

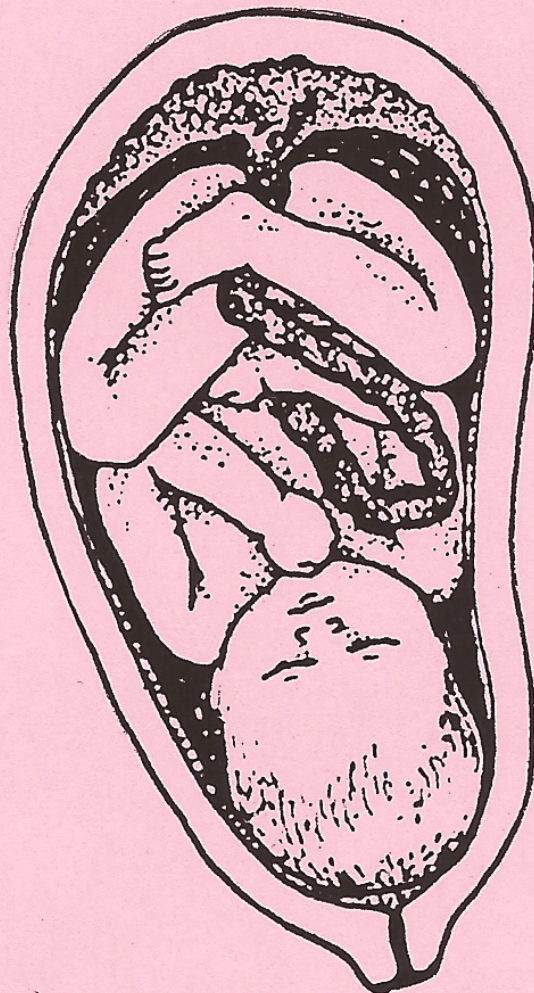
number
5
sep '03

only
5
bucks

ZUZU

- and -

the BABY CATCHER



• midwife • meets • motherhood •

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IF EVER Pollyanna was needed - it has been these past three & four-months. This has been - for the most part - the summer from hell. Not only have I been stuck in my semi-annual run of saying/doing/posting really stupid stuff, sticking my foot in my mouth, and generally being a nuisance, but things around me kept going wrong, & more wrong, & terribly wrong.

I almost decided to just quit doing ZBC altogether, because it seemed this issue would just be such a downer... and I didn't feel right putting yet another angst-ridden, sad-story, every-things-fucked-up zine out there.

But then things started to improve... So here I am... and I will endeavor to entertain. I cannot completely ignore the sorrow, so let me first say to A&G - the heart cannot comprehend your sorrow. I hope & pray somehow you find peace. Fellow mama-zinesters - my apologies & love. Further apologies to Ginny, Mariya, & Isaiah for any stress I may have caused you, at Disneyland & beyond!

Thank you Kate, Pamela, Michelle, Pat & Anne, Ginny, Stacey, Lauren, Kim, Mariya, my LJ friends, and my beloved Randy. You have supported & supported, above & beyond the call of duty!

BECAUSE this issue comes late, it will probably be a little rough, a little unpolished, a little different... but hopefully still... what it is!

Peace,

Phon Sept. '03

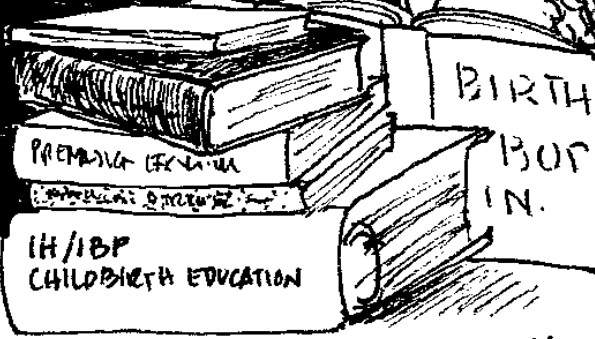
BECOMING a Midwife in 10 easy years

PART 5: TO SCHOOL OR NOT?

I decided not to join the first year of the fledgling school. I didn't have the money, and all the students knew each other already...

BESIDES, IT'S ALL HAPPENING A LITTLE TOO FAST!

!X!O?!@!#!
HOSPITALS!!



Utterly depressed & frantic, I quickly got a job at another art supply store. With part of my severance pay, I got a correspondence course to be a childbirth educator.

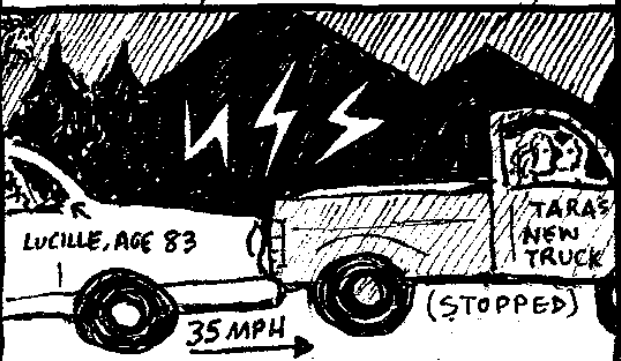
I GOT FIRED FOR "WANTING TO TAKE VACATION" ON NO NOTICE!



THEN FATE INTERVENED ONCE AGAIN...



I was learning so much, so fast... how fucked-up the medical model of birth can get; how women's bodies are made to give birth... it was great.



THEN FATE INTERVENED ONCE AGAIN...

At the time I was totally freaked out, but as it turned out, the settlement would allow me to attend school the next year. So, I sent off for my application.

Answer the following questions as as you can.

1. Why do
2. What
3. How
4. W

life? ten years? or?

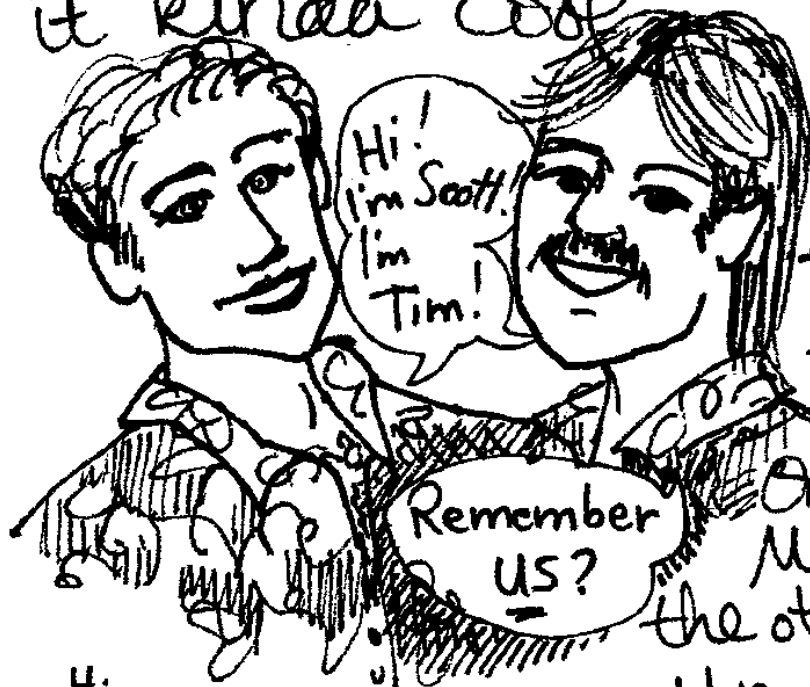
NEXT STOP: A CHANCE MEETING

CLASS OF '83 ROCKS!

OR: HOW TO HAVE FUN AT YOUR SPOUSE'S 20-YEAR
HIGH SCHOOL REUNION (next year - mine!! eek!!)

Hi! What's up ↑? So, ohmigod,
we went to Randy's 20-year
reunion - he is, like, so old!

I didn't know anyone so
I felt kinda weird at first.
But the theme was, like,
Hawaiian, so everyone was
dressed the same which made
it kinda cool.



The first
thing - we walk
in and these
two guys
totally attack
me!

