

Bob's Musings about Family History (and my responses in blue)

Nan and I: when I was a young boy were very close. She was always very let us a stay up later when watching us and have some snacks and we talked about one day getting a cottage in the woods and living together, but somewhere around preteen that changed and where she once was a confidant now whatever I told her she ran back and told Mom and Dad and of course it was 1960s and I was not always able to communicate with Dad and Mom so then our relationship became estranged and I really didn't tell her anything anymore cuz I didn't trust her to keep anything I said between us and then she would get more and more nasty as time went on and was not the easiest person to deal with. As far as Cecilia Weintraut she was always very nice when I went to her house you could always smell the alcohol and the cigarettes but she was kind and once in awhile gave me a toy or something nice. As we got older I did not really have a lot of interaction with her. I was young and never really understood what Barney was, but I guess he was her friend with benefit guy who helps around the house, but I didn't understand that

Cecelia's house always smelled of cigarette smoke as well **YES!**...she was always very nice to me...and yes mom hated her **YES!** ...In her earlier days mom was the most judgmental person.....she didn't get sort of accepting as a person until maybe the late 1970s...i think both parents were quite prejudice although dad didn't really vocalize that **Dad "swallowed" his prejudices in order to do business with everyone. Mom was overtly xenophobic until the late 1970s**

.....as a youngster i was brought up to feel anyone who wasn't a catholic was doomed to hell and an unworthy human being.....this came from nan mom dad and the church and school **YES! Same here! My problem was for a LONG time that I took all that stuff to heart. I not only felt that non-Catholics were on the expressway for hell, but that this life was really not worth living. Until my mid 20s I thought suicide was the best way to leave this "vale of tears and suffering"—as the nuns at Immaculate Conception put it. Dad never talked to me about religion, but Mom and Nan were "substitute nuns", parroting back what they had learned at the same school I attended. I know Mom spent HOURS teaching me the Catechism and quizzing me about it. She was so proud when I became an altar boy (one step closer to a non-existent heaven)**

....i want to retract that mom was the most judgmental person lol she was second to NAN !!! who was very nice to me at times and i shared confidence with her only to be outed by her to mom and dad , so i learned never to tell her anything personal by the time i was around 10 or 11 I think **Nan was exposed to hatred of the Irish as she grew up and this made her lash out against any group that was not white, Catholic, and Irish. Dad told me that Nan did not want Mom to go out with him once she "found out" that he was Jewish (!!) and Eastern European. Dad told me that, when he first met Mom, he told her that his name was Ed Trout so that she did not think he was Jewish**

.....in her later years mom became much more accepting and relaxed and much less judgmental and became friends with her sister Helene after shunning her for 20 plus years [Having read correspondence between Nan, Mom, and Helene](#), I know that Helene had acted irresponsibly when Mom was pregnant, and Mom never forgave her for supposedly making Cindy so handicapped. I don't think she ever became friends with Helene; she just wanted to keep her side of the family together as much as possible. She even started inviting Gerry over for celebrations occasionally

.....we rarely had any parties at the house **NEVER!** Aside from small birthday parties. I may have been the first person to bring friends over to play pool (Tom Foster, Ron Savich, Bill Kopeski). Mom would bake us cookies and offer soft drinks. I'm pretty sure I'm the first to bring a girl into the house...i cant ever remember having takeout delivered like a pizza or Chinese food as a kid **NO!!!** Because they were "non-American", ethnic foods and never had a bbq **NEVER!!** But part of the reason may have been that Dad did not want to spend money he didn't have to. He actually took me to Pat's for a real cheese steak when I was 25 ... and made it sound like we had been going there frequently in the past

or anything with friends and relatives and obviously i was the black sheep of the family lmao when in reality i was just a normal kid from the 60's and seventies who wanted to fit in with what most kids were doing [Yes, Mom and Dad couldn't figure out what they had done wrong since you were doing things they could never imagine anyone doing](#). I think they expected all of us to hang around the house and the store. If there was an envelope, you were the first to push it. Your "rebellion" was explicit and maybe even defiant at times; mine was much more subtle.

