

Marianna Wertz: *The Beautiful and the Sublime*

Marianna Wertz, born Aug. 14, 1948, died on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, Jan. 15, 2003. Marianna, who was vice-president of the Schiller Institute in the U.S., was not only a *beautiful soul*, but in her fight not only for her own life against disease and death, but in her selfless fight for justice for all humanity in association with Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., she was what the German poet Friedrich Schiller described as a *sublime* individual.

As Helga Zepp LaRouche wrote in a message to her funeral on January 20: "To Marianna, My Little Sister in Eternity, You were the soul of the Schiller Institute in America, and the reason why you chose that task is because you felt a complete affinity with the sublime Idea of Man of the poet, whose name is the metaphor for our work."

A dear friend of Marianna's reported that his father, now deceased, kept the following statement by an unknown author on his desk:

"Man's dearest possession is his life, and since it is given him but once, he must live so as to feel no regrets for years without purpose, so live as not to be with shame of a cowardly and trivial past."

As Marianna told me, her husband, and several others in her final days, she had no regrets about how she had lived her life: she felt completely blessed by her association with the political movement of Lyndon LaRouche, by knowing Lyndon and Helga LaRouche personally, and by our marriage. In fact, she said that she could not conceive of a life more blessed than the one she had lived.

On the Front Lines

Marianna and her brother Anton Chaitkin were raised in an intensely political family. Their father, Jacob Chaitkin, had led a boycott against the Nazis during the 1930's and had successfully sued the Wall Street partners of the Nazi government on behalf of American bondholders. She



Courtesy of William F. Wertz, Jr.

IN MEMORIAM

attended Alexander Hamilton Elementary School in Pasadena, California, and was shaped politically by the Franklin D. Roosevelt views of her parents. In fact, in high school, when she became head of the Girls' League, she succeeded Anne Roosevelt, the daughter of Franklin and Eleanor's son, James Roosevelt. The last book she was reading before cardiac surgery on January 2, was a biography of FDR.

Marianna quite naturally joined the political movement of Lyndon LaRouche in 1971, after Nixon dismantled the post-World War II Bretton Woods System established by Roosevelt. She ran for political office herself in Seattle, Washington in 1975, winning the primary election for an unexpired City Council seat.

Shortly after our marriage during the middle of that campaign, Marianna was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease, at age 27. During the rest of her life, Marianna fought disease as she politically fought the financial oligarchy. Even as she suffered nausea from chemotherapy, she campaigned publicly against the attempt to legalize

In December 1983, Marianna successfully climbed to the top of Brunelleschi's Dome in Florence, Italy. Twenty years later, while in the hospital with congestive heart failure, she studied Bruce Director's class on its method of construction.

marijuana for so-called medical use.

Although she combatted the cancer in 1975, and defeated it when it returned in 1982, she had to contend with the after-effects of radiation treatment and chemotherapy. In 1982, she had to undergo a double-bypass heart operation, following a heart attack caused by the earlier radiation. Over the course of the succeeding years, she had four hip operations stemming from chemotherapy, including the last one on our 27th

anniversary, Oct. 29, 2002. Finally, she was diagnosed with aortic stenosis and underwent open-heart surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital, in Baltimore, Maryland on Jan. 2, 2003.

Through all these ordeals, including my unjust imprisonment along with Lyndon LaRouche and others in 1989 in a political railroad, Marianna never retreated from the political fight for justice for all. She always remained optimistic. She always thought, not of herself, but of how she could help others, even in the smallest of ways.

When Lyndon LaRouche and his associates were persecuted, she travelled internationally, despite need of a hip replacement, to mobilize support for LaRouche's exoneration under the auspices of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations. She took on ending capital punishment as a personal mission. Not only did she visit me weekly in prison, but she wrote articles in the *New Federalist* and *EIR* against the injustices of the U.S. criminal justice system, the murderous policies of the HMO's, and the inhumanity of the Welfare Reform Act

of 1996. Later, she reached out to many prisoners, among others, who responded to the truthfulness of her articles.