One was, like,
Mr. Model, and
the other was
Mr. Mullett head.

I'm, like "uh, No, because this is my husband's class." Then they look at each other and go "Oh, you're one of us!" (I'm totally thinking "I am NOT one of you, queerbait!") But they are drunk & laughing and I started laughing too!! "Okay, what does that mean?" I go. They go "You're a SPOUSE! So what you do is pick someone in the yearbook and say you are that person to everyone that comes in!!" Ohmigod! It was so funny. I couldn't find anyone in the yearbook who I wanted to be. but everytime I ran into those guys I was all "Hey Scott! Hey Tim!" I have No idea who they really were.



Everyone was happy to see Randy. I was very proud. He rocks!

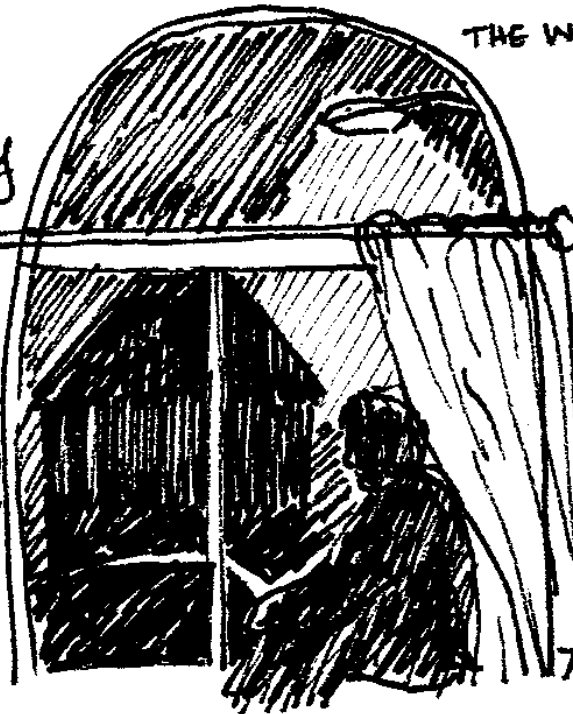
OK, so when we got there we met up with Marky, one of Randy's best friends who is gay and living in California. I love Marky and even though he's in a breakup 😞 he was still totally fun to be around. We ran into another gay friend, Jody, and his partner. Jody & Marky & Randy were all yakking and nobody had introduced us yet so I looked at Jody's partner and said "Are you a spouse, too?" He smiled and we were instant buds!! 😊 I can't remember his name but he looked just like Keifer Sutherland in Lost Boys (♥!!) Anyway he and I were totally checking out and noticing that there were, like, TONS of gay guys in Randy's class!! It was soooooo weird. I mean, this is little loggingtown, Washington, where did all these fags come from? Jody and Marky were oblivious, too; Keifer & I were all "Damn! Look at him!" and they're all "huh?" (Hello? gaydar!!) Anyway if you want to have fun anywhere, hook up with the gay guys. If they

arent too swishy, they are way cool,
and laugh riots!

So, because I'm preggers I only had
one glass of wine, but Randy & the
Boyz were ripped. Markey said he'd
bring Randy home so I left, 11pm.
Zuzu was asleep with Nana and I
got her to bed with no problems.

The party ended at 1am, so when
Zuzu's squeak woke me up at 1:30 and
Randy still wasn't home I was, like,
"Ohmigod I am totally late for
WORRY duty!" So then I had to sit
up, looking out the window and think-
ing the unthinkable. I HATE WORRY duty!
Luckily he got home at 2AM so I didn't
have to do it

for long. I
was so happy
to see him. O
He had great
stories to tell.
Maybe he'll
tell you! Well
that's all! TA,
Thonda



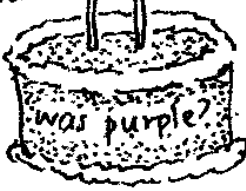

THE WORRY DUTY TAPE:

Nothing's going
to happen to
him... the uni-
verse wouldn't
be so cruel...
but it could...
what would I
do with 2 kids
on my own? Damn
it where is he?
what if some-
thing happened?
Nothing's going
to happen to
him... the uni-
verse wouldn't
be so cruel...

at-a-glance

2003

JU

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNES
<p>1</p> <p>Zuzu sick for past 2 days- fever only, but miserable... up all night with her. What am I going to do with a baby?</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Doctor ruled out strep, but poor Zuzu can't eat, says her mouth hurts. Randy comes home early to help a while, then back to work... and I lose it completely. I waited for about 10 minutes solid- Zuzu brought me kleenex and goldfish crackers. Poor baby- she's the sick one!</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Zuzu Finally thing. are so Long nap missed Rose Fest</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>ZUZU'S 2ND BIRTHDAY (Monday) and PARTY (Sunday)</p> <p>Trying to avoid the stressful and overwhelming kid party, we have a casual open house all day Sunday. It works perfectly- the most relaxing party I've ever thrown. Zuzu makes a haul! Both days!</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Did I mention Zuzu's cake</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Getting Ashland Riri, who really sick.. night in the poor thing!</p>	
<p>15</p> <p>Despite feeling yukky, get to see Midsummer Night's Dream w/ Randy at the romantic Elizabethan Theatre. Lovely. 😊</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Back from Ashland. Trip smooth until I have a shake, which sends my intestines into spasm! Riri leaves on vacation</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Lynn, Kyler & Priya arrive to stay for the week. Lynn gone with Kyler a lot, Priya is bored with me & Zuzu. ☹️</p>	<p>Just I'm not remem- have no</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Randy, in sympathy, takes Zuzu to the zoo so I can get stuff organized for the garage sale. Thank you!!</p>	<p>23</p>  <p>Uncle Doug drives Zuzu around for me! (as I distribute ZBC)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Long, Long week, help. Am really having another manage one on</p>	
<p>29</p> <p>I keep forgetting and rubbing my nose. Yow!!</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Our prenatal day. We heard the baby's heartbeat... Randy was teary-eyed, I was thinking, "Okay- it really is in there."</p>	<p>JULY</p> <p>1</p> <p>It's hot.</p>	<p>My is time</p>

NE

2003

at-a-glance

Brought to you by LJ!!

DAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 is better! ate some- Randy & I wiped out. together, the Junior parade.	5 Zuzu getting better, Mama relaxing, getting ready for party on Sunday...	6	7 My computer dies. Randy is going to try to save it, but it doesn't look good. ☹ ☹
11 ready for without is really, ..spent the hospital, ☹	12 Leave early In the morn for Ashland HOORAY! VACATION!	13 LUCKY DAY!! Romeo and Juliet ♡ Starring: you know who! (see page 10)	14 Lucky me- I get the 'Flu! The genuine, throwing- up, weak, icky flu. Lovely. Zuzu is in Daddy & Nana's hands.
18 hangin' with the girls. as much fun as Priya bers. I feel bad- I just energy to entertain...	19	20 Absolute sobbing wailing meltdown- by ME. So tired of being mama!! R takes Z for a while... she asks "Mama stay?"	21 Lynn & kids leave, poor Priya has caught the flu from hell. Probably not a fun trip.... NEW COMPUTER HERE!
25 no babysitter to beginning to fear child- I can barely my own!	26	27 GET NOSE PIERCED! Sick of drawing pictures of newborns with problems. As the pope said to Michaelangelo: "When will there be an end?!"	28 My friend Androo is in utne!! R & I get in a fight over when he's coming home from game day. I'm very whiny.
2 client due any now.	3 It's July already- where'd June go?	4 Randy takes Zuzu away & spends the night at Nana's...	5 I get up - no child- I can shower! Put my contacts in immediate- ly!! I CAN LEAVE! I go shopping... 9

Meeting Kevin....

okay, is
he NOT
a hunk?



photos used w/o permission...

Flashback: Ashland, OR, 2002.

I write in ZBC #1 about a hunky actor w/ dreadlocks & a very nice butt.

