

2010 CALDERONE PRIZE
PROFESSOR SUSAN P. BAKER
May 6, 2010

Good morning, everyone! I'm so glad to see you, and to be here, and to be a part of this special occasion

Before I begin, I would like to thank all the wonderful people at the Mailman School who have labored long and hard behind the scenes to make today's event a success: Lillian Silver, Madelyn Storms, and Lindsey Ames from the Development Office, Henry Miller and Sabrina Strauss of Goodman Media International, the august members of the Calderone Prize Selection Committee, some of whom are here today; and above all, Dean Linda Fried who has, in her inimitable fashion and warm inclusive style not only inspired us all, but given us a real sense of new possibilities and new beginnings. If I've forgotten anyone I apologize and ask you to please chalk it up to my "forgettery," as my mother, Dr. Mary Calderone, used to call it.

Professor Baker, there is not a mother in this room who doesn't thank you from the bottom of her heart for the work you have done improving child safety down through the years. As only one example of the many things you have accomplished, I remember as if it were yesterday coming home from the hospital with my new baby girl carefully strapped into her car seat. That my daughter was safely in a car seat and *not* in my arms was entirely due to your influence in getting child seatbelt laws enacted and on the books throughout the country and your insistence on prolific public health education and outreach to get the message out. Some twenty-six years later, I know that Ariana would want to thank you personally for being so well taken care of so soon after her birth, but she works for UNESCO in Paris and was unable to make the long trip home.

Sue, I really wish you had been around when my father was alive. You probably would have been the only one who could have said to him, without contradiction or

complaint: "Frank . . . *do* be more careful!"

My father was a public health physician who not only understood his field but combined that knowledge with an astute business sense and considerable administrative skills. His many years spent running his father's theaters made him especially aware of the importance of public relations, as well as the uniquely symbiotic relationship between public health and the media. My father knew all this instinctively, and he knew it years before anyone else.

Besides being a public health physician, and, indeed, part of the team that traveled to Geneva in the late 1940's to help in the creation of the World Health Organization, my father was also an inveterate risk taker, whether it was calmly sailing into the teeth of Atlantic gales; navigating through impenetrable fogs in Nova Scotia with only the sound of bell buoys to guide him; successfully completing several Bermuda races; scuba diving in the Caribbean, or horse-back riding –something he thankfully gave up long before we were born. We once looked at an old photograph of Daddy jumping a horse over a fence. My sister, who is not only an equine veterinarian but an extraordinarily good rider, frowned slightly, then politely opined that it was plain to see from the ungainly rider and the clearly uncomfortable horse that our father was just plain awful.

As for his driving, it was . . . how do I say this diplomatically . . . *fast*. I can remember a few late afternoons standing by the living room window with my Swiss au pair looking out across a large saltwater pond to a long winding hilly road. We were waiting for him to come home from work at the United Nations in New York. At last, we'd spot his car way off in the distance, coming down Kings Point Road, whipping around the bends at breakneck speed, hell bent for home and a good stiff drink. In her incomparable Swiss-French accent my au pair would remark dryly: "Et, le voila . . . here comes the cowboy!" That was the other Frank Calderone, and I think that only Professor Baker might have had the clout to get him to s - l - o - w down!

Thankfully for us, throughout her long and prestigious career Professor Susan Baker has *never* slowed down and has quietly, persistently, passionately, and often with little or no fanfare worked diligently for the health of the public in the arena of public and personal injury control and safety issues of all kinds. We thank her today by awarding her the Calderone Prize and the Calderone Medal.

The medal itself is a replica of one that was struck for my grandfather at the turn of the last century, so there are well over one hundred years of family history attached to it. Reconstituted for a different purpose today, the medal symbolizes for me everything that is *good* and *necessary* and *honest* and *important* about our field.

The Calderone Prize Selection Committee awards this honor only to the best of the best, and over the years the Calderone Prize has slowly become the premier public health award, both here and abroad.

Susan P. Baker *is* the best of the best, and I am delighted and honored to have been asked to join with the Mailman School and the Calderone Prize Selection Committee as we bestow this prize and this medal upon her today.

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