To the Mountaintop

Marianna was sustained in the face of adversity by a passionate love of Classical culture. She played the violin, until the effects of chemotherapy on her shoulders forced her to abandon it.

She was a participant in the founding of the Schiller Institute in 1984, and was one of the original signers of the statement issued by Helga Zepp LaRouche calling for the Inalienable Rights of All Mankind.

During the late 1980's, having learned German on her own, she joined me in translating the works of Friedrich Schiller. Difficult poems that I would not even attempt, she translated beautifully—for example, "The Song of the Bell," "The Artists," "The Walk," "Shakespeare's Shade," "The Dance," "Pegasus in Yoke," and "The Glove." Although neither of us was satisfied with our ability to recite poetry or perform drama, she nonetheless infused her mind with the most beautiful poetry and drama, just as she also strove to master *bel canto* singing.

As Helga Zepp LaRouche wrote: "Your translations of Schiller's works prove that you are a true poetess, fulfilling the standard set by Schiller, that one has to be a poet in two languages, if one wants to translate poetry adequately. I will always have in my mind, how movingly you recited the poem 'Hope,' which gave us a mirror into your beautiful soul. A beautiful soul, a person for whom passion and duty, freedom and necessity are the same, that is exactly how you have lived your life."

Moments before he heard the news of Marianna's death, Lyndon LaRouche spoke to an audience in India about this same quality of the sublime in reference to Schiller's Jeanne d'Arc:

"Jeanne d'Arc made possible modern European civilization. Without her action, it would not have occurred. She was a simple farm girl, who went to her stupid king. She said: Stupid king. God sent me to you, to tell you: Become a real king! She said, God wants you to become a king. So she went out and commanded

troops, won battles, and then was betrayed by the king. She lost the fight, because she was betrayed, but she refused to submit, at the point of being burned alive. As a result of her courage, and death by the inquisition she inspired France to throw the British out of France, successfully, and also inspired and contributed to the Renaissance."

Marianna was such a simple and courageous girl, who overcame her fears and fought for the truth. When other associates of LaRouche fled out of fear into narrow-minded family life, or otherwise fled from the necessary political and intellectual fight, she, with all of her physical infirmities, insisted upon being on the front lines.

Even as she was in the hospital being treated for pulmonary blood clots and congestive heart failure, she continued to work intellectually to master the ideas needed to teach the LaRouche Youth Movement. During her last illness, she was researching an article on how to produce geniuses. Her list of geniuses included Lyndon LaRouche, Leonardo, George Washington Carver, Gauss, Ben Franklin, Socrates, Schiller, Beethoven, and Kepler.

Marianna's passion for justice also led her to develop a close friendship and collaboration with Civil Rights heroine, Amelia Boynton Robinson. She edited Amelia's book, *Bridge Across Jordan*. But,

more than that, she made it possible for this beautiful gem to shine upon a world stage, when the world so needed a burst of sunlight. She even helped her to walk.

As Amelia wrote on hearing of Marianna's death: "Marianna was like a daughter to me, and a friend, and the best editor you could ever imagine. She was a combination of everything good, and she did it all so well. I can imagine angels coming to Marianna, telling her that God is waiting for her now. It takes away a lot of our darkness and despair, to know that He has relieved her of her pain and tribulations. She's gone to a higher ground, and knowing that takes away our sadness."

Like Martin Luther King, Jr., on whose national holiday she was buried in Leesburg, Virginia's Union Cemetery, in her 54 beautiful years, she had "been to the mountaintop."

As Friedrich Schiller writes in *On the Sublime*: "Only when the sublime is wedded with the beautiful, and our receptivity for both has been cultivated in equal measure, are we perfected citizens of nature, without for this reason being its slaves and without frittering away our rights as citizens in the intelligible world."

Marianna has done her job. Now it is up to each of us to spend our talents equally well.

—William F. Wertz, Jr.



Despite her hip replacement, in 1992, after I had been released from prison, we stood together high in the Bavarian Alps. We had been to the mountaintop. We had tasted Heaven.