A few months later, I get an email

from a reader. 'That hunky actor is our good friend Kevin' EEEK! They had shown him my zine, even... (blush, blush)



Back to 2003: I harbored a hope that he would be in one of the plays I was going to see. Sure enough... on Friday night who takes the stage as Romeo but Kevin Kenerly himself!! SWOON!!

The play is beautifully done, the love scene breathtaking, the death scene makes me cry. Afterwards I wait like a schoolgirl to meet the man. He is the 3rd actor out and I shamelessly accost him. He is even more beautiful (& younger-looking) in 'real life', and he indeed remembered my zine, with a gracious smile. His voice was like melting chocolate as we chatted... what a doll. And then, out of nowhere, a gaggle of old ladies, oxygen tanks in tow, flocked around shouting "Wherefore art thou, Romeo? HERE HE IS!!" "Romeo! Romeo!" and I left Kevin to his fans with a smile of apology for keeping him so long. What a sweet, wonderful moment!

Little Things I Prefer NOT to Live Without

tweezers

Q-tips

Dr. Bronner's Peppermint Castille Soap

O-Cel-o sponges

Liquid Paper

a watch

Kleenex brand tissue

earrings

Zuzu ♥

Ziplock baggies

nail clippers

Clinique Quickliner (o2smoky brown)

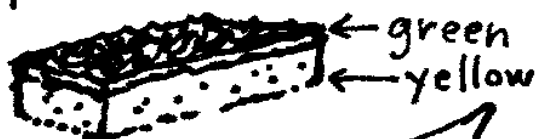
Contact lenses

post-it notes

paperclips

lipstuff w/petrolatum (sorry!)

m&ms



travel
stuff



SUGGESTION BOX

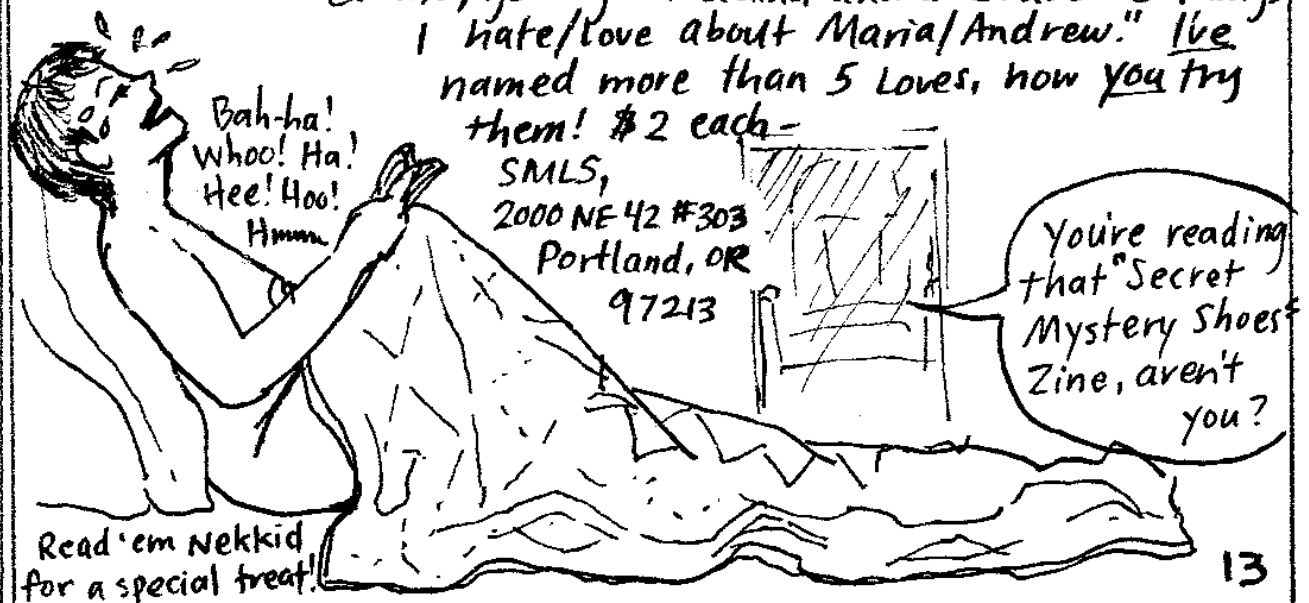
Have you ever read a zine, or a book, for that matter, that makes you giggle...or even belly-laugh out loud? That makes you feel so good that you flip to the front the moment you're done, and start reading it all over again? Well, this zine—the only thing I'm going to review this issue—is MY FAVORITE ZINE IN THE WORLD.

Is that bad of me to say? I mean, Lordy, there are a lot of great zines out there, but a girl's gotta have a favorite. And this is mine.

SECRET MYSTERY LOVE SHOES, a zine by duo Androo Robinson (Ped Xing comix) and Maria Goodman (Don't Say Uh-Oh) stole my heart from the moment I held it, with its hand-sponge-printed cover, in my little hands. First of all, Androo & Maria are the nicest people I've ever met— I mean, genuinely nice... warm, sweet, funny, humble, yet so frighteningly talented it seems illogical. Their zine is a manifestation of themselves - bright & shiny, self-effacing & real, personal, hilarious, wonderful. Think about all the zines you've read, and then clear a space in your mind for SMLS. Jump on in!

Open up #1 and the first page is a warm, sweet welcome as Androo shows you around their apartment, proudly pointing out the amazing things Maria has done with what she calls 'crap'. Next thing you know Maria takes over and in her very personal and gently teasing (okay, not always so gentle, but it's totally funny) style she shows you just how she does it. (Okay, honestly, she's a total smartass...but she's so cute about it that she can get away with it.) Plus if you're good, she'll

let you have a treat.' The fun is only beginning. Androo writes candidly - maybe too candidly - about things he has stolen & had stolen from him. Amazing centerfold of Androo & Maria paperdolls (warning! frontal nudity! :) They take turns drawing comics from memory, an essay about Frisbee, and I was laughing so hard I started choking and Randy came in to see if I was okay! Whew! And that was only #1! In number two we get introduced to Maria's real passion: natural cleaning stuff. What a wealth of info - told with passion, humor, and a LOT of vinegar. Drawing lessons from Androo, a tale of a haircut or two, and get-to-know-you surveys make me feel like I've just had a long chummy brunch with them. #3: Amazing Ouija board stories, movie 'stuff' - it's hard to describe. My favorite thing in this issue - Maria & Androo review each other's dreams. Maria on Androo's dream: "Low-budget dreams, while gritty and charming, are often marred by the appearance of B-list celebrities." she is deliciously merciless! #4 has even more - we get to actually go to bed with our hosts! Plus, some of Maria's homemade remedies for getting rid of bugs - and some bug stories... more of Androo's succinct and beautiful comix, getting out stains, and a brave "5 things I hate/love about Maria/Andrew." I've named more than 5 Loves, how you try them! #2 each -



SHORT BIRTH, LONG WEEK

Somewhere around noon on July 7, I got a call on my cell from my client Michelle. "Hi!" I laughed, "I am even now on my way to get your Triple-Sec." She laughed, too, saying that we would probably be needing it. "But Michelle," I protested, "It's your due date... and it's broad daylight! You can't be in labor right now!" "I know!" she agreed.

But she was. It was pretty good timing, actually - I was two blocks from the liquor store (Lynchburg Lemonades were to be served after the birth, in lieu of champagne), Zuzu was already with Ri-ri, and Randy at work. My gear was packed & ready to go... it was actually just as good a time as any. The only unfortunate thing was that she had no childcare available for Mary (4½) and Cathleen (2) - but I figured we would cope. Historically, Michelle had pretty efficient labors, and it would be nice to be home in time for Zuzu's bedtime. I was at her house within the hour.

