

Thank you all for being here, for my mom and for us. I've tried my best to be brief, and expect I have failed miserably in that effort. My apologies in advance.

My mother told us quite specifically how she wished to be buried. She wanted a mausoleum, in the classical Greek style, in which she would be placed in an above ground sarcophagus (which should open from the inside, just in case there had been a mistake). On the wall would be mounted a TV and next to the sarcophagus would be a nightstand upon which we would place a remote control and a ham sandwich.

This story reveals a few qualities of my mom that I thought we might consider during today's session:

Mom knew her own mind. While my dad was unsure of a few things while we were planning the funeral, when I asked him where we should hold the funeral, he immediately knew mom would want Campbell's, as she saw it as "tonier" than Riverside. Her politics were firmly that of an idealistic liberal, leavened by an acute understanding of human nature and its limits, and she would eagerly engage anyone over the thorniest issues of race, class or the social safety net. Franklin Delano Roosevelt could do no wrong. Her coffee was resolutely American, but with a tinge of Europe— no espresso or burnt Starbucks for her— preferably Chock Full of Nuts, but in a demitasse cup with a drop of milk and a tiny spoonful of sugar from a tiny spoon. She could be opinionated, and loved a lively debate. In an argument of ideas she was nimble and persuasive, and would convince you before you even knew it. And you would enjoy being convinced, because she was so damned smart, and funny, and 99% of the time she was right. Hard for a son to admit, but true.

Mom was irreverent in her opinions, sometimes bordering on inappropriate (a tendency I have, for better and worse, inherited). I cannot tell you how many times I had to suppress giggles at mom's comments during a somber wedding, or, yes, even a funeral. She had no patience for cant, conformity or blind orthodoxy. I think it offended her respect for reasoned thought almost as much as it offended her sense of fun. She was a bit subversive. That ham

sandwich in the mausoleum is a sibling of the bacon and non-kosher hotdogs with which she would tempt my observant Jewish childhood friend and his older brother. In her command of psychoanalytic theory and masterful teaching, she never fell back on dogma, but always challenged and interrogated accepted truths.

Yet mom appreciated tradition. She venerated Freud even as she challenged and expanded his theories, happy to draw upon the complexity and nuance of an approach to the psyche she respected and continually plumbed for insight. She had many personal traditions, and really established most of our familial traditions: the Manner Schnitten, Weiner Schnitzels, Marilen Knurd, wood strawberries, heaps of schlag (yes, there is a theme of rich food here); but also skiing, hiking, traveling and obscure movie quotations. (Beat the Devil and Star Trek were favorites)

Mom had style. For many of my cousins and pseudo cousins, my mom and dad were a jet-set couple, full of youthful class and joie-de-vivre, the JFK and Jackie of their circle. Mom was a knockout in the high fashion outfits my dad would convince her to wear, especially when they were a footloose couple running around post-war Europe, living La Dolce Vita. Back in New York she was a connoisseur of opera, ballet and, for certain, fine food, passing along a love of caviar and pâté to her granddaughters. When my folks went to Washington DC in the 60s to the Doctors Against the Vietnam War rally on the Mall, she wore her mink. Hers was a sense of style that was classy, yet unpretentious and casual. Her home was always both beautiful and comfortable.

Mom was entitled. I mean this in the most positive way: It's no crime to be entitled if you are truly deserving, and she was. She was a darling of her loving parents, especially her doting father, my grandfather, Alfred, whom she adored back, and grew up in the magical, if partially imagined, landscape of the Viennese Ringstrasse bourgeoisie, where she felt safe and loved. Even with the Anschluss, her family's flight in 1938, and the challenges of resettling on New York's "Riverseeda Dreeva," mom was always optimistic and expected the best. I recall that when asked to speak at a High Holy Days service honoring Holocaust survivors at our synagogue, she said "but I didn't suffer." This was partially true, as

they had escaped safely, even traveling first class on the Normandy, but it is also a tribute to mom's world view: she was an eternal optimist who made the most of each and every day. She was entitled to the best and she got it.

