



Albert J. Krieger

November 4, 1923 - May 14, 2020

Albert J. Krieger passed away peacefully at the age of 96, with his beloved wife, Irene Stoller Krieger, at his side, just as she had always been, at home, abroad, and in the courtroom throughout 74 years of marriage.

Albert J. Krieger was a legal legend. Armed with a razor-sharp intellect and near photographic recall, he was most well-known for the surgical precision of his cross examinations, for meticulously dissecting a witness's testimony slice by slice, and most importantly, for being a man of unimpeachable integrity and dedication. As comfortable in an appellate courtroom as he was in front of a jury, he was a scholar, and had argued cases before the United States Supreme Court.

The name, Krieger, means "Warrior," and that's what he was, a warrior and an icon. He taught ethics as well as trial skills and delivered hundreds of inspirational speeches to a generation of lawyers as a frequent lecturer at law schools, seminars, and bar events all across the country. He inspired thousands. Even after he retired, including the week before his death, letters of gratitude continued to come from far and wide to thank him for his influence. A common theme was that Albert's voice was always with them, urging them along, to be their very best, to wonder, when faced with any issue, "What would Albert say?" and then act accordingly.

Stunningly, Krieger never relied on notes in the courtroom, for any speech he ever gave, or in the classroom; he worked purely from memory. He had the ability to remember whole files of evidence and could recite prior testimony verbatim as he questioned a witness, or the language from caselaw, all without picking up a pencil, opening a computer, or looking at a piece of paper. The quickness of his mind, combined with uncanny powers of persuasion and a legendary, powerful, booming voice, allowed him to always be "in the moment," but that does not mean he did not prepare. His mind was always working. Often, when his office was in his home, he would disappear into his garage for a while, tinker with a project (he owned every power tool imaginable and was quite a skilled craftsman) and everyone knew that soon enough he would emerge with a new theory of defense, or a

new argument, or the key to whatever issue he was grappling with. Even in the garage, he was working.

His list of clients included some names like Cockeyed Willy, One-Eyed Ben, Joe Bananas, and the Teflon Don. The cases involved some of the most notorious criminals of all time. They fueled headlines that splashed across the national news media for days and weeks at a time and became the inspiration for multiple movies and documentaries that remain classics to this day – Honor Thy Father, The French Connection, The Godfather. But he was a lawyer's lawyer, often representing other high-profile attorneys, as well as corporate businessmen.

His proudest professional accomplishment, however, was his defense of members of the Lakota Sioux tribe in the highly controversial trial of American Indian Movement activists charged in the standoff at Wounded Knee in 1973. For almost a year, he commuted from Miami to South Dakota and handled these cases pro bono. The year ended with dismissal of charges or acquittals for all but two of the original 150 defendants. Working as Liberty's Last Champion, defending the civil rights and culture of a marginalized society living within our own, but without the same protections—this was his defining moment, in a career that spanned six decades.

Albert believed in the rule of law and had an abiding, passionate respect for the Constitution and for our adversarial process. In his words, "As a citizen, I will accept the pronouncement of our highest court, whether I agree or disagree. But as a lawyer, if that rule fails to establish what is right, I am equally bound to struggle for its change. It is here that liberty's definition thrives." He passionately believed that and said, "It is the defense lawyer who says to the all-powerful government that it must prove that the charge was properly brought. It is the defense lawyer who gives to all those within our borders, whether they realize it or not, freedom's comfort."

He was committed to supporting and improving the defense bar. He was a founder of the National Criminal Defense College and was one of the 34 original members of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, an organization now many thousands strong. Krieger served as president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers in 1979-1980, and the NACDL later presented him with its Lifetime Achievement Award. He was also Chair of the American Bar Association's Criminal Justice Section, served on its Standards Committee, various ABA Task Forces, and as the NACDL representative in the ABA House of Delegates. He was one of the ABA's most respected voices on criminal justice issues. He was honored as a Legal Legend by the 11th Judicial Circuit Historical Society and recognized repeatedly for his contributions to the practice of

the law by bar associations from coast to coast. He often contributed to legal journals and taught in academic settings. He taught at Harvard Law School's Trial Advocacy Workshop for over twenty years, in addition to speaking at countless legal seminars and bar association events.