The pool was set up but not yet filled when I arrived - I smiled to see the inflatable kiddie pool - the same one I'd given birth to Zuzu in. Michelle was definitely in labor - her usual rule-breaking pattern already established:

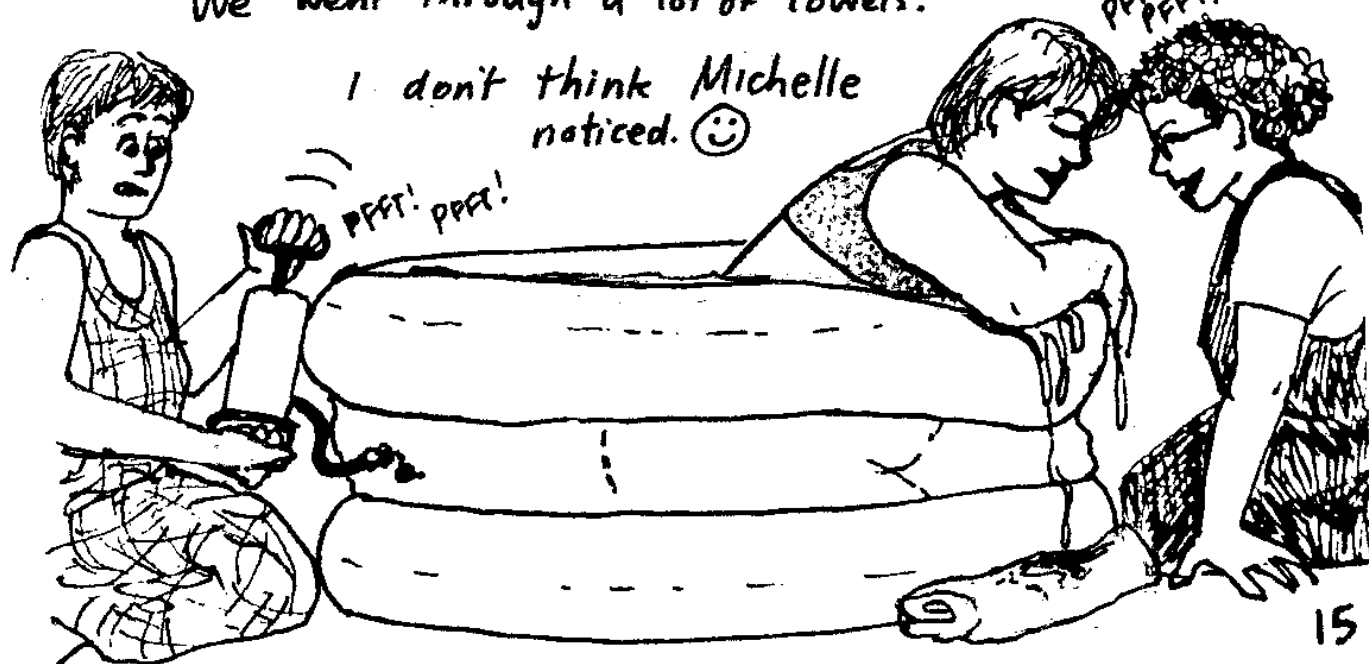
Most people believe that it is the frequency of contractions that determines the progress of labor; the closer together, the further along the mama is. That whole idea is a myth - what counts is how long the contractions are from start to finish. Good, strong, active labor contractions are a minute long... in most cases. Michelle was one of those rare exceptions - hers only lasted 40-50 seconds. Efficient, though - they got her babies out every time!

So... here we are. Michelle's hubby is with his other girls, trying to get them to nap. Her doula, Jessica, arrives and is massaging Michelle. The pool is filling. I set up my equipment, make sure Michelle is eating & drinking a bit... and wait. Years ago I heard a Montana midwife's expression "Sit by the hole and wait." Yep. That's what to do.

At around 3 pm, Michelle was starting to sound-and look-transitiony to me. Her baby sounded great, she sounded great... it was all picture-perfect... Except her hubby was tied up with the girls. Jessica was happy to do childcare, but this was only her second birth and I knew she'd rather be seeing a baby get born than playing house! So, I asked Michelle if Randy could come watch the girls, and bring Mary in when the baby was coming. "Sure!" she said. Randy came right over and since we had babysat the girls several times Mary was very comfortable with him. Good... everything's settled.

My assisting midwife was helping Michelle get a handle on her breathing... she was feeling tingly and dizzy because she was breathing a bit too deeply through contractions. "Breathe with me," she guided Michelle in taking short blowing breaths. Meanwhile I was making short breathing noises of my own: the pool was deflating! Agh! Apparently somehow between Zuzu's birth and this one, it had sprung a leak in the middle tier. Earlier in her labor it had been easy to manage, but now it was worse, and as Michelle leaned on the side water was pouring over. Jay and I took turns pumping it back up, me apologizing over and over.

We went through a lot of towels!



Some thoughts on "checking" a woman in labor...

When my assisting midwife arrived at Michelle's labor, she watched the labor pattern for a while (contractions every 5 minutes, about 40-45 seconds long) and asked me if I'd checked Michelle. I hadn't. Her labor was progressing normally for her, and she was beginning to get that "7 centimeter flush" high up on her cheeks... watching all the other signs is usually enough for me!

If a woman asks me to check her during her labor, I tell her that I'll be happy to, but first to think about how she will feel if I give her an answer she doesn't like. If a mama is in good strong labor, and everything looks normal, what will it do to her mentally and emotionally if she finds out she's "only" 4cm? Usually when women consider this possibility, they choose not to be checked. I assure them: your labor is progressing normally. All is well.

Knowing dilation is a bit of useless information that can potentially do more harm than good! Besides, dilation can and does change rapidly - a woman can go from 5 to 10 cm in the course of a few contractions! The cervix can also "un-dilate"... again, not so useful to find out.

Granted, there are times when it is appropriate to check: if the labor seems to be progressing abnormally slowly, i.e., contractions are not getting harder, longer, or closer together after hours of work - or if contractions are irregular, things like that... under certain circumstances it is helpful to know if the baby's head is straight and flexed, chin down. A crooked head will often cause a crooked labor! Besides - birth energy should be "out" - and checking just seems to be pushing it back "in". Speaking of pushing - I don't check when women feel "pushy" either. I tell them to push a little if it feels good, and to blow it out until pushing is unpreventable. Babies come out.

Cervixes dilate. Let's just let that happen...

At around 3:40pm she started feeling a little "pushy", and ten minutes later her water broke into the pool. The waters were clear, a little vernix, no meconium... and two minutes later she was actively pushing.

Michelle is a natural baby-haver - her body is very efficient, her births smooth. Prior to this baby's birth, I had asked her if she wanted to catch her own baby this time, rather than actively having a midwife's hands on her. She liked the idea, and so helping her do it herself was my goal...

On hands and knees she pushed, alternating with sitting back on her heels. The head eased out well, Michelle's hands protecting her own body, her own tissues. The baby's color was good. She sat back on her heels again, head out, and suddenly seemed a little panicky. "Help me!" she said, and I told her "you're doing just fine - you can lean forward on the next contraction..." but my words alone were apparently not helpful. My assisting midwife - senior, and Michelle's primary midwife for the first two - took charge. She reached in, reporting that the cord was around the baby's neck - not tight, though - and told Michelle to sit back in a semi-reclined position. Then she actively managed the rest of the birth, the baby - a girl, Lucy - born in two or three pushes. Lucy was brought to the surface and placed in Michelle's arms. It was 4:14 pm.

As typical for waterbirth babies, Lucy did not come out and cry immediately. We rubbed her feet and back, observing her color (good) and muscle tone (great). Her breath came and she cried and cried - so much that we were teasing Michelle about it! Mary came around to the side of the pool to look at her new baby sister. All was sweet & well.

(A funny little side-story: Randy had been hanging out with Mary just outside the door, waiting for the birth to be imminent. Michelle & Jay had agreed it would be fine

for him to accompany Mary in - to be with her to re-assure her. Jessica, the doula, was not in on that conversation, though, and when we said "go get Mary" that is exactly what she did! She opened the door just wide enough to let Mary in and then closed it on Randy's face... later we all had a good laugh about it. Even without direct adult interaction, Mary did great, sort of paced until Lucy was born... then watched, wide-eyed...)

