

# Is the Stand-By-Your-Man Attitude Increasingly a Thing of the Past?

With the news of Nancy Reagan's death, the media has been peppered with tributes to the wife of America's 40th President.

Despite what the writers of these tributes may think of Mrs. Reagan's politics or even personal quirks (and yes, she had some), they all seem to agree that she had a major redeeming quality. That quality was the fact that she was a woman who willingly sacrificed herself to be a support, comfort, and companion to her husband.

President Reagan would have seconded this opinion of his wife. In fact, he said as much during a [speech in 1988](#):

*"I've been thinking for several days about what exactly I wanted to say today and how to put Nancy's role in my life in perspective for you. But what do you say about someone who gives your life meaning? What do you say about someone who's always there with support and understanding, someone who makes sacrifices so that your life will be easier and more successful? Well, what you say is that you love that person and treasure her. I simply can't imagine the last 8 years without Nancy. The Presidency wouldn't have been the joy it's been for me without her there beside me. And that second-floor living quarters in the White House would have seemed a big and lonely spot without her waiting for me every day at the end of the day. You know, she once said that a President has all kinds of advisers and experts who look after his interests when it comes to foreign policy or the economy or whatever, but no one who looks after his needs as a human being. Well, Nancy has done that for me through recuperations*

*and crises. Every President should be so lucky.*

*I think it's all too common in marriages that, no matter how much partners love each other, they don't thank each other enough. And I suppose I don't thank Nancy enough for all that she does for me. So, Nancy, in front of all your friends here today, let me say: Thank you for all you do. Thank you for your love. And thank you for just being you."*

Nancy Reagan's stand-by-your-man brand of womanhood has gone out of fashion today... but judging by the praise which she is receiving for it, do today's Americans secretly recognize the value of this attitude of love and support in a marriage?

*Image Credit: Reagan Library*