The last thing the mausoleum story tells us is that mom was immortal. The big joke of the whole mausoleum shtick was that she never really expected to die, and we never really thought she would. As Betsy Auchincloss said to me, upon hearing the news, "But your mother promised me she would never die!" Our old friend Vivian commented a couple of nights ago "I don't think Helen is convinced that she's dead." I'm sure she's right. I'm sure that mom believes she is still alive. And in an argument, I'm sure she could convince me that she is right. It may be a cliché, but in mom's case, especially, it's a truth, that Helen Meyers lives on in the patients, students, colleagues, friends and family whom she touched. No need for the mausoleum, mom. You've convinced me.

Ok enough with the mausoleum.

Permit me to close with a few words to all of you from my mom. I know she would have had things to say to you which she did not have the chance to tell you. My mom was the best, most generous listener around, but the listening wasn't free. The price was that you had to listen back: to hear her stories, kibitzing, insights and wise counsel. Not a few of our friends and family have surprised me with stories of mom's assistance and interventions, indeed one friend has said, "she saved my life."

So here are some quick notes from her to some of those mom loved:

To her patients: You were her passion. Mom looked forward every day to the time she spent working with you. She didn't need hobbies because you were her mystery stories and adventures and art, all rolled up into one. Mom would only ask that you bring her more of your stories.

To her friends: Mom loved you. She thrived on the company of her friends, from Vienna, Hunter, medical school, residency, Columbia, RMHA, the IPA. You were her partners in crime, debate partners,

siblings and platonic lovers. Talking was mom's narcotic. Please keep talking to her.

To her protégées: Mom had a set of students and supervisees who became her colleagues and friends, many of them women for whom my mom was, despite her ambivalence over being considered a feminist, an important role model, inspiration, advocate and provocateur. Please remember her contributions, both intellectual and personal, and teach the next generation with passion, smarts and love.

To our 4560 Delafield family– Mary, Terry, Dora, Laney– She would ask you all to check in on dad and us, and stock up heaven with a stash of Manner Wafers and Charlie perfume.

To her adoptive children: my childhood friends, the neighborhood kids I grew up with, my pseudo cousins the Mendlowitzes, Beth's classmates and colleagues– you all know who you are– she would wish to send you her love, tell you stop being self-destructive, and to send her information on me and dad, because we never tell her anything.

To sister-in-law Pat: she would ask you to take good care of dad.

To her brother Willi: she may forget to call you, but only because she is always thinking of you and figures you know her so well that you know what she'll say anyway. I suppose *you'll* have to call *her*.

To her cousin Henry: she'll be with you soon, so get a nice seat in a café on the Piazza San Marco in heaven, Florian's I presume, where you are no doubt hanging out already. Have fun together and try not to argue. And see if you can get her an American coffee and a ham sandwich.

To her nieces and nephews– Erica, Lizzy, Jonathan, Peter and Ann. She'll want you to tell her all the news as often as possible, to support and love each other, and for you to know that you are all her children, too. And to look out for me, your brother, and dad.

To Beth: you know you were truly the daughter she never knew she

had wanted, and whom she truly enjoyed and loved in that complicated and passionate way that mothers do.

To Rennie and Maddie: she was so thrilled to be able to watch you grow up. The joy you gave her is unquantifiable. Remember to visit her in your hearts, to care for each other as she hoped siblings would, to grab ahold of life as she did, and to never settle.

To Dad: you were her knight, her pal, her lover, her sparring partner, her nurse, her most intimate co-conspirator- Tyrone Power to her Ava Gardner. I have never seen a bond so close, or a husband so devoted to his sweetheart. You were the perfect partner for mom. You were each blessed to have each other for so long. Mom would tell you that you have me, and Beth, and the kids, and all of us who love you dearly. We won't be as much fun, but we're here. Then she would ask you to get her some coffee and complain that her son hadn't called.

Finally, I have my own message to her. Mom, the remote is in there with you. The sandwich will be nearby. You were the most loving, engaging, caring, supportive, entertaining, smart and inspiring mom a guy could ask for, and your love for me, for dad, for the life of the mind, and for the people in this room, was and is my inspiration. I will miss you hard. And I promise to call.