

Eulogy for Erin Anderson

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De la part de la famille d'Erin, je voudrais tous vous remercier du fond du cœur d'être venus, beaucoup de loin, d'être ici pour nous aider à célébrer la vie d'Erin. Erin serait, et sans aucun doute elle est, très fière et comblée de joie de voir ici réunis, tant de gens qu'elle aimait et admirait pour se souvenir d'elle. Je m'appelle Ellen Anderson et je suis la sœur d'Erin et de Philippe. Nous, sa famille, voudrions partager avec vous quelques unes de nos pensées et quelques uns de nos souvenirs d'elle.

On behalf of Erin's family, I'd like to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for coming, many of you from far away, to be here to help us celebrate Erin's life. Erin would be—indeed, we know she is—so very proud and overwhelmed with joy to see so many people she loved and admired here to remember her. I'm Ellen Anderson, Erin's and Phil's sister. We, her family, would like to share with you some of our thoughts and memories of her.

Erin was, first and foremost, a woman of valor. Even as a little girl, she had drive, determination and strength. One of my earliest memories is of her not bothering to walk. At 10 months of age, still unable to stand on her own, she was placed by our mother in a walker. She bypassed walking altogether; instead, she *ran* straight ahead, just as fast as her little legs would take her, yelling with joy. At the age of 10, she hitched the small family dog, her devoted slave, to her skateboard with a jump rope and got our delighted pet to gallop down the street, pulling a triumphant Erin on her imaginary chariot. She never fell off once! She and our brother Phil were a formidable pair: they competed and cooperated with each other as a championship high school debating team in California.

Erin was a risk-taker, an adventurer, a pioneer, always in motion, always in charge, determined to get right everything she did. She had strong principles and beliefs that she fought and negotiated for. And she did these things, not for herself alone, but for the other members of every team she ever helped to build. That balance between competition and cooperation was virtually unique in my professional experience. The stories on the web site her INSEAD colleagues and students have created to honor her memory testify to the consummate scholar, teacher and leader she was. She is clearly much admired, and much loved in her professional, public life. She told me earlier this year that her principal public legacy would be the good work she had done that had made a lasting impact and had been of practical use in the real world. She was also gratified by the students she taught who became her colleagues. We, her family, thank you all, her colleagues and students, for the intellectual satisfaction your accomplishments gave her and for the sheer pleasure you offered her of participating in your enterprises.

She was not just a superb academic, however. She was a faithful and tireless correspondent who kept her family and friends connected with each other for decades. She was richly rewarded by a vast web of friends from every era of her life with whom she stayed in touch, even in the prehistoric era before the advent of email. Her sense of family was generous. Our stepmother, Jean, wanted me to say today that Erin's devotion, kindness and faithfulness to our widowed father's dear second wife gave her yet another daughter, whose loss she feels as of her own flesh and blood. Phil and Rhonda rejoice in Erin's heartfelt love of their children, her nephew and niece, Spencer and Olivia, and in her unstinting goodness and generosity towards them. Her brother-in-law, Tim, recalls with gratitude Erin's expert and timely advice on building a client base for his legal practice. For Erin, the personal and the professional went hand in hand.

Erin's devotion to Hubert, her beloved husband, reminds me of the story of Ruth from the Hebrew Scriptures. For Ruth asks to accompany Naomi to a new land in these heartfelt words: "Do not ask me to leave you. Where you go, I will go; where you stay, I will stay; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried." Erin and Hubert both lived out this commitment of mutual love in their 28 years of marriage. Each supported the other's career in the United States and France. Hubert learned English and Erin learned French, so that each spoke the other's language of the heart. They began their married life in Erin's country, the United States, where their daughters Aline and Valérie were born and started school. Hubert first learned Erin's language and adapted to her country's ways.(well, maybe not so much the food!). 15 years later, they moved to France. Erin adored living among the French, and became a most appreciative admirer of Gallic elegance, savoir-faire and joie de vivre. Her integration into French life was fostered by Hubert's loving, welcoming family, first and foremost, by his parents Henri and Colette. They, especially, made possible Erin's exquisite balance between her career and her family. They were always there, a tower of strength, actively involved in the raising of their much loved granddaughters. Erin saw Colette not just as Hubert's mother but also as her own. In France, Erin and Hubert raised Valérie and Aline as citizens of the world. Their international family widened its boundaries when Aline and Maxuel were married last July, adding Brazilian soul to the Franco-American spirit. What a joyous occasion that was! It was also the last time many of us saw her. Erin was radiant, in her element, delighted to see the next generation beginning their own adventure of love and marriage.

Erin's special gift to her cherished daughters is her rock-solid confidence in them, which has given them added strength from her deep and boundless love. Because she believed, and believes, in them, they can believe in themselves. Aline says, "Mom believing in you is like an iron wall behind anything you might tackle." Thanks to her love forever defending and supporting them, anything is possible.

I don't want to say goodbye yet to my brilliant, beautiful, loving, sometimes exasperating, funny and irreplaceable sister. I was so looking forward to her old age; I know it would have been unique, surprising, delightful. She would have been such a grand, interesting, utterly individual old woman who would have left us all in the dust while she waited for us to catch up with her. Not a single day of a long and healthy life would have been wasted on Erin.

She left us far too soon. And yet, on a beautiful morning, under a blue sky, surrounded by music she loved, she was in charge, independent, full of hope, looking forward, not back. She was absolutely herself: determined, dynamic, optimistic and loving to the last second of her life on this earth.

May we live our lives as authentically as she lived hers, until we all meet again. Now we come together to bid her goodbye, which in English means "God be with you."

God be with you, Erin. Because of her love for us all, today she would also have us say, "Until we see one another again."

Pas un seul jour d'une longue vie n'aurait été gâchée par Erin. Elle nous a quittés bien trop tôt. Et pourtant, par une belle matinée, sous un ciel bleu, entourée par de la musique qu'elle aimait, en pleine action, pleine d'espoir, le regard vers l'avant, pas en arrière, elle nous a quitté.

«Que Dieu soit avec toi, Erin,» ou, comme on dit dans cette langue française qu'elle a tant aimée, « à Dieu. »

Puisqu'elle nous a tant aimés, nous pouvons tous être sûrs qu'aujourd'hui elle voudrait aussi que nous disions, « A bientôt. » A bientôt, Erin. A bientôt, et à la prochaine.