

OUCH! YALE



by Reg Green

Thoughts Speak as Loudly as Words

Proverbs are remembered less for their wisdom than their wordplay: 'Birds of a feather flock together.' 'Actions speak louder than words,' etc. But one of them I have come to believe in unquestioningly: 'Great minds think alike.'

My conversion came on the day my eldest son graduated from Yale, when the festivities were dominated by one interminable speech by an academic which, as far as I could tell, contained not one original thought or captivating phrase.

As it droned on, I kept saying to myself, "Come on, come on, get on with it." Apparently not just to myself, however, and after a while my ex-wife, Jane, made it quite clear that I was ruining a memorable occasion. Chastened, from then on, I suffered in silence.

When at last the ceremony was over, I asked my mother, who was sitting on Jane's far side if she'd enjoyed it. Yes, she said, except that she missed a lot of the main speech because Henry Kissinger, who was sitting behind her for his son's graduation, kept saying, "Come on, come on, get on with it."