

Book Review

DOUBLE STANDARDS By Aviva Hellman, \$14.95; Doubleday & Co.

This is the story of women who gave up their identities, personal ambitions and basic needs for the sake of their husbands, homes and children, only to find themselves in their middle years discarded and alone. Bewildered, they are rudely awakened to the fact that times have changed and they are its victims. How one woman copes with unpalatable situation and in doing so achieves an independence and pride that fulfills and sustains her is the core of this well written and absorbing book.

Set in the elite political and social circles of New York, Southampton and Europe this is Beth Van Ess's story. She defies her family and gives up her own profession in order to marry Adam Stillman, a liberal, idealistic Jewish lawyer with whom she falls deeply in love. Determined to make her marriage work, she tries to bridge the barriers between her world of privilege and not-so-subtle WASP prejudices and Adam's idealism and Jewish background. It is not an easy struggle for Beth, but she refuses to give up and in doing so is blinded to the changes taking place in people and politics and in the character of those she loves.

The story begins in the fifties and ends at the present time. At age 50 she is settled into a state of contentment. Suddenly, her world turns upside down when she is faced with Adam's decision to leave her for Lori, a talented young girl half her age. The situation in itself is not new; what is new is the manner in which she faces it and the people whose lives are changed by her decisions. Although there is a great deal of explicit sex in the book, the story moves rapidly and holds the interest of the reader from beginning to end.

Reviewed by Gladys Lavitan

To Joe Schiffer... The Essence Of Judaism

A Fond Remembrance By His Daughter

Since my father's death, the Charlotte Jewish Community has poured forth such love and concern for our family, and such wonderful praise for my father, that I felt it fitting and proper that they should really know the man, and know that their love and admiration is not misplaced. The best way I could think of to reach the entire community, and to let them know about Dad, is through the paper...

Linda Schiffer

New York's Lower East Side was an interesting place to grow up in during the 1920's and '30's. It was an exciting, exhilarating and emotional place...a grab-bag of languages, religions, races...running one into the other until it all resembled an abstract water-color painting and chaotic symphony.

It was into this environment that my father was born...the second of three sons born to a tailor from Poland and a simple woman from Austria...Solomon, Joseph and Bernard...the sons of Morris and Yetta. Joseph was my father.

The stories my father would tell my sister and me of the days of his youth on the Lower East Side of New York City were always filled with the poverty but joy of being raised in that chaos. He (at the tender age of 5, he claimed) would collect pieces of coal from the streets which had fallen from the coal trucks...would gather the copper pipes from old buildings that were ready to be demolished...all to raise some extra money. Candy was unheard of. It was considered a luxury. When hunger struck while at play, Yetta would toss a bread, butter and onion sandwich from the window, wrapped in a paper bag. One sandwich for all three boys to share.

My father went to Seward High School and was a member of the soccer team.

He was proud of having played soccer then, and of the team photo which we still have. My sister and I hunted his image out of the others. He was so thin in those days of his youth, but his face had that determined look which we knew so well.

All the while, growing up in the streets of New York City, his character was developing. It was formed by NOT having everything he wanted, BUT working hard for what he had, not to mention the love of family and friends surround him, and a deep-rooted Faith.

He trudged from a job all the way downtown to City College all the way uptown...daily. He never complained of the long hours and constant work. My father never complained of anything at any time during his life.

When the family moved to Brooklyn, conditions were a bit better. It was in Brooklyn that he met mom, and it was in Brooklyn that they lived most of their 40 years of marriage. Brooklyn - where the family, all of it, resided. It was also where the religious center of our lives was located, with the synagogue within walking distance.

My father worked so hard all his life...He was determined that my sister and I would have all the material things that he never did. He and mom sacrificed many of their comforts in order to send us to a private Hebrew Day School to ensure the best education available. And he worked - for bosses who knew his worth but never shared the benefits reaped from his hard labor - then finally, for himself. He built a small construction business, and as things got better financially, we moved to Westchester County. It was one of his dreams come true.

Over the years, as he provided for us, he also saw to it that needier people received

a share of his good fortune. Anyone who ever needed help, be they family or stranger, was never turned away. They all seemed to find their way to our door. They came to see Joe. He was always the first to give when a charity asked. He was always the first to give even when they didn't ask. And when business wasn't good and things got tight for us, even then no one was ever turned away. If he couldn't offer money, he offered whatever services he could render. The Synagogue and Israel were foremost, though. He maintained that a Jew could not survive without both. He never asked for honors in return, nor recognition. He did what he felt he should do. Many did recognize how special he and mom were, and these plaques are on our walls - silent reminders - never spoken of by him. It wasn't necessary to brag.

IF ONLY THE WORLD COULD SEE THROUGH MY FATHER'S EYES!! What an Incredible Place it would be! He never saw an evil person. He saw only the good in everyone. Even when he was hurt by people, he could explain it away and be charitable. The world, to him, was a place where everyone belonged and everyone deserved to have the best. He never wished anyone ill - only "good health" and happiness.

We moved to the South because most of the family was gone, or moved away. He missed his brothers, but spoke to them often, and had hopes that they would visit as often as they could. My sister and her family were here, and it's where he wanted to be most...near his grandson...the apple of his eyes!

My father died on December 1st, 1981, after just one year in the Carolinas. It is most fitting that after such a short time

in this community, the synagogue was full for the service - filled with people whose lives he touched during this brief year; even some of the nurses who cared for him during his three weeks of hospitalization were there. People we (the family) knew, and many we had never seen before, but who knew my father, came. They came to be near him one last time and to share our grief in his passing...for he was the epitome of the Jewish Human Soul - a Truly Caring Man! It was merely what tribute was due him.

Yet, there were so many things left unsaid...undone. It happened all too suddenly, his passing. The only thing left now is a deep chasm - a void so great that there are times when I'm sure nothing will ever fill it. We wander around the house, mom, the dog and I, and it is so empty and quiet. The total unreality of it all is overwhelming. My sister and her family live nearby. We still have each other to cling to, but it is no easier for them than it is for us. My uncles are in the North, and even though warmth can be generated over a telephone line, you cannot reach out and hold someone who is over 700 miles away. We comfort each other the best way we know how.

It has been almost 30 days. Daddy, and there is something you should know. Something which, unfortunately, we never said often enough to each other while we still had the chance...

Daddy, I Love You Very Much!

First Call

See page 16

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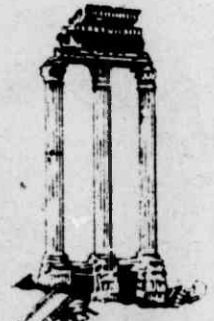
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