Albert was born on November 4, 1923 and was raised in New York, the younger son of Ida and Lui Krieger. He had two precious sisters, Dorothy and Edith and a very loving brother, Teddy, who was also an attorney. He outlived them all but remained very close to all their children. He graduated high school at the age of 16 and earned a football scholarship to New York University. He suffered a career ending injury his freshman year but his football scholarship was immediately converted to an academic one. There, he met his college sweetheart, Irene Stoller, and when he returned from serving in the United States Army during World War II, they married. He then attended NYU Law School. Soon they had three children and moved out to Long Island along with various other family members and close friends. Two more children were soon born.

When the oldest children in the family were just toddlers, Ida and Lui bought a farm in the Catskill mountains, in large measure to have a place for the extended family to be safe during the polio epidemic. The extended family continued to spend at least part of every summer at the farm for decades. During the polio epidemic, however, Albert was developing his practice as a young attorney in Manhattan, so he spent weekdays in the city and weekends at the farm, foreshadowing a practice that had him traveling all across the country throughout his career. It was a lifetime of long-distance commuting, as his talent was in demand in every corner of the nation.

Albert had a lifelong love for the ocean and fishing. After his fourth and fifth children were born, he became an avid boater and moved to the shore of the Great South Bay on Long Island. When the older children went off to college, the Krieger's moved to South Florida, where Albert opened a second office. He eventually gave up the New York office, based his law practice in Miami, and did even more boating and fishing on Biscayne Bay. Boating adventures and misadventures are the source of many favorite memories for his family. When the children were all grown, Albert and Irene began to extend their travels to all parts of the world, finally going on many well-earned vacations that, for the first time, were not business related in any way.

Albert always felt badly about being away from home so much. What he never fully realized was that he was truly a force larger than life, and that regardless of whether or not he was physically present he was fully involved in each of his children's lives and influenced any decision that any of his children ever had to make. No matter where he

was, each of his five children always felt his presence, and knew that they were safe. As children and as adults, they always knew that he was fiercely devoted to them. He may have been “Liberty’s Last Champion” but he was his children’s champion, as well.

Albert was a brilliant man with a smart, beautiful wife and five healthy, successful children. He had a fascinating career and a family that loved him more than words can say. The Albert Krieger who could have witnesses “shaking in their boots” by the tone of his voice and his intimidating presence, was a teddy bear of a dad and a devoted husband. Irene and Albert were head over heels in love for almost 74 years. No one could have lived a more principled or loving life. He will be dearly missed and always remembered. His was a life well-lived.

Albert Krieger is survived by the love of his life: Irene Krieger; five children and their spouses: Seth Krieger (Kathy Peres), Claudia Lewis (Neal R. Lewis), Kathy Streeter (Martin Streeter), The Honorable Luise Krieger Martin (David J. Martin) and Jared T. Krieger (Deidre Saunders); nine grandchildren: Kameron Lewis Levin (Seth Lewis Levin), Zachary Lewis (Meleina Mayhew), Nina Lewis (Jeran Kamnorit), Tyler Martin, Nicholas Martin, Ari Streeter, Nate Streeter, Mikella Krieger, Samantha Krieger; and five great grandchildren: Sydney Lewis Levin, Elijah Lewis Levin, Ava Lewis Levin, Malakai Kamnorit and Sebastian Kamnorit. He is also survived by dozens of nieces and nephews; on whose lives he made the most incredible impression. He was loved dearly by all and he adored every one of them.

Albert J. Krieger will be buried at Mount Nebo Cemetery in Miami and a memorial service will be held when it is safe to do so. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to the NACDL Foundation for Criminal Justice at <http://www.NACDL.org>.