...I'm pretty sure they wrote me off as the prodigal son around 13 years old.....they never once discussed me going to college or even brought it up and dad was quite upset when i decided to enroll a Camden county college and i paid for everything myself but he thought i was wasting my time and money and never offered to help in anyway or encourage it and mom stayed silent as well [I think Dad was very proud of having the business called "Edward Weintraut and Sons" to keep a dynasty going](#). I'm sure he knew by the time I was 16 that I had ABSOLUTELY no desire to work at the store or to work for him, and he might have resented my apathy. Dad ridiculed me regularly for going to college, even though he paid full tuition. I could have applied for a scholarship but he was against it (maybe for tax reasons). Mom really wanted me to become a brain surgeon even though I cannot stand the sight of blood. Still! I got turned on to literature and music "relatively" late in life, when I was 17. Music played no role in our home life until you and I started playing ... I'm pretty sure Dad did not accept what I decided to do with my life until I became a dean in charge of the College's budget. He thought that was REAL work. I worked at the store while at college to help pay back what he was spending for my education—and hated most every minute of it!

.....just some background stuff I'm sure you never knew ...i harbor no resentment ...it is what it is.....i never knew either grandfather and dads dad i was told coughed up his lung from asbestos

poisoning and i heard moms dad was a really great guy that worked at the shipyard and died of a heart issue that today could have been treated...we rarely saw our relatives and on dads side almost never saw our cousins but a few times [This is something that has been really gnawing at me. We had relatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey that we never heard a peep about. Dad's sister was a petty criminal and should have been ostracized, but the other people seemed to be upstanding](#)some i saw come in the store in later years for a conversation.....dad liked having company [YES! but he never had friends; he had business acquaintances](#) but mom absolutely hated it [YES! For good or ill, Nan was her only confidante ... after Dad, perhaps.](#) and I know when Cindy was born so ill that destroyed moms life and desire to have a daughter which she could never really get over(understandably) there are times in my early 20's where mom and i were close and even though i moved out i would come by the house and have lunch and would talk for several hours....dad was never easy to talk to for me and we had a close but very contentious relationship but i always tried to include him in any family activities as well as mom.... [I may be unfair, but I think Dad's shortcomings as a father are due to his conflicted relationship with his own father ... the same way that my own shortcomings as a father are due to my own conflicted relationship with Dad. I hope my kids do not have a conflicted relationship with me! At least I've exposed them to all kinds of ethnic foods and I've taken them on trips throughout this country and Europe LOL. I've come to appreciate Dad more as I've grown older, but I know there is still a gulf between his outlook on life and mine](#)

Some other memories of the earlier days: I remember on Price Street on hot stifling summer days the 4 boys were crowded into a small bedroom to sleep with the only window closed mom and dad would have the AC window unit on in their bedroom.We had an adjoining closet that was opened with clothing and every now and then you could feel a trickle of AC drifting through the closet ... [There were only three of us at Price Street. There were three bedrooms: a master connected to a medium-sized bedroom via a walk-through closet, and a stand-alone small bedroom to the right of the stairwell. I'm pretty sure I slept \(or tried to sleep\) in the small bedroom after I turned 10. You and Neil shared the medium-sized bedroom for a few years. Yes, I remember trying to sleep while sweat dripped across my brow during the summer months. There were also roaches or mice scampering behind the wall adjoining Aikens' house. Those critters keep me awake for hours!](#)

... and if we had visited the shore then we lay there(at least I did)burnt to a crisp as there was no concern for having kids in the sun all day....sleeping was hardly an option but staring at the ceiling was lol. [Yep! I remember one time you and I had severe sunburns on and behind our knees, making it painful for us to do anything for a day or so. I vaguely remember Mom or Dad slathering some kind of suntan lotion on us once we got to the shore, but it must have been a cheap brand because it seemed to wear off quickly. Once we got home, Mom would slather our burns with Noxema. That helped reduce the pain for a while, but it would come back in the middle of the night](#)

