

## Eulogy

Joe Killeen

I cannot express in words what my father meant to me. However, I shall try to express some of his many qualities, and the immense impact he had on my make-up. John was an immensely giving, considerate and polite man. He always made time for me, and was more than willing to answer, to the best of his abilities, any questions I had. In fact, one of the biggest shocks I had, growing up, was that he did not know everything. But between him, and a few books, we always got to the bottom of whatever my enquiry was. When I was titling this document, I could not for the life of me spell 'eulogy': this is precisely the sort of the thing that I would have consulted John on, rather than going to a dictionary.

One of the most striking things about John was his size. He towered above both me and Mary (my mother), and yet was not the least bit intimidating. I like to think of him as a big friendly giant.

I have not been able to come to terms with my own mortality, so it is especially difficult to think of death, when thinking of my beloved father. John was an atheist, and I take after him in that respect. But for those of you who are trying to find a way to cope with the concept, I thought it might be useful to repeat what some great thinkers, outside a theological context, have made of it.

Socrates' outlook on death in the Apology was that either death was akin to a deep sleep, which was inherently pleasant; or that it was a journey to another place where all the dead were, which would be pleasant, as it would enable him to converse with all the dead whom he admired.

Machiavelli's concept of Glory was the means by which, he thought, human beings could achieve immortality. He thought of Glory as being the highest non-religious good available to human beings. The Glory is one's reputation after death, which serves as an imperishable exemplar of the highest rank of human achievement.

This notion, if nothing else, I take from Machiavelli and apply to John. I would not be who I am without the experiences I shared with him. I am sure the same is true for all of you who knew him well. His achievements in the field of social research live on, even if, sadly, he does not.

*This eulogy was delivered at John Killeen's funeral service.*