

As I continue to write about my life, I realize I have been rather selective about the time periods and experiences I choose to discuss. Part of this may be attributed to the fact that I have a more vivid memory of my childhood, and the early years of school and work. As I get closer to the last 20 or 30 years, the details become blurred. Some events, I have almost totally forgotten, and it might take photographs or documents from the period to jog my memory.

There are a few events I have not touched on thus far, largely because I am not sure how to describe them. I want to be as honest as I can, and one way of handling a period of your life that you find it hard to write about, is not to write about it. Still, it was an important part of my life, so I will try.

After Sylvia and I separated in 1972, I was quite depressed. Dan Jordan was aware of it, and advised me to find an apartment that would be pleasant and make me feel good when I entered it. I looked around and came up with a great building and a great one-bedroom apartment at 2121 P St. NW, just off Dupont Circle and close to my office. I furnished it, hung some pictures, and began to enjoy my new life.

The challenge now was to meet women. I met a young woman at Betty Chia Karro's wedding, we went out several times, but it didn't work out. I am finding it very difficult to admit why "it didn't work out." She was terrific in every way, but when I saw that she had a spinal disfigurement, I was too uncomfortable to continue going out with her. There was a lovely person whom I had gotten to know through the Jewish Community Council. She was divorced, had a couple of kids and lived in Silver Spring. We enjoyed each other's company, and had a good physical relationship, but it was a hassle getting to her house, and she had her hands full, working and taking care of the kids.

It seems that one way to meet women is to ask a friend who is involved with someone, if his friend has a friend. Working in my office was a young man named John Medina. He was going out with a very attractive woman named Claudia who was separated from a local sports announcer named Warner Wolf. I asked John if Claudia has a friend, and he said he would ask her. He came into the office one day to tell me that his friend has a really great looking friend who is recently divorced and lives not far from me. We arranged a double date, and that is how I met Barbara Bord.

Barbara was indeed very attractive. She was Jewish, lived just a few blocks away from me in an apartment house similar to mine, and though she had two boys, they were with her husband. We started going out. And we continued going out (and sleeping in) for the next five years. I met Barbara's friends; she met my friends. When I planned my big seven-week trip to Israel and Europe in 1975, Barbara wanted very much to come along. We worked out a compromise: Barbara came with me on the first three-week leg of the journey to Israel and Italy, and then returned home. I continued on to Southern France, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark and Northern France, including Paris.

Barbara put together a surprise 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party for me at her apartment, inviting all my friends and my kids. It really was a surprise and I was very touched. We jointly

arranged Passover seders and invited all our Washington friends. I was active in the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) and Barbara became involved as well. We were an item. Barbara accompanied me to Reading Out Loud related events.

By 1979, it was clear that Barbara wanted something more. I began to feel that I wanted something less. However, I didn't know how I could extricate myself from this relationship. At a Civil Rights Commission staff meeting, I had met a young woman who lived in New Hampshire and who worked part-time with the Northeast office, working with the New Hampshire Advisory Committee. I was immediately attracted to her.

STOP! VERY IMPORTANT. I have been breezing along, trying to write about this period from 1972, when Sylvia and I separated, to 1979-80-81 when Fran and I met, got serious and married. As I was writing, I began to realize that I am a bit shaky about dates, and even more shaky about certain events. When I tried to remember back to my meeting the young woman from New Hampshire, I thought it was around 1978-9, prior to my leaving Washington. I couldn't remember her name, nor where in New Hampshire she lived. I knew I had saved her correspondence and hidden it away in a desk drawer. I just went to get it, and discovered that our relationship went from the beginning of 1972 into 1973. How can I be so far off? And how can I forget a very serious romance? It is a part of my life which has become obscured, but which I can now look back on, with the help of her letters, and recall with great joy. (I came across another collection of letters from a North Carolina woman from the same period. But that is another story. I didn't realize I was such a lover, then.)

My New Hampshire friend's name was Marsie Macey and she lived in Concord. She was petite, pretty, smart, wild, strong, independent, a feminist, sexually liberated, and wrote wonderful, romantic letters. I assume I wrote some pretty good letters as well, but I don't have copies. (I wonder if she kept mine.) Marsie had been a member of the N.H. Advisory Committee and Jacques Wilmore, the Commission's Northeastern Director, hired her, on a part time basis, to work with the N.H. and Vermont Committees. The staff meeting at which we met must have taken place toward the end of 1971 or the beginning of 1972. I believe we must have told each other about our marriages: mine to Sylvia was ending, and hers to "Doug" had recently ended. We hit it off from the start. She had a boy and a girl who lived with her. Nice kids, as I remember.

From rereading her letters, after more than 35 years, I emerge as a very different person than I remember. I like seeing myself through her eyes—a handsome, romantic, sensitive, worldly-wise lover. It was a complicated, long distance, relationship. I am surprised that I made it up to New Hampshire as frequently as I did (according to her letters.) Did I fly up there? Did I drive? Did I take a train? Did I combine it with visits to New York? Was it awkward sleeping with Marsie while the kids were in the house? Knowing how frugal I tend to be, and knowing that travel is expensive, I am pleased that I was such a sport. We apparently spoke frequently on the phone and wrote a great many letters. From her letters, it is clear that it was a serious relationship. Marsie shared a great deal of herself. She said that I asked, "Why are women struggling so hard to find themselves, and why should a meaningful relationship jeopardize the search?" She

answered, Women do not want to be defined by men. In her relationship with Doug, she said that she put the relationship ahead of herself. She wrote that Doug wanted an “independent” woman, but when she asserted her independence, the marriage was threatened.

Maybe the same thing happened to us. Despite the fact that my memory was hazy, the letters brought back a very romantic time. The year culminated with our plan to go to Puerto Rico together. This I remember clearly. I made arrangements for our flight out of New York, a hotel and a rental car in San Juan. (We shared costs, at Marsie’s insistence.) I remember how excited I was, how wonderful the first several days were, and how things started to go down-hill when we had trouble with the car. By the end of our wonderful vacation, we were hardly speaking to each other (though we continued making love.) Since there were no more letters (though there was a picture post card from Puerto Rico mailed from Vermont, with a January 25, 1973 post mark) it is clear that our relationship ended. Looking back, I suspect that maintaining the relationship would have been too complicated. Marsie was not going to leave Concord, and I wasn’t going to leave Washington. By this time I had met Barbara. I am glad I kept Marsie’s letters.