I remember patterning! After Cindy was born we had usually twice or thrice a day patterning where Cindy laid on an Ed Weintraut custom built table and we would move her arms back and

forth sometimes with volunteer neighbors helping from the church. It was a daily ritual. We would also frequently visit different churches especially Bishop John Neuman in hopes of a miracle (as Neuman was supposed to have miracle powers even in death). None of this did one iota of good but we all hoped and prayed (as I did daily) that some miracle would occur! **All true! I forgot about patterning. Maybe I repressed it. We did that several times each day, for ten or fifteen minutes at a time. Nan helped Mom out a lot doing that, giving them a chance to gossip**

I don't believe that Aunt Helene had anything to do with Cindy's affliction **Technically, you're right, but Helene did spend a day with Mom when she knew that she had already contracted mono. I do not know if exposure to mono led to Cindy's affliction, but it might have been a contributing factor. At any rate, Mom never forgave Helene for acting irresponsibly at the time.**

and I shared that with Mom often. In our neighborhood area there were more than a few similar situations as well as an abnormal amount of childhood cancers and deaths. I believe this also affected Steve and his thyroid issues. **Yes! That might have been THE most important factor leading to Cindy's situation, and certainly play a role with Steve. I'm glad that all of us have survived as long as we have. Mom and Dad were so at first so happy to leave an unlucky house (913 East Price) for a lucky house (21 Saddle), but it turned out that 21 Saddle was actually the unlucky house**

We lived in area which was all farmland and dangerous chemicals like DDT etc were regularly used as there was no EPA. I totally believe that the water we drank was contaminated in some degree that especially affected very small children and pregnant women. We had two die very young in Surrey place. The Maine and Orr boy. Also at the end of Coventry Court was a huge burn pit where everything was just dumped in and burned. NO REGULATION on this. After they would start the burn the construction workers just left it burn and went home and all the kids would go and hangout and throw stuff in to see it burn. **That was all before the EPA existed. We need more governmental regulation and oversight of the environment today. If Trump and the Republicans win the next election, more environmental controls will be eviscerated**

We also attended a very bad and repressive Saint Pete's school which I hated growing up. Dad and Mom insisted on Catholic school because public school was filled with Heathens! for several years I told them to take Steven out and put him in public school where he wouldn't be stigmatized by the whole experience as we were during our indoctrination and mentally stifled and emotionally traumatized. **True!** Finally because Steven too was having issues there they listened and sent him to public school where he flourished in a more diverse population of children. In that school if you weren't in the click you were ostracized.

To this day I can't eat liverwurst or bologna sandwiches because once you told MOM you like something you got it for the next 5 years lmao **I haven't had a bologna sandwich since I left home! Actually, as a joke Berta made me one this summer when we spent an afternoon at the**

beach. She wanted to recreate Mom's famous bologna-and-sand sandwich—the kind we always ate at the shore. I took two bites and put it away

As kids we all road our bikes in the Mosquito fog truck and no one ever told us that was a bad idea! I'm surprised I'm still here LOL I don't remember doing that but I know other kids did

And the multiple paper routes which netted you out about \$3 a week snow rain heat below zero didn't matter they had to be folded and delivered on a bike or sled or by foot and land on the porch or there would be hell to pay. Also the notorious hotdog dog that hid in the bushes until I went up the driveway and bit at my pants everyday. It was terrifying just trying to go as fast as I could LOL dogs ran freely back then. There were no regulations about leashing them. To this day I am terrified of small dogs, whether they are leashed or not I also remember at some point you and I made a deal that I would deliver and you would collect and split the money....I hated trying to collect from those cheap bastards lol I know you had to go back multiple times otherwise you would lose the paper route. I liked delivering papers but hated collecting money, especially since I often had to go back 3 or 4 times. That's why I decided to make collections once a month rather than every week. One of my least favorite customers was Mrs Tonzillo. The paper cost 48 cents every week. She would give me 50 cents and say "Keep the change. It doesn't look like much of a tip now, but over the years it will grow and grow. You just wait and see." Yes, that 2 cent tip allowed me to buy my family a meal at Wendy's forty years later lol