

IN MEMORIAM

When Maggie Hall died on March 3, 1999, CQ lost a valued friend and irreplaceable editorial consultant. Maggie, with her musician's gift for the sound of the written word, left her mark on every issue of the journal; and, with gratitude, this volume is dedicated to her memory. We asked Henrik Blum, Emeritus Professor in the School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, who worked with her over many years, to share some of his memories of Maggie.

Maggie Hall was a distinctive person and personality who saw the world's activities in terms of social justice achieved or thwarted. Given the number, variety, and ubiquity of failures of equity in the world about us, Maggie was often in a less than happy mood.

Maggie was as demanding of others as of herself. Her credo required that people do well in the work they undertook. From the highest to the lowest of the intellectual, administrative, or political world, no excuses were acceptable for poor, uneven, tardy, or pretentious work—and Maggie had the intellectual capacity to make these determinations rapidly and consistently.

Maggie was a staunch supporter of persons and institutions that she felt met her criteria for social goals and integrity. She would not participate in a shoddy, shallow, or less than truthful enterprise—even under the most strenuous pressure.

Maggie first worked under my supervision in the late sixties when I came to the University to set up a new program in Health Planning. She was turned loose to create a library that would serve faculty and graduate students as an accessible and useful resource. Maggie worked best, and most happily, when she worked alone, on projects that required Herculean organization, scrupulous attention to detail, and keen logical analysis. She worked long and hard and accomplished the task, essentially without professional supervision.

Nearly twenty years later when I took over the direction of the University of California, Berkeley—University of California, San Francisco Joint Medical Program, Maggie was there as the Director's assistant. We resumed a very positive relationship in a very different situation. Fortunately, we respected and knew what to expect of one another.

Maggie was as thorough in preparing a letter as she was in editing a piece for a journal. Under the prevailing circumstances at the university, the political demands on the letters were often as critical as the scientific or philosophical demands on articles destined for journals. She would step into my office, letter in hand and want to know, "Just what are you trying to say? I can see several potential thrusts." Such up-front administrative assistants and editors are hard to find.

Maggie's insights were 20/20. When the then Dean asked her to inform me that the committee, appointed to find my replacement, had decided on a particular candidate, Maggie could not refrain from asking the Dean, "Just what does he have to offer this program?" The Dean decided to talk to me personally and opened with Maggie's comment. I told the Dean that Maggie had hit the nail on the head, that this would-be-escapee from a prestigious Ivy League School was about useless in my opinion. The Dean took this to heart and set up a new search that chose well. Maggie had saved the program from a serious injury.

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Maggie and I retired at about the same time. She followed me to what was then called the "Over 60's" clinic, which served the health needs of elderly and predominantly poor minority persons. She gave her time, enthusiasm, and talents to what we both felt was an important community enterprise. In serving this vulnerable group until the time of her death, Maggie continued to display the same dedication and commitment that had always shown her to be one of that special class of people who put society's needs first.