

Capsule Commentary on Steiner, Carrying My Father

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When experiencing a life event such as the death of a parent, or someone similarly beloved, few things feel more natural than turning to an old friend's stories or telling our own. Simply put, storytelling can help us interpret what it means to live and die. Maybe the old friend's tale will resonate. Or maybe what resonates is a 2000-year-old text.

In trying to reconcile a complicated relationship with his dying father, John Steiner seeks understanding from the father-son relationship described by the Greek epic poem, the *Aeneid*.¹ This ancient story offers a mirror against which Dr. Steiner reflects his own experience. In doing so, he attains a measure of equipoise after his father's death.

Dr. Steiner's narrative originated as a conventional Text & Context manuscript. It evolved into a story about a physician seeking comfort and wisdom from a classic literary work.

What makes Dr. Steiner's piece so powerful is his genuine, and generous, emotional response to the poem. We hope readers and prospective authors will be inspired likewise to turn to great works of literature and art when reflecting on a difficult life experience and will seek not just understanding, but also comfort and wisdom.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards:

Conflict of Interest: The author has no conflicts of interest with this article.

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