

A journal for my “Human Sexuality” Class on the subject of Birth and Babies

That Time I delivered a Baby

Birth is the one aspect of this class that didn’t make my repressed-self feel as if I should go to confession (as a reaction to confronting sexual information). The fact is, I have never wanted children. With the high heritability of bipolar disorder, depression, and anxiety, it is just too much of a risk that my child would be perpetually suicidal no matter how big their trust fund would be (wishful thinking). Plus, I hate kids. And adults. And the knowledge that no matter how good a parent you may be, you will still screw up your child somehow.

All that aside, I have always been very connected to babies and the miracle of birth. I have always been in awe of the ability of women to grow humans. The Wicca, the druids, and pretty much all goddess religions worshipped this phenomenon seeing it as a direct connection with God/nature/universe. Whether that is true or not, I have always thought that is such an incredibly beautiful ideology. Furthermore, babies themselves exhibit everything that is wonderful about humanity for me. To me, they are the ultimate philosophers; they observe everything in total awe and without the bias of experience. They prove that the “mundane” is just a perceived concept whenever they find excitement in a blade of grass, in a sheet of paper, or in a song. Babies, bubbles, quantum physics have always been on the short list of things that make me feel less like Wednesday Addams so I knew I wanted to incorporate them in my life in some way.

I volunteered through a priest friend of my fathers to go to Honduras and work at an orphanage when I was 16. Since I would be working with young children, I had to get CPR certified for both child and infants, in addition to taking an “Infant Care

certification” course. Upon arrival, I learned the priest was only going to communicate with us via email leaving the run of the orphanage to me and two other teenagers; ages 17 and 18 respectively. Only one of us spoke Spanish, and not very fluently.

One day, a very pregnant women came through the door crying and yelling; It did not take a genius to figure out she was in labor. Though we tried to contact everyone we could, it became clear we had to suck it up, lay her down, and do this old school. We had an old computer that slowly connected to the internet so we washed up, put on gloves, cleaned her up, and followed Google based directions on home delivery. GOOGLE DIRECTIONS. Though I was probably dramatic talking about it in class, it was a really interesting and enlightening experience.

For one, it turns out women are built for giving birth (shocker). Though she was screaming a lot of the time, you could tell her body was doing the majority of the work. The whole process also turned out to come in handy for this course because I knew, first hand, everything there is to know about umbilical chords, bloody show, dilation, contractions. We measured her cervix dilation with fingers (1, 2, 3) to see when she was ready to push. It was kind of wonderful that the orphans in residence brought her water and wet a towel. Finally, after 9 (!!) hours of labor and so much blood/goop, she delivered a healthy baby boy. I cut the umbilical chord and cleaned him up in a very rudimentary way, and wrapped him up and gave him to her. I was in shock of this woman, who 5 minutes previously was screaming as if it was the end of the world, now was docile, calm, and happy. The whole thing may have solidified my desire not to breed but it was really beautiful in a dirty sort of way; Life and all that, you know.

During high school and part of college I worked in the infant care unit of Doctor's hospital (basically as a nurses assistant, it probably wasn't legal but they took the Honduras experience and the infant care classes as sufficient). Mostly my job was monitoring the babies in the "boxes" and making sure their charts were all right over night. I have no idea how I'll use this passion as my life continues. I do not under any circumstance want to be a nurse or an OBGYN. But I know that babies make me so happy that I'll have to figure out how to incorporate them somehow. (Let me clarify, when I say baby, I mean 0-12 months. After that, I am over it and talk to them like they are 25).

Here is a picture of the baby a few weeks later. He came out with a full head of hair. It is amazing how much they grow in the first few weeks! And yes, I had dreadlocks when was there.