Cemetery

Mount Nebo Miami Memorial Gardens

5505 NW 3rd Street

Miami, FL, 33126

Comments



“ May he rest in peace. I was blessed to have met Mr Krieger in the early- mid 1980's here in Milwaukee when he represented Joseph Balistrieri (RIP). I was a pre law undergrad at UW-Milwaukee and pretty much skipped all my classes because of that trial. Mr Krieger blew me away with his "court presence" and just how affable he was "off the court." We spoke many times during breaks at the trial. A nicer man didn't exist. I actually reached out to him again in about 2010 and called the phone number listed as his law office on Google. He had since retired but when I called the number his wife actually answered and passed the phone to him and we spoke for about 10 minutes in regards to a project I was helping a student with. To my surprise he offered any assistance he could. This gentleman was brilliant, kind, smart and real. He was one of a kind and obviously left quite an impression with me. A book should be written about him.

Jeffrey Fojtik
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
jeffreyfoj@gmail.com

Jeffrey Fojtik - January 31, 2021 at 05:02 PM



“ The highlight of every Board of Directors meeting of NACDL was an impassioned speech by Albert. You could count on it. Different subjects but beautifully delivered. We all went out to conquer the world after those. He was a powerful but loving leader

jerry Gold - May 23, 2020 at 11:29 AM



“ A great lawyer and raconteur. I was privileged to listen to him deliver a luncheon talk to the Colorado Bar Association several years ago. His audience, a tough crowd, composed of lawyers, professors, and judges was thoroughly enthralled for the best part of an hour. And of course no notes. A unique man who will be missed. Kirby Wells

Kirby Wells - May 19, 2020 at 02:48 PM



“ Great man!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

paul blackman - May 18, 2020 at 08:09 AM



“ What an amazing man!! I had the pleasure of listening to his interesting stories when he came to his dental appointments... I would have loved to watched him in action. His legacy will live on with the wonderful family he has raised! Love & prayers to Mrs Krieger & the family. Mary Ann Stahl (Dr. Greenberg's office)

Mary Ann Stahl - May 17, 2020 at 10:02 PM



“ I had the pleasure of working with Albert through NACDL and teaching with him. When he talked, everyone listened. It was not just his booming voice and incredible presence. Albert was a mensch who always strove to make our world a better place. As a colleague, mentor and friend, I will miss him .

Larry Vogelmann - May 17, 2020 at 09:11 PM



“ there is a rift in the world -
a mind of exceptional intellect, reason, humor, compassion and love is gone.
you will be missed Uncle Albert

Marc & Lee

Marc Stoller & Lenore Rey - May 17, 2020 at 05:40 PM



“ A great man and the best first boss any lawyer could wish for - RIP Albert - and, thank you. Bobby

Bobby Wells - May 16, 2020 at 03:14 PM



“ Proud to say I knew & learned from Albert Krieger. A wonderful human being. An inspiration to so many of us.

May his memory be a blessing.

Leonard Sands - May 16, 2020 at 02:45 PM



“ Coming from the reading of the obituary the world lost an angel to Heaven where his memory can and will continue to be for eternal blessing to his entire family and beyond, big shoes to fill. Powerful, mighty, loving, and an inspiration sounds like he had it all! Albert will be missed he left tremendous legacy in his child(ren), Claudia, grandchildren Kami, Zach, and Nina! Rest in Peace!

Didi Browdy - May 16, 2020 at 01:00 PM



“ Claudia, Neal and family - Your Dad was a legendary lawyer and such a devoted father and grandfather. I particularly remember his and Irene's kindness and hospitality to Ben and the rest of the band at the time of Hurricane Andrew.

Zecher tzadik l'vracha - The memory of a righteous person is a blessing.

Marc Sternbaum

Marc Sternbaum - May 16, 2020 at 12:21 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Family



Seth Krieger - May 16, 2020 at 11:55 AM



“ I have many wonderful uncles, but Uncle Albert will always be at the top of my list. I have such warm and loving memories of the time we shared; too many to enumerate. But he always made me feel very special, and very loved. Our family has lost someone very dear...someone irreplaceable. He will live in our hearts and in our memories forever... as a man of great intellect and strength, but also as a man of great compassion, humor and kindness. I love you Uncle Albert and will miss you terribly. All my love to you, Aunt Irene, and my Florida cousins and their families. I wish I could be with you all now.

Sue Bregman - May 16, 2020 at 11:51 AM