

OMAN and pregnancy The natural order of the universe. Contrary to popular belief women don't have an innate and instinctive awareness of the process of pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood. And becoming a mother is not the most glorifying experience in the world to every woman. Infact there is a sharp increase in psychiatric illness following childbirth in some woman. This may range from mild depression and moodiness on the third day after birth to constant depression lasting any thing upto one year. A period of fully acute depression is considered quite normal by doctors and in fact is thought to be almost necessary to relieve tension and anxiety after birth. These bouts of depression may be termed post natal blues or post natal depression according to their severity and time of onset.

Post Natal Blues

Post natal blues occur in 50 60% of woman following

"The Sexiest Woman Alive? Geena Davis asked last year Her query came in response to a 1989 People magazine cover naming Sean Connery, then nearly 60. "The Sexiest Man Alive," and the fact that

when it comes to the silver screen there is no equality between the sexes. While actors in their 40s and 50s are just coming into their prime. actresses the same age are finding a desert where there should be a range of interesting parts. "In our society men are accepted as actors for a longer period of time, even though

get wrinkles and paunches." says actress Piper Laurie. A Best Actress nominee for 1961's The Hustler, Laurie. now 61, is bucking the tend, coming out of a long hiatus and landing interesting roles, such as the part of the smart, bubbly redhead Vera Delmage who romances a deserted husband. played by Albert Finnery, in Rich in Love.

Meryl Streep, in a speech to the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), commented bluntly: Actresses seem to lose their market appeal (around forty). At the age of forty, however, most male actors are just approaching their peak earning potential.

On the big screen, the disparities are all too obvious. Robert De Niro, 50, was just paired with Uma Thurman, 24, in Mad Dog and Glory. Robert Redford, 55, starred with Demi Moore, 30, in Indecent Proposal. And Sean Connery romanced Michelle Pfeiffer, 27 years his junior, in 1990's Russia House.

Just compare the career path of Warren Beatty, 56, still easily casting himself as a romantic lead in flashy, big-budget films like Bugsy. with those of his former leading ladies. The Bonney to his Clyde. Fave Dunaway, 53, is retreating to television like so many actresses of her generation, while Dianc Keaton, 48, who starred with Beatty in Reds, was most recently seen on the screen as "Mom' in Father of the Bride and Godfa ther III. And when was the last time we saw his Shampoo costar Julie Christie?

Meanwhile, Jane Fonda, 55. has retired from show business

Depression After Giving Birth

by Farhana Ahmad

delivery, how does the mother feel? She feels tearful, irritable, and there is lability of feeling over the baby and poor concentration. These symptoms are unexpected and bewildering to a new mother who along with the rest of us is schooled to believe that having a baby is an occasion of sublime joy and consequently cause the mother considerable distress.

Prompt recognition and reassurance by the nursing staff, doctors and family nearly always succeed in alleviating the distress.

Rapid changes in proges terone and oestrogen levels which follow childbirth is suspected as the cause.

Post Natal Depression

Within 6 weeks of delivery 10-15% of mothers develop a new episode of depressive ill-

ness termed the post natal depression. In addition to the usual features of depression there may be excessive concern about the baby's health, fears of harming the baby, guilt about maternal deficiencies and marital tensions including loss of sexual interest. The attending physician may miss diagnosis at a routine post-natal examination because, he is more concerned over the baby s welfare and on possible gynaecological complications.

Moreover, women are embarrassed by admitting to feeling depressed after what is expected to be a joyful event in their lives.

Why Does It Occur?

Post-natal depression probably occurs as a result of various social and psychological changes following childbirth including giving up work, financial hardship, altered status, marital friction and sheer exhaustion of broken nights. The huge hormonal changes occurring in the body after the birth of the baby is another factor closely related to post-natal depression. Other investigations have shown that mothers who are separated from their children at birth, the mother heavily sedated and the child whisked off to the nursery for anything upto 24 to 48 hours suffer a longer period of depression and take longer to adjust to their babies. It appears to be vital to the health and well being and long term adjustment of both mother and baby that they are allowed close and intimate contact

immediately after delivery.

Thankfully mother and baby

remain in close proximity in

our country.

Very often, women who ap-proach childbirth in a state of fear and anxiety, continue to be anxious after birth and there is also a connection between long complicated and traumatic labours and post partum depression, anger and anxiety. There is no easy answer to the reasons or the cures, but most women go through a long period of role adjustment in their first year of mothering.

