



# When It Was Our War: A Soldier's Wife on the Home Front (Shannon Ravenel Books)

*Stella Suberman*

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When Stella Suberman wrote her first memoir, *The Jew Store*, at the age of seventy-six, she was widely praised for shedding light on a forgotten piece of American history--Jewish life in the rural South. In her new memoir, Suberman reveals yet another overlooked aspect of America's past--the domestic side of war.

Her story begins in the Miami Beach she grew up in, when hotel signs boasted "Always a View, Never a Jew" and where a passenger ship lingered just off shore carrying hundreds of European Jews hoping for--but never finding--sanctuary. It was a time of innocence, before that war in Europe became our war.

Stella was nineteen when America entered the fighting. By the time she was twenty-three, the war was over. She married Jack Suberman the week he enlisted and set out alone to join him in California. She was kicked off trains to make room for soldiers, her luggage was stolen, she was arrested for soliciting, but she was determined to follow her husband. And she did so for the next four years as he was sent from air base to air base, first training to be a bombardier and then training others. It wasn't until he was sent overseas to fly combat missions that she finally went back home to wait, as did so many other soldier's wives.

This remarkable memoir renders a double understanding of war--of how it matured a young woman and how it matured a country. By personalizing the patriotism of the 1940s, Stella Suberman's story becomes the story of all military wives and serves as a powerful reminder of how differently many Americans feel about war sixty years later.

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