Anyway, back to the birth. Baby is quieting & looking around in mama's arms, breathing well. The water is completely clear - bits of vernix but nothing else.

Then Lucy poops - a lot - and since her cord is done pulsing we decide to get mama out and cut Lucy loose!

We wrapped Lucy up and handed her to her daddy, and we helped Michelle out of the pool. Her placenta had not yet separated, and she could not get comfy enough to try nursing, so we sat to the side to await it - talking and laughing about the birth.

Lucy was a bit "wet" sounding and a little grumpy and snuffy - not unusual for a relatively fast birth.

My assisting midwife was caring for her, listening to her lungs and observing her. After about

a half-hour, Lucy was calm, the placenta came with no problems, and at 5pm, 45 minutes after her birth, was nursing like a pro.

Her other big sister woke up and they all cuddled up together and

we drank Lynchburg Lemonades (delicious!), celebrating this new life & the easy birth.



At 7pm midwives & doula were downstairs in the kitchen, charting & getting ready to leave, when Jay came downstairs. "Michelle would like one of you to come look at Lucy - she seems to be struggling to breathe...."

At 8pm we were pulling into the hospital parking lot with a grunting, flaring baby. We had observed her at home for about a half-hour, and she seemed to do okay as long as the O₂ was on her... but not okay enough. The O₂ tank ran out just as we arrived, but having called ahead of time they were ready for us. In what was just moments but felt like forever, they had whisked her into a room and were suctioning, bagging...and calling for more help.

It was scary and surreal. Just hours before, a perfectly healthy baby was nursing at home, and now my client is lying on a stretcher in the hallway in the ER, watching, helpless, as more and more frantic-looking medical staff rushed in and out of the room where her tiny baby lay very, very still. They intubated her, to get her O₂ saturation up. They put a central line in through her umbilicus. Her sats kept dropping: 70, 60, 45... at one point they got as low as 28%, and one of the neonatologists came out to tell Michelle in a grave voice that her baby was very, very sick, and to be aware that... well...

Time passed in a nightmare. Michelle called Jay, back at home with the girls, and asked him in a quiet voice to see if their priest could come, and to come up himself. We waited mostly in silence, staring at each other. It was a horrible feeling... the newborn babe of my client... my friend... was dying, and there was nothing I could do. They kept asking me if there had been meconium (in the fluid when her membranes ruptured). No... No... I told them. She had no signs

of a problem till long after birth. Michelle and I both, from our own perspective, started the self-questioning that persists to this day: what went wrong? was it something I did/didn't do? how could we have prevented it. There were no answers then; there are none now.

At midnight baby Lucy was stable - sedated, on a ventilator, but stable. Michelle was checked in to the hospital, a breast pump brought to her room. Her husband, their priest, and a good friend were there, and I went home to weep.

At first I thought it was GBS - Group Beta Strep. The testing for/treatment of GBS is controversial and far from understood. It kills babies; it is unpreventable, some believe. I did not believe it was GBS. It was not meconium aspiration. All I, or anyone, could do was wait. And pray.

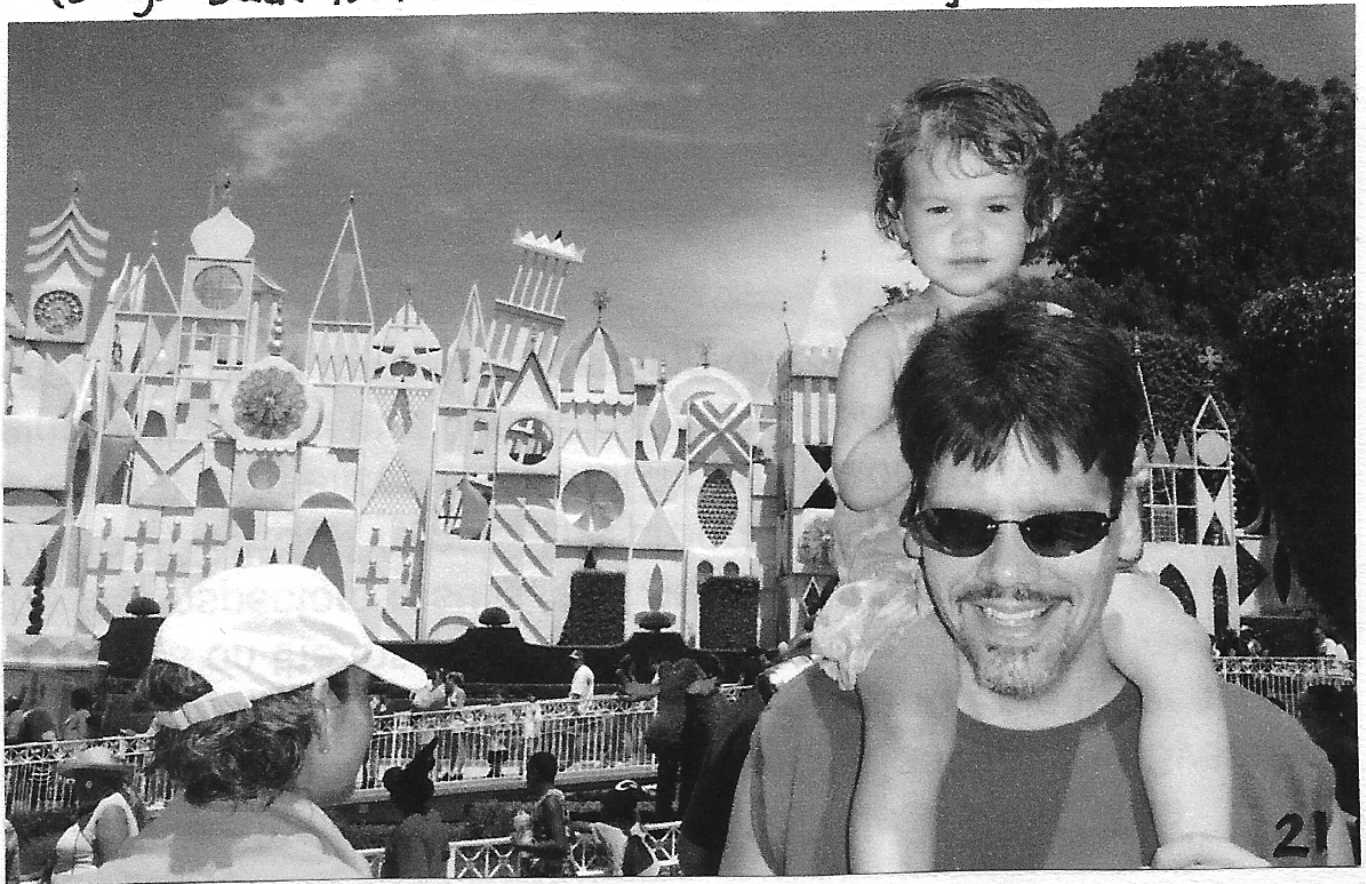
I took Michelle's other daughters the next day, so her hubby could be with her. I spent as much time in the NICU as I could - it's amazing how quickly you get used to the routine of scrubbing up before going in to see the baby. She lay still, tubes in her throat and nose and arms and feet. Again and again we thought "This can't be real" - but it was. We cried together, many times. Michelle got the worst of it. She pumped religiously. She never left Lucy's bedside. After the first night she no longer had a room, and had to rest and sleep in one of the "pumping rooms". It was heartbreaking.

After three long days, Lucy seemed ready to come off the ventilator... and did well. Then some blisters on her arm made them think she had herpes (!!) and they kept her for four more days. It was a time of deep fear, grief, and gratitude... and I will always feel that I could have done more. Michelle was a hero.

Lucy went home July 15... and is healthy. ♡♡♡

It's a small girl after all...

