

## Instructions for my Funeral

My dear children,

You are now all old enough to realize that I, your father, will not live forever. This has caused you great concern, and you have all shown compassionate interest in the topic of whether or not you will be inheriting my car, which suggests the disquieting notion that you are convinced I won't outlast the vehicle.

Nobody likes to contemplate his own mortality, especially if he thinks it might somehow be related to how often he changes his oil. But having done so, I'm prepared to give you instructions as to the final disposition of my remains.

My funeral should not be held immediately after my passing, as I would want the news to reach the far corners of the world so that the citizens of this planet can respond appropriately, probably by stitching together a giant quilt to be permanently draped over some otherwise unused land, like Wisconsin. Elton John will write a song about me which will become an instant hit, even though it will sound suspiciously like another one of his tunes. Children will spontaneously build cute memorials out of flowers and stuffed animals—children who don't participate in this outpouring of love should be punished.

The funeral itself should be held in some place large enough to hold all the mourners, but let's not have one of those messy bidding wars like what happens for political conventions and the Olympics.

There will naturally be a lot of competition for front-row seats. I would like to see these reserved for family members and weeping supermodels. When the President of the United States arrives to escort in the other heads of state, everyone should stand in respect, but let's not forget that this whole thing is all about me.

Being so grief-stricken, none of you will be able to speak, of course—but then, who will? I suspect that you'll have to hire professional actors who can work past their anguish. During the Presidential Eulogy, it's inevitable that small children will become fussy and want to go out and play—these children should be punished.

I suspect you will be unable to prevent a candlelight vigil and people tearing off their clothes and biting their own arms and all of that, but I think it will avoid a full-scale riot when Congress declares a week of silence. This could be an annual event, even, though I will be disappointed if the holiday turns into an excuse to sell refrigerators and automobiles (if people do want to sell things, they must do it in silence. If they speak, they should be punished).

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Eventually, revisionist historians will eventually come along and try to sell the theory that I was not as important as people think. Although this ridiculous idea will die out as its proponents are executed, you should still argue against it. Why else, you should point out, did they put my face on the American flag?