Post-natal depression can last for several months if it is not treated. If you are under stress it is important that you are not left in isolation to cope with fatigue, the baby, your own ambivalent feelings andthe 1001 daily demands of mothering. It is also important that you talk about your feelings and try not to feel guilty about them. Your husband, mother, sister or relative or nurse or doctor will be able to help you cope until you have fully adjusted. Anti-depressant drugs may be required in severe cases.

mistress or romantic rival of her teenaged daughter. She is figure we have yet to see in an American produced film -an older woman, coolly self possessed and every bit a sexual

Shirley MacLaine, 59, is going strong as well, but not as a romantic lead. In the recent picture Used People, she portrays a sincere but decidedly unglamorous older window who gets a second chance at love. She and Piper Laurie will soon costar in Wrestling Ernest Hemingway, playing women in their 70s being courted by Richard Harris and Robert Duvall.

With a growing number of female executives and producers, such as Sherry Lansing, chairman of Paramount Pictures: former studio head and independent producer Dawn Steel; and Linda Obst, the producer of This Is My Life, in positions to develop and green light movies, we may begin to see a push for better roles for actresses of all ages. But for the moment, actresses - event those in their prime - who want to insure good parts start their own production compa-

Diane Goldner, a former editor at Fame, writes on entertainment topics for a variety of publications

■ The Gambia have dec-

lared war - on palm wine

ping of palm wine have been

resuscitated and more and

more people are appearing in

court for playing their tradi-

African equivalent of Greece's

retsina, Spains Sangria, rum

punch in the West Indies.

home-grown wines and bawdy

brandies in tourist spots all

the species Elaeis guineensis,

is tapped for local consump-

juice, tasting better when

special home-made slings.

wood which has been soaked

in water until it becomes sup-

ple. They are a tourist attrac-

round the tops of the trees.

statesman Dawda Jawara last

July, has ordered a clampdown

groups enforcing local laws in

Banjulinding forest recently

fined three tappers - Merico

Camara. Ebou Mendy and

Mundu Manneh — 500 Dalasi

each for illegal production of

Janneh says that tapping de-

stroys the forests, where palm-

oil trees are fast disappearing.

The tapping of the trees for

wine, according to chief

Janneh, prevents the trees

from producing palm-oil and

palm-kernel oil, which he

maintains are of far greater

economic importance than

palm wine because "everyone

consumes these while only a

Forest protection has be-

few people drink palm wine."

Banjulinding chief Eric

this controversial nectar

Self-appointed youth

on tappers.

The wine, obtained from

Palm wine is the West

tional trade.

over the world.

Old laws banning the tap

EOPLE under the age of .21 resemble one another as much in their appearance as in their way of life and scale of values. They express both their desire to

of a quest for individual happi-Young French people con sider their country as the uncontested champion for respecting Human Rights, for social protection, political freedom and the fight against

live with others in harmony

and their wish to keep their

independence. So they reject

what they call "the illusion of

collective happiness" in favour

social inequality. However, on the subject of racism and the means used to eradicate it, only 27 per cent consider that "France is acting well", while 36 per cent think that the United States is taking the best action in this area. They also consider that the USA is the country in which the possibilities of making a fortune are the greatest. 55 per cent of them are convinced of this compared with only 4 per cent for France and 15 per cent for Japan.

According to young people in France today, what should be the first duty of rich countries? 38 per cent reply to maintain peace in the world, 36 per cent to reduce the inequality between rich and poor countries, 15 to protect nature and the environment. and 10 per cent to fight against dictatorships.

Young People, the World and the Future

Out of a population of 56.3 million, France has 15.7 million people under the age of

21. What do these young people, who are old enough to have an opinion on topical is-

sues, think? The answer is provided in a survey carried out for the Ministry of

How does the young generation see the future?

Young people in 1992 become less easily involved than their elders of May 68. When they feel concerned by a fact of society which arouses the interest of France most of them discuss the matter with their friends (48 per cent) or buy newspapers to find out more about it (35 per cent), but only 14 per cent take part in events to support the issue or in movements to provide help.

Finally, as a confirmation of other statistics from other sources, television is increasingly the window through which young people look at the world. 64 per cent of them quote the news on television as being the main source of "what they know about other countries".

Only 10 per cent of their information comes from school, university or books. This hegemony of television af-

fects all categories. Thus, for the great majority of young people, the world, with its upheavals and transformations is perceived through this particular medium and its contingencies. It is effective but, at the same time, creates a distance in relation to the event.

In general, they say that they are more concerned by what is happening in the world than by what is happening in their own country. Those most interested in how the planet is developing are the children of upper management (73 per cent) and those living in the Paris area (62 per cent).

Young people in France feel themselves to be so much "citizens of the world" that 71 per cent state themselves to be "closer to a young person whatever his nationality", than "Closer to a French person" whatever his age (27 per cent).

What are the events or phenomena which, according to them, could be a threat to France? The largest number of them (39 per cent) consider that it is unemployment and 16 per cent esteem it is the rise in racism.

L' Actualite en France

Tar old woman who is going to be called Sexiest Woman Alive? Coming of Age in Hollywood

by Diane Goldner

So what if you're talented, beautiful, and an Academy Award winner. Will they return your calls after you hit 40?