Despite the hard & horrible, irritating & frustrating events of this past summer, the Baker Family DID manage to get some fun out of it!! Perhaps the best part was our trip to Disneyland!! Gush gush. Well, listen, I know that any so-called progressive parent hates the mouse and all it stands for; I will stand up proudly and admit that I have long loved Disneyland. Randy and I had our one-day honeymoon there, and when Randy decided to pull a stagnant investment to treat us to D-Land for a 3rd anniversary present, he pulled out all the stops. We took Nana, RiRi, and Isaiah, thinking-correctly- that a four adult/two child trip would allow for more fun all 'round. We stayed at the Grand Californian hotel, right on the park property, and let me tell you that is the way to go! It was a five-minute walk from the park gates, making it easy to go back to the hotel to swim during the hottest



hours of the day. We stayed 4 nights/5 days... heaven. The kids got used to waiting in line pretty quickly, which was a good thing, because in mid-August the lines are long! For some reason, though, Small World had pretty short lines, and Zuzu loved it. We went on that ride NINE TIMES in those five days. I actually didn't mind a bit; it was hotter-n-Hades out and Small World is a long, cool ride. Zuzu loved the rides where there was more to see & less action; Isaiah preferred the action rides—so the last 2 days Riri & Isaiah took off by themselves. We went to the Electrical Parade on 3 of the evenings—nothing like wide-eyed sleepy kids... The food & water (2.80 a bottle! Yipes!) were the bulk of our expenditures but let me tell you I ate some GREAT food, especially at the New Orleans Cafe places! Thank heaven we bought squirt bottles for the kids, keeping everyone cool & having fun in the process. Randy & I got to go on Pirates of the Caribbean a couple of times ♥♥ bringing back a lot of great memories. I also went on California Screamin'—a pretty big fast upside-down rollercoaster. Weird sensation, having my pregnant uterus flop up into my chest for a moment! But, I love rollercoasters & couldn't resist. One of my favorite parts was Randy's response to the pool: Mr. "I-Don't-DO-Public-Swimming-Pools" went apeshit over the waterslide at the hotel—sliding & running to do it again, over & over! It was so cute... and made me so happy. On day 3 we needed some laundry done, so I hauled a load to the laundry room. Hours later I step into the same infrequently-used elevator and find a pair of my panties looped thoughtfully over the railing... oops!! It was actually quite hilarious. All-in-all, despite the heat, my pregnant status, my lack of patience with 2½ year old boys, and all—I had a wonderful time. I know Zuzu & her daddy did, too!

and some other happy stuff

THE BEACH: Seaside, Oregon, is a straight-shot drive from our house, maybe an hour-and-a-half away.

Pure joy for Zuzu & her parents. We play in the sand, play keepaway from the ocean, eat mini-donuts, ride the beautiful & well-maintained carousel, rent surreys, browse the sweet little toy-store, and go home happy.

CAMPING: Another favorite for all of us; we found the perfect campground about an hour the other direction, along the Columbia River Gorge. Wyeth Campground is immaculate, the campsites are spread out at least 20 feet apart; there's hiking trails and a stream to throw rocks in (and build rock towers—it's easier than you'd think) and see frogs. It's kept up by a delightful retired couple who gave us kindling in our great hour of need. Bliss, bliss, bliss.

GRANT PARK WADING POOL: Shade for the mamas, cool water in a big round pool to splash & play and pour into the grass. Every day Zuzu was saying "the swimmin' pool open to-day?"

THE ULTRASOUND: after finding out at 14 weeks that I'd been exposed to a great deal of weed killer, we waited in panic to confirm that our baby's growth was normal. Everything looked perfect, and we were elated to find out that it's another girl!! Her name will be Josephine. Little Josie. Perhaps the best day of all.



ZUZU, THE
HAPPY CAMPER

The wit!
The talent!
The silliness!

Zuzu's page

From the mouth of our little friend:

"Where is everybody? Here is all-body!"

"That's how people do it!"

"Mama got on her naked clothes!"

"My house is all kind of a mess"

"My want some open-meal!"

(uh, that's oatmeal)

"Mama you all nice and warm!"

"That not riiight!"

(if you sing something silly and she's not in the mood)

"My went on the biggest airplane my ever see!"

"Read me a once-upon-a-time story"

"Daddy"
(with ears)

March
2003

Age 21
months

"When my grow
up, my want to..."

Upon discovering that milk no longer comes from my breasts, I apologized to my not-yet-weaned little girl: "I'm sorry sweetie! I didn't know my boobies were empty!"

She looks at me thoughtfully and says "Go the gro-see shop!"

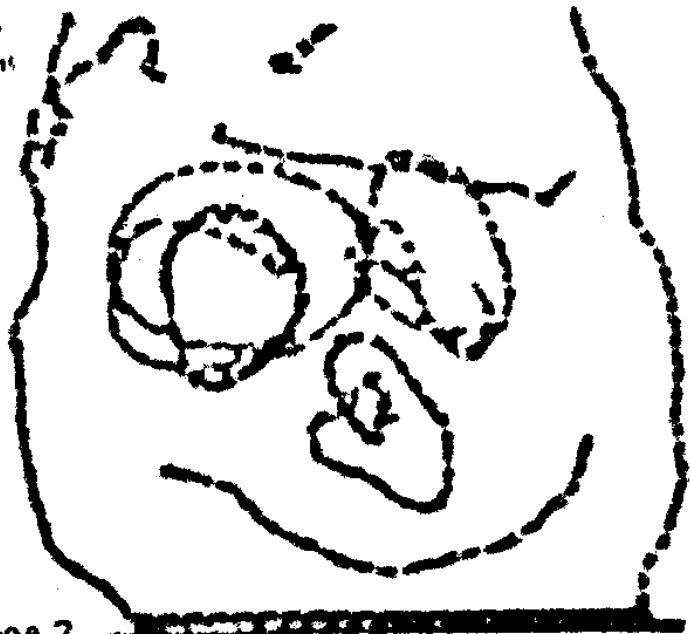
"Here my come!
Here my come!"

"What are
you talking
about, Daddy?"

Magna-
Doodle

drawing

June 2003 Age 2



GEEK DADDY GETS BEAT UP: AGAIN

In this article there will all manner of objectionable things: pettiness and violence, stereotypes and sexist notions will fly free, and if you're like me it will leave you empty inside and wondering if the species deserves to survive. Hmm. Let's hope I'm exaggerating.

You see, we are apparently having another baby girl. I'll believe it when I see it. Well, actually I'll believe when I don't see it, if you know what I mean. It's a girl, and I'm greatly relieved. Why, you may ask, would I prefer a girl when the most populous nation in all the great world tells me boys are better?

I prefer having girls because I know the problems boys have, especially geek boys, and I prefer not to be in the position of offering advice. Oh, I would rise to the occasion if a boy came along, don't you worry! But the sort of advice I would be tempted to give could get my male child killed.

If you're a boy from the age of eight to about sixteen you can expect to get tripped, punched, pounded, harassed and humiliated dozens of times every school year, sometimes dozens of times in a month. If you're sensible (or cowardly, or unflappable, or unobtrusive, or whatever phrase you prefer) you just put up with it until your assailant gets bored and moves on. This approach minimizes the beatings, but not the humiliation.

(For this next part, I want you to remember that I was an addle-minded hormonally imbalanced kid (a.k.a. teenager) and cut me some slack).

If you're me, you make the bully's life a living hell every chance you get until he cries for mercy. And I mean every chance you get. If he's an older kid who drives a car you unplug his spark plugs or cut his fan belt. Do this every day for a week (or until he stops bringing his car to school). Then you tell him (where no one else can hear) that if he ever wants to drive his car again he's going to back off now. Or, when no

one else can hear you, you insult him with the most vile provocations you can muster in an attempt to provoke him to attack you in a place where adults will instantly break things up. And then you innocently deny the provocation. This is the one great part about being a geek boy with a likable and calm demeanor: the adults always believe your word over that of a bully. Your rep always comes out on top, and you have to be a good actor and protect that rep dearly. It is your best friend. In short you risk life and limb in exchange for the life-affirming joy of getting the upper hand and making sure the bully knows who is pulling the strings.

