

When I think about Frances Howard, I have two images in my head. The first is of a remarkable woman, a great American, and a worldly person. I also think of her as my grandmother -- someone with whom I shared the bonds of family over innumerable holidays, someone who beamed with a certain expecting pride when I excelled, someone who would tell me about her world travels and making the world and the community a better place. When I stop and realize that these two images are in fact of the same person, I am struck by a sense of amazement.

It is a blessing to have a great American for a grandmother. There is a time in one's life when one realizes their place in the world, where they and their family fit in. For me, this was some time in high school. Until then, I hadn't realized that my grandmother was remarkable. I hadn't realized that it was unusual for a grandmother to commit herself to ideas, to schmooze with national leaders, and to impact the lives of many, many people. Since this realization, I have carried a pride for her and her life. And since her death, I have tried to honor her memory and have worked to ensure that her spirit lives on.

Grandma, we will all miss you. I will miss your vitality for life, your love of and your dedication to ideas, your commitment to a better world, and the way that you carried yourself. I hope that my life is as full as yours.