Saving the Time-Space Continuum

Barbara Walters in her “pre-interview” asks, “If you could change anything in your past, what would it be?” That becomes an interesting point to ponder. What would I change? As a die-hard science fiction fan, I know the pitfalls of altering the flow of time. Marty McFly taught us that changing our past can be problematic, such as wiping out our own existence. Therefore, this is no light choice to be made. Something small, being hit by your grandfather’s car while saving your stalker father, could prevent your birth. The Doctor claims that there are fixed points in time that cannot be changed without endangering the entire time-space continuum. Whoa! That certainly ramps it up. I could screw up the entire cosmos. Better make this count.

I could change my father’s cancer. Lymphatic cancer survival rates have greatly increased since 1979. He died by slow inches over twelve years until the man who died that January was not my dad. Weekly battles with the chemotherapy drove me to the pages of numerous works of fiction. However, I would have never been able to become so engrossed in reading that thermonuclear devices can’t reach me. Long trips for radiation pushed me to conquer motion sickness while reading in the car, allowing me to rewrite a curriculum and figuring out how PowerPoint works while riding down the interstate. At the time, his slow his slow death excruciating. Now, I realize that losing him all at once at the age of four would have been more devastating.

I could complete my B.A. at Ball State. I would be ready to retire from teaching, or, maybe the career of political campaign management would have carried me to that Michigan Avenue penthouse. I might just as easily be dead from the lifestyle I pursued. I certainly would have never met my wife. How many guys were hired by their wives? Meeting Nora, the greatest love of my life, saved my life in more ways than one and brought number two into my life, my daughter, Deah.

I could have stayed at Fruit of the Loom. I would have nearly thirty years in. Punching the clock ended responsibility, the money was good, and I was moving up, I would be management by now. I would also be brain-dead. It was a good job, for some the optimal job. I found the routine of factory life mind-numbingly boring. Probably the most mind-expanding times were the three years of full-time employee/full-time student/full-time father. There is just something about becoming who I was meant to be.

I believe we are the sum total of genetics, relationships, and choices. Altering my past would alter me. Has it all been pleasant? No, but they are a part of me, and I like who I have become, who I am becoming. The answer to the question is an unequivocal…nothing. The time-space continuum is safe. This I believe.