So when you're in history class and the bully next to you has stolen your pencil, and the ensuing conflict has led to the bully kicking your desk repeatedly when the teacher isn't looking, and then having drawn the teacher's attention three times already, and the teacher shouts (actually shouts), "If either of you pulls one more thing, you are out here!", here's what you do.

1. Apologize to the teacher sheepishly and sincerely.
2. When the teacher turns his back (the fool!), lean over to the bully and say, "You're going bye-bye." He'll look at you with a combined expression of malice and confusion.
3. Grab your desk/chair and flip it and yourself over sideways onto the floor, and sit there with your school supplies scattered all over the place pointing your finger up your victim with a mock expression of pain and disbelief on your face.

This works really, really well.

Situations like this rely heavily on the utter predictability of the participants. Frustrated teachers and angry bully-boys are so predictable it's like knowing the future. Out went my nemesis for the day, shrieking "I'm going to kill you!"

You should understand that it was no ordinary pencil he stole. It was a Dixon-Ticonderoga No. 2 Soft lead, the greatest pencil ever made. (I can feel Rhonda rolling her eyes. She thinks this pencil is perfectly ordinary

and does not necessarily deserve to be called by its full and proper name. Bah!)



If you live in a smallish town where the bullies are not willing to actually kill you, this self-destructive strategy works! Eventually the bully agrees to leave you alone and to tells his primitive friends to do the same. This usually happens at the point that he's about to be kicked out of school permanently and his "old man" has beaten him soundly several times for getting into trouble.

It's a good thing I didn't go to an inner city school. I'd be dead as Caesar's Ghost.

This strategy also turns a momentary humiliating encounter into a torturous and lengthy battle for puerile supremacy. Is my way better? Of course not. It's one of those philosophies that says "If everyone did this, the re wouldn't be a problem anymore!". Of course that's true of everyone's philosophy pretty much.

Was it worth it? You're darn right it was! Driving bullies insane and surprising them with my gall was the only thing that got me through those horrible times. "A bloody nose and your pride is worth more than a humiliating peace." (I'm sure I didn't quote that properly.)

So, I spent much of that period of my youth angry (duh), bitter (double duh), and getting beat on repeatedly by boys I'd never met before (this part I could have mostly avoided).

My father was dead right about this: when you get hit in a fight you don't even feel it. Your emotions kick in and there is nothing but rage. It was a liberating discovery.

Now here's the tricky part. I always see myself as a pacifist ... right up until someone hits me. What happens then is totally irrational, and I couldn't control it very well in those days. The transformation into a frothing nutcase also never helped me to win a fight.

I think the anger is more within my control now, and here's how that happened: As you may know I decided to take Taekwon Do when I was in my early thirties. It had been more than a dozen years since anyone had tried to punch me for no reason. One sunny day when I was a yellow belt I found myself sparring a black belt who had an arrogant attitude. I became so angry so fast that I couldn't remember my own name. This black belt was staring off into space and not paying attention right in the middle of our sparring match. In that revelatory instant I was back on the "playground" in a fight with a bully. I wanted so badly to sock that arrogant SOB right in the face. Since he wasn't paying attention I'm sure I could have done it, too. A thin strand of sanity wrapped itself around my emotions and said, "You're an adult. You don't hit people out of frustration. This guy has done nothing to you. It's pathetic." I bowed politely and left the floor. I had no idea this juvenile anger was still thriving within me. The school's Master, who is a psychologist and an anger management specialist, found me in the hall and encouraged me to tell him what was going on, so I did. With his help I stayed in the school and during the next few years the flashes of anger faded and have not returned.

All in all it would be hard for me to advise a boy dealing with these kinds of problems. I know what its like to live in fear and I would simply not be able to tell a kid to "suck it up and move on". I'd be more likely to help him figure out ways to "win". Of course winning in this case is purely about ego satisfaction, and it's not a victory that everyone would recognize. The win you achieve is offset by the fact that no one supports your behavior, including your geek friends that you get into trouble trying to defend.

To me, this advice sounds an awful lot like the irrational nonsense that has always plagued the world. Pride over common sense. Revenge over civility. Suicide bombers. I think I was very willing to risk my life for the chance to get even. And I think this ego trap was so appealing to me as a kid because I felt so powerless. I had no means to stop the bullying. On several occasions when one bully stepped out of the ring his friend or brother would step in. No adult had any useful advice on the subject, ever. Not many people seemed to understand that it wasn't this one bully that was the problem. The problem was that I lived in

fear every time I stepped into the locker room or the cafeteria, because somewhere in that room was an asshole who wanted to abuse me because I looked like I had no choice but to take it. I think if you put people in this sort of situation, you will get some very irrational results.

Junior High and High School were like the gladiatorial arenas, and gym class was the worst. Geeks looked even geekier in gym, and supervision was almost non-existent.

Having exposed my violent nature and petty streak of vengefulness, and rehashed the ubiquitous foolishness of boys in general, it would be fair to ask, "Why do you claim to value boys and girls equally?"

There are many reasons, but the first begins with a short retrospective. Growing up I always liked girls better. They were smarter than boys. It was always the girls I had to compete with in the math races, spelling tests, etc. I didn't like hitting or spitting, which were the chief talents of boys in grade school. Girls had more imagination and liked to role-play. Sports sucked canal water, and not even *good* canal water. Most of my best friends were girls.

Then puberty starting hitting like a meteor storm. I lost all of my female friends because, "My boyfriend wouldn't like us hanging out together." There were other excuses, equally lame. At the same time the boys became less imaginative and much more competitive (read, assholes). It was hard for me to like girls better anymore. They were traitorous and cruel, and what's worse, they liked boys!

For a long time I saw boys as evil and girls as stupid (mostly for liking boys). No, I did not like the typical gender roles, not one bit. I had no respect or tolerance for the constant posing. The whole phenomena made people mean and idiotic. Yuck! I was unconscious to the fact that I was just as busy posing in my own way.

Other than my collection of equally annoyed and outcast friends, I really didn't see any sign that this dementia had a cure until my first year of college. Suddenly the women started talking again and the boys I didn't like went... somewhere else.

Like most people I grew up thinking that my little microcosm was the whole world (because it is), that the boys I knew represented all boys, the girls represented all girls.

Teen culture and public school were an ugly, ugly crucible, but I don't feel the bitterness like I once did. I'm sure there are better ways to grow up, but I also know there are a LOT worse and that my tiny complaints look a tad pale next to kids who had real problems – probably kids like most of the bullies I ran into. Talk about angst – sheesh!

Anyway, our little Josephine is on the way and I couldn't be happier.

"Why run around in your cage in your dying hour denying that you're a squirrel". (That's a half-remembered quote from Fahrenheit 451. It's up to you to decide if it means anything, because I don't know why I typed it here).

My new advice to any kid would be,

- "Do what inspires you". Unless the kid looks like a psychopath. You don't want that kind of inspiration in the local schoolyard.
- "For the love of God, do not get all angsty". Angst -- Now there's a recipe for humiliation.
- "Remember that people are short-sighted, selfish, quick to judge and slow to change." And you can forget about blaming them for it. It is exactly and precisely and in all other ways just like blaming the sun for making you hot. Oh, and you're one of 'em, kiddo.

And here is some carefully gleaned wisdom for everyone:

- Beer and wine DO mix. But if you find red wine is too bitter (ack!), it is better to just stir in some grape juice.
- Vote for women in government. Will they do a better job than men? I think a damp sponge and a rusty pickle fork would do better, but the point is, let's find out!
- Never eat an earwax flavored jelly bean for anything less than 1000 dollars cash.

