

Mostly about People

By Wally Trabing



10/24/65

Sex Babies

One hundred and five babies were born in Santa Cruz county last year to mothers not married to the biological fathers.

Another 10 were born in the Salvation Army's Booth Memorial for unwed mothers' home in Berkeley. Another estimated 40 had babies in other cities.

I guess this will shock a lot of people.

The immoral side of it didn't hit me so much because I believe these people know they did wrong, and that a lot of added finger-shaking won't stuff water back behind the busted dam.

What shocked me was wondering about what is happening to the children; what kind of a life will they have? What happens to the girl after the terrible moment of truth has been faced?

I had a frank talk with a Mrs. Monica Moniz about this. She's a professional case worker with the Children's Home Society of California, the oldest (since 1891) and largest adoption agency in the state.

Mrs. Moniz is a kindly woman whom you can talk to easy. I don't envy her in this job. She has to take a human tragedy and ease it toward a solution of love and happiness for a baby without a family.

Her first job is to counsel pregnant girls toward reaching a decision about whether or not to keep the baby or place it up for adoption—never to see it again.

When the child is born she is responsible for placing it in a temporary foster home until adoption.

And thirdly, she works long and hard to help match these children to new parents — a match which involves a lifetime together.

Mrs. Moniz spends a couple days a week at the local Red Cross office on Mission street.

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During our long talk, never once did she mention the word "illegitimate," and so from here on out I won't either. A child is one of the most irrefutable facts in this world.

Man did not make the laws of nature by which an embryo abides to become a child. The fact that a child is coming is what concerns Mrs. Moniz and her organization.

Last year she dealt with 50 pregnant women, ranging in age from 15 to 34. Anyone can come to her.

About 30 were high school or college students. The rest were divorced or separated women. One or two were on the brink of divorce.

Of that 50, 26 have released their babies for adoption; 12 decided to keep their children, and 12 are in the last stages of pregnancy and have not yet reached a decision.

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Eighty-seven children were born of white parents; 3.5 per cent were Mexican; 3.2 per cent were Negro and .09 per cent were Chinese or Japanese.

Seventy per cent of the women were Protestant; 24 per cent Catholic; and only 3 per cent professed no religious affiliation.

So many unmarried pregnant women are alone. The loneliness must be a terrible thing to go through.

Mrs. Moniz said that most of the girls postpone coming for help until late in their pregnancy. Some don't know where to turn. Some actually won't accept the fact that they are pregnant, she said.

"Especially the college kids. They are away from home, and most try to hide their ordeal from their parents. We respect their wishes."

The biological father is usually not in a position to marry and support the girl. Nor psychologically ready. They are often not helpful. She did not praise the biological fathers.

"It costs the agency from \$300 to \$450 to resolve the girl's predicament. If she can't afford it, we handle the costs. Not many pay us back."

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Mrs. Moniz is careful not to force decisions.

The baby legally belong to the mother. The biological father has no right to it.

If the baby is born in an agency hospital the mother has the right to see it and take care of the child while she is in the hospital.

But time runs out. The agency wants to place the baby with the adopted parents before it is three months old and preferably sooner.

The mother's final signature is not requested until she has recovered from her pregnancy, but then she must make up her mind.

Once she signs the release, it is final and she will never see the child again.

For it is awful cruel to give a couple a baby and then a year later snatch it away. They have learned to love it as much as any mother and father. So this is the way it has to be.

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Mrs. Moniz said that many mothers make their own adoption arrangements, but this places a terrible strain on the natural mother when she knows who has her child.

Many unwed mothers usually stay at home during their pregnancies. If they are in school the high school district furnishes a home teacher.

Who are these unwed mothers-to-be; who are the unwed fathers?

Well, Mrs. Moniz could not give a pat answer.

They are from broken homes; from homes with not much parental affection; from homes which you and I would consider perfectly normal and where the father and mother come in and search in anguish with Mrs. Moniz, trying honestly to figure out where they failed.

Perhaps they really didn't fail.

Perhaps it is you and I who allow filthy, greedy, money grabbing producers of TV drama, shows and movies and magazines which promotes sexual laxity.

But the upshot is always the child and I admire these people who are seeing to it that it does not suffer a lifetime of shame and social incrimination.

Tuesday—How adoptions are arranged.

Wyoming has a 17-11-2 football record for the last four seasons under Coach Lloyd W.

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