



Babies in the Time of Corona

Let me let you in on a little secret. I have never been a “baby person.” Oh, I always liked babies. They are cute. And they entertain. But I was not one to go “over the moon ga-ga” for a baby. I much preferred ages 2 1/2-8 when they can talk, engage with you, “do stuff” and begin to understand the world. That is my favorite age.

Of late, I’ve taken more of an interest in babies. It seems like there is a baby boomlet going on as many who had delayed child bearing all of a sudden are having children. Although it is only anecdotal, I would venture to say I have officiated at more baby naming’s and *brises* than at any time in my career since the 1990’s.

At first glance, one might think that this was a byproduct of being sheltered at home during a pandemic! And then one realizes the pandemic although seeming to have lasted forever, has only been around for five months, not nine or ten.

But the visceral impact of a child being born during this time is still the same. At first there is worry. Worry about a child being born during an incredibly divisive time in our history. Worry that the pandemic could hurt the baby. Worry about how to raise a child during a pandemic. Worry about the need for childcare, socialization with other children, and even the need for parents to just have a night out without the baby. But these options for this moment in time are very narrow and harder to come by.

But then I stop. Looking at a baby, not as the mother or father or grandparent, nevertheless brings a smile to my face, and an appreciation that is deeper than before. ***At this moment a baby represents hope.***

Hope not only in the baby’s future, but in all of ours. Human beings are resilient. Whether it is a time of war or pandemic or economic downturn we have children. We believe that tomorrow will be better. And that somehow, in some way, this little baby will be part of the solution.

That is a lot of expectation to put on a baby; that little one, lying there so innocently.

But expectations start somewhere, and we are part of that somewhere. No, we should not put today’s problems on the shoulders of tomorrow’s children. (Yet, how can we not?) But we can hope and dream that just as we strove to create a better world, so will they. And it is our job to teach by example. To assume our responsibility now in making things right.

Things are messy right now. But in some ways, things that need to get done are clearer than ever before. Our responsibility to each other extends beyond our family to a world that is increasingly inter connected. Our need to protect and save our environment from global warming cannot delay any longer. Our need to invest in education and ways to use technology to improve our lives is more urgent than ever. Improvements must start somewhere. And when I look at a baby, I see hope. Hope that this baby’s world will indeed be an improvement on our own.