Dear baby -

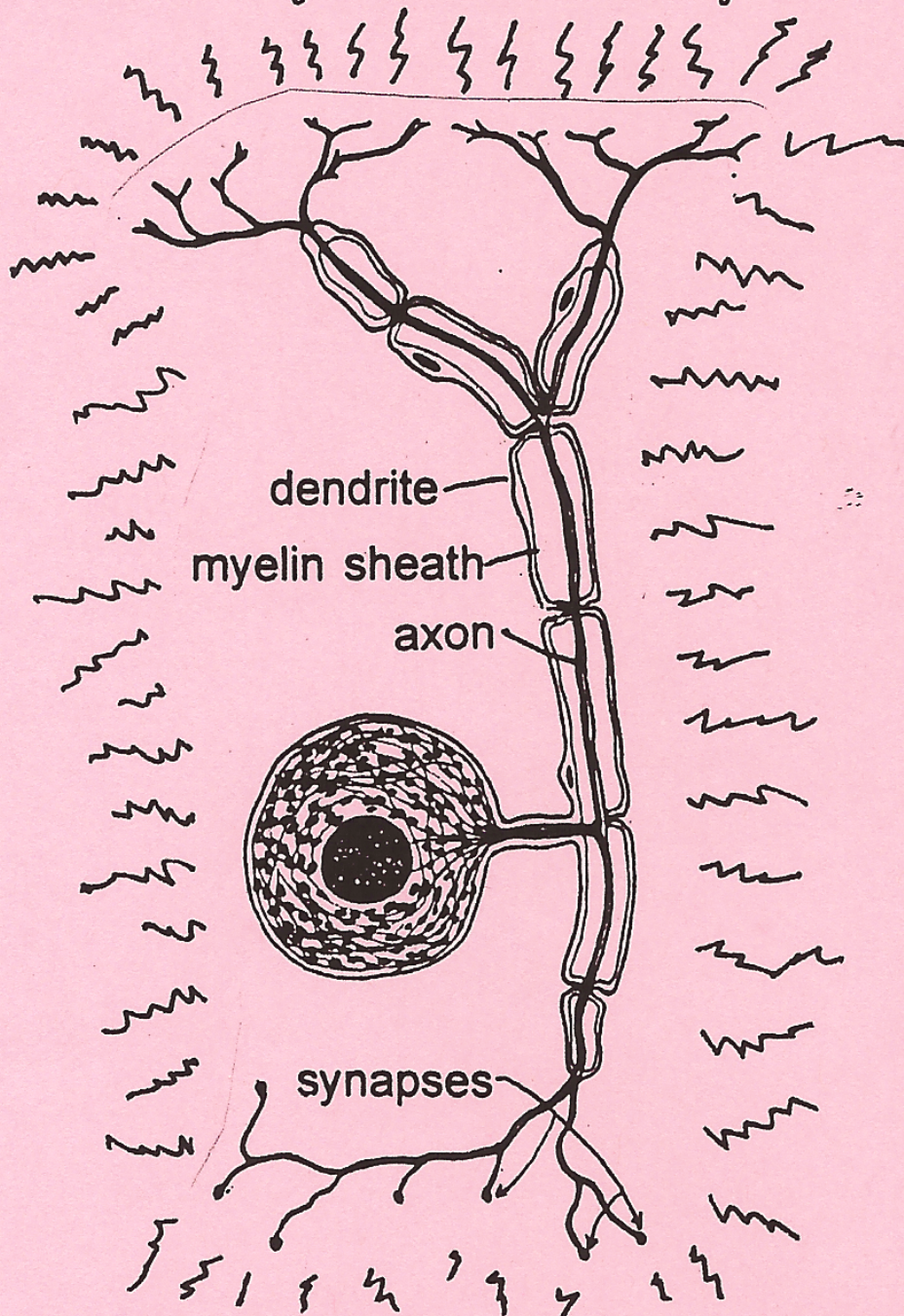
I cannot imagine how hard the past three months have been on you. The first thing I said when I knew you were there was "welcome!" and then I did nothing but dread & fret and worry. I worry, as every mama of a second baby does, that I will not have enough love in my heart for you, too. I worry that sleep deprivation will make me the most horrible mama to you and your sister. I worry that you will be damaged.. that you will end up in the NICU or, worse, die, like your spirit friend did. I know I have had shameful moments of weakness, where I said I didn't want you... but little baby, surely you who nestle inside me, know that you are wanted!

We peeked inside at you and we're overjoyed that you are a girl. We have decided to call you Josephine... probably Josie. Josephine Baker was a really cool woman, we'll tell you all about her. I know that even peeks inside can be mistaken, though, so I want you to know that even if you aren't a girl, we'll still name you something really cool, and love you with all our hearts.

Keep on swimmin' baby, 'til we get to meet you! Love, Mama

This issue was brought to you by, and is dedicated to, my nerves. Thank you.

"It's easier to get forgiveness than permission..." E.M.



from Anne Frye's Holistic Midwifery Vol. I - drawing of nerve cell

This is a better-late-than never issue of Zuzu & the Baby Catcher
 It is a zine by midwife, mama, artist & pregnant woman, me.
 Copies are \$2 each, subscriptions available. Back issues available, too.
 Rhonda Baker 2000 NE 42nd #183, Portland, OR 97213
 rhonmama@msn.com www.emeraldgiant.com/babycatcher

Powers" villain, Dr. Evil.
 - "Quick Takes" by Jay M. Smith, Chicago Sun-Times



HEADLINE of the Week!

"THERE IS NO UNIVERSE!"

- The Weekly World News

According to the WNW, "The stars are not huge, fiery balls of gas billions of miles away. They're holes in an enormous tin roof that covers the Earth."



Lame joke du jour

An IRS agent walks into a tannery. "Why haven't you paid your taxes?" says the taxman to the owner. "Business has been very bad," answers the tanner. "Do you mind if I check around the place?" asks the IRS man. "Go ahead," says the owner. "You'll see I have nothing to hide."



Hand" was released, Universal Pictures, which had bankrolled the film, dumped it, showing it at drive-ins and at the bottom of the bill in the few cities

Please see **FONDA**, Page E7

Peter Fonda accepted a Mid-Life Achievement Award earlier this month at the Waterville, Maine, opera house.

Zinesters make the symposium scene

Annual Portland conference attracts self-publishers

By SU-JIN YIM
 THE OREGONIAN

If this were a zine piece, it might be handwritten. Or illustrated with mad-deni-gally cute drawings of Zuzu, an almost 2-year-old Portlander. Even starting at you from the pages of the Internet.

Or it might be something completely different.

Zines, a subculture of independent publishing that endured the mainstream spotlight in the trendy '90s, defy neat definitions or styles.

They incite, amuse, bore, educate and gratify in ways that, their creators say, mainstream media rarely achieve. You can find them online, in bookstores such as Powell's and Reading Frenzy, or mailed directly from the author. But members of the zine community didn't often gather in person to discuss their work and challenges. So three years ago, a handful of Portland zinesters created the Portland Zine Symposium, a now-annual festival that draws zine publishers nationwide.

This weekend, organizers expect more than 1,000 fellow zine publishers

IF YOU GO

What: The third annual Portland Zine Symposium
Where: Portland State University, Smith Memorial Center, 1825 S.W. Broadway
When: Friday-Sunday
Cost: Free
More information: www.pdxzines.com

to ride-share, bike, fly and train their way to downtown Portland, clutching copies of zines with names such as "The Penny Dreadful," "Death by Robot," "Slush Pile: The Second Coming!" and "The Assassin and the Whiner." In their pages, poetry shares space with essays about the politics of resistance and heartbreaking short stories about love lost.

The organizers labor to produce the zine fest because they "knew there were so many publishers here and so many resources, but we didn't really always get together and share our work," says symposium co-organizer Eleanor Whitney.

This weekend, they'll fill Portland State University's Smith Memorial Center to discuss their work. Among local attending zinesters will be:

◆ Whitney, 22, of Southeast Portland, who publishes "Indulgence," a personal zine.

Please see **ZINES**, Page E7



ZINE S

A taste of Symposium weekend

Zine 101 zine publi

Zine Etic trades an

Zine Dis a distro o system

Changing Photocopy and comm

Sending Mail requ graphic/p

Race in Z A dialogu

There's M Make a Z workshop personal creation

Zines and Zinester p experienc how they parents.

Selling O ethics of publishing yourself v consider somehow anyway.

Source: The Symposium