like California in terms of prison guards and teachers, Yale has more security forces than professors?)

The two and one-half day reunion was hectic, with a choice of activities all day long. The weather was hot and humid. Although most of Yale is now air conditioned, the Commons (site of our "dress up" dinner), the chapel (two hour memorial service for deceased classmates), and Woolsey Hall (Whiffenpoofs and Glee Club) were not. People were very friendly. Although over half the class reported they are still working, no one talked much about himself or his job. My experience at this and other reunions was that it is as much fun to chat with "new" classmates as with old friends, as we all shared so many experiences. There were separate breakfasts, lunches, and dinners for the class. However, the noise level was typically so high that it was possible to converse only with the people next to you. At most of the meals, Annick and I managed to sit with people I had known, but as I said, it was difficult to have an extended conversation.

We attended three panels made up by class members. While the climate change panel, featuring Bill Nordhaus and Tom Lovejoy (one of the noted national climate researchers), did not introduce many new ideas, the overall situation was presented very well. The experts are pessimistic. The national security panel was enlivened by questions at the end from classmates who appeared to be among those Democrats disappointed by the Obama administrations. They asked, for example, why Cuba is still our "enemy" despite its excellent record in public health. In other words, they accused the US of acting hypocritically in foreign affairs. I thought the panelists responded adequately--foreign policy is always faced with ambiguous situations; you try to muddle through; your guideposts are commitment to greater democratic participation, greater free markets, and greater personal freedom. The most articulate among the speakers was Jerry Bremmer ( Bush's initial "czar" in the occupation of Iraq). The speaker who summed up, Wick Murray, a professor at the Naval Institute, was also pessimistic, forecasting a declining American influence in the world year by year. His only positive point was that the Western hemisphere should be energy independent within 15 years. The education panel consisted of David Boren and Benno Schmidt. It was clear that "income inequality"

now describes American educational institutions as much as any other aspect of the economy. For example, CUNY spends \$7000 per year per community college student and \$14,000 per college student, contrasted with Yale's expenditure per undergraduate in excess of \$200,000 per student. (Of course, this includes all of Yale's expenditures, many of which do not directly relate to undergraduate education. Nevertheless, the figures underscore how much more Yale possesses in financial resources than most other institutions.)

Like the 25th reunion, there was an ambitious reunion film, for which over 100 classmates were interviewed (although most were apparently eliminated in the editing room). The film maker is a younger Yale graduate. As an aside, at one moment in the film, he posited the four best known members of the class: David Boren, David Gergen, Bill Nordhaus, and Arthur Laffer. I could almost hear a momentary groan from the economists in the audience, as I'm sure most recognize Laffer as a celebrity, but not as an economist. Others who I think could have been named instead include John Malone (cable billionaire), who gave \$50M of our \$68M record setting reunion gift, Warren Hoge (retired New York Times international correspondent), Benno Schmidt, Bill DeWitt (principal owner of St. Louis Cardinals), or Dick Cheney. Guy Struve, who chaired the reunion committee, received cheers whenever he spoke with the day's announcements. Everyone recognized what a huge job Guy had done in leading and organizing the reunion. We set a record for the highest percentage (50.1%) of living classmates who have attended a Yale 50th reunion.

All in all, Annick and I had a lot of fun and were very glad we attended. The high points for me were having two classmates whom I didn't know ask about two of our sons. One, David Swenson, a Seattle lawyer (and 1967 HLS graduate) had heard that our son Walter is well respected among the Seattle bar, and Henry Hewitt, a Portland lawyer, said he is a personal friend of the founder of Lithia Motors, where our son Eddy is chief counsel, and that Sid Debore is very pleased with Eddy's work.

John