



DEAR KAREN

By Sarah Feingold L'05

My car's wheels refused to climb your long driveway, but the Syracuse snow was no match for my Rochester-bred feet. Once inside, I gazed out unobstructed windows into the quiet white landscape, not a man-made object to be seen. Framed art posters sat next to piles of books curated on the floor. You said you lived in paradise. You taught me the beauty of Syracuse.

You offered me hot tea as I rattled off statistics to prove that I came prepared for this job interview. You were the only woman in your law school class, the first woman to run for mayor, and a former president of the National Organization for Women. You hired me to be your law clerk; I had no idea what that meant. You taught me to accept opportunities.

For more than two years, I conducted your legal research, mailed your letters, and drove you to Wegmans for Ben and Jerry's ice cream. I assisted you with your present and you graciously took an interest in my future. You talked about how you broke boundaries to push forward in your career. You introduced me to friends, colleagues, and former law clerks. You suggested that I turn to writing and speaking to solidify myself as an art law expert. You taught me to create my own opportunities.

But most of all, you shared stories. You absorbed and recollected books, newspapers, articles, current events, and personal stories from friends. Your thirst for knowledge was contagious; so was your humor. You taught me that teachers are everywhere.

Because of you, girls can play on Little League teams, women may not be discriminated against in housing and employment, and women are admitted to previously all-male Ivy League schools. Because of you, we women were able to share a beer at McSorley's Old Ale House. You taught me not to take progress for granted.

You always pushed for the next fight. You argued that the next hurdle for equality is for equal rights of men, especially for parental rights. You taught me your work was never done.

After law school, I had a hard time keeping in touch with you. You would mail me letters and send me highlighted articles, but you did not have an email address, use a computer, or own a cell phone. A call to you usually resulted in a busy signal or your answering machine. I left lengthy messages in hope you were screening your calls and would pause your writing or put down your reading to talk to me. You always did. You taught me that valuable relationships are worth effort.

The last time I saw you, a little over a year ago, we ate burgers, shared stories, and laughed. When I called you my mentor, you called me your friend. You taught me to make the most out of our time here; you taught me life is fleeting.



Sarah Feingold L'05 is the counsel of Etsy, Inc., where she focuses on intellectual property, business, and e-commerce law. She is also an artist and creates jewelry she sells on the site.