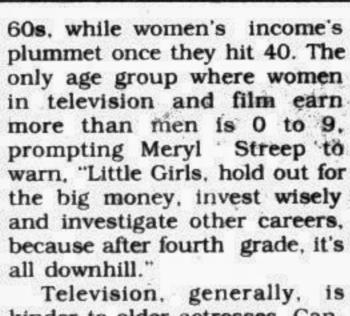


to star as Mrs Ted Turner. But we also have not seen much of Jacquiline Bisset, 46. or Gena Rowlands, 58

According to the SAG's 1991 records, just 34 per cent of television and film roles went to women, an increase of only 1 per cent in five years. In her SAG speech, Meryl Streep predicted that by 2010 women will be eliminated from movies entirely - if actresses don't speak up.

Actresses over 40 played a mere 10 per cent of all roles in 1991, a percentage that hasn't varied significantly since SAG began tracking jobs in 1982. "If you're a woman in show business, don't hit forty." advises former SAG women's committee chair (Ms.) Timothy Blake.

SAG salary surveys show that men's earnings soar when they are in their 40s, 50s, and

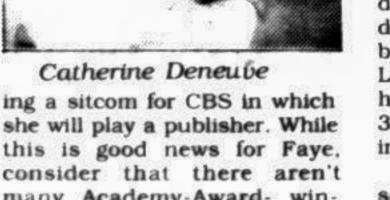


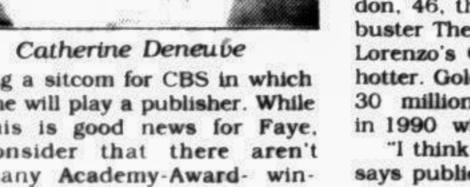
kinder to older actresses. Candice Bergen, 48, has had the biggest success of her career with Murphy Brown. Bea Arthur 68. Rue McClanahan Betty White 72 and Estelle Getty, 70. flourished as the Golden Girls for years (Mc-Clanahan, White, and Getty still hold their won on the Golden Palace). Dixie Carter 54 reached stardom with Designing Women and there are few actresses half 69-year-old Angela Lansbury's age who can compete with her success in Murder, She Wrote. Fave Dunaway, a Best Actress Academy-Award winner, hip to the older-actress-finds-rewardingwork-in-TV trend, is develop-



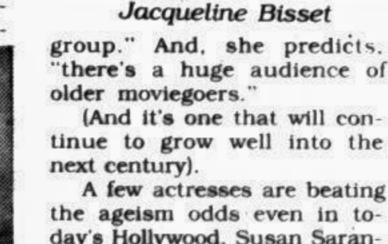
ing a sitcom for CBS in which this is good news for Faye. consider that there aren't many Academy-Award- winning actors who have to look to a weekly TV gig to maintain an acting career.

Although past facts and figmain characters are over 40.





ures have been discouraging, there's a growing awareness in Hollywood that audiences are receptive to moves where the "People are drawn by their peers," says Piper Laurie. "Mena and women's eves are caught by their won age



Candice Bergen

day's Hollywood. Susan Sarandon, 46, the star of the blockbuster Thelma and Louise and Lorenzo's Oil, has never been hotter. Goldie Hawn signed a \$ 30 million deal with a Disney in 1990 when she was 44. "I think a lot of it attitude." says publicist Allen Eichhorn,

who represents Goldie Hawn, Liza Minnelli and Candice Bergen. "Certain actresses just don't let age stand in their way of accomplishments." An encouraging break

through for older woman in film came with Catherine Deneuve, 50, playing a romantic lead in the French-produced epic drama, Indochine. There is nothing dowdy or old about Deneuve as mother.

Some Secrets of Strongly-knit Families

I HY do some families survive life's crises and prosper, while others are overwhelmed? A wide survey shows numerous qualities that make a strong family function.

Commitment: Crucial to any family's success is an inestment of time, energy. spirit and heart, otherwise known as commitment. The family comes first. Family members are dedicated to promoting each other's welfare and happiness — and they expect the family to endure.

For strong families, com mitment and fidelity are closely linked. Some families have seen commitment eroded by a more subtle enemy-work and its demand on time, attention and energy. In this context I may say: "The time I spend with my sons could be better spent at the office. Then I remind myself that my job as a father is more important. If I'm a good father to my sons. they're likely to be good parents too. Someday my grandchild or great grandchild will have a good father because I, in turn, was a dutiful father."

In a survey covering 1500 children, the question was asked. "What do you think makes a better a family?" They

by ASM Nurunnabi

didn't list money, cars or fine homes. They replied instead that doing things together was what counted.

Members of strong families say that they spend a lot of time together - working. playing, and eating meals.

What about quality versus quantity of time? Strong families realize the time they spend together needs to be good time. It also needs to be sufficient; quality interaction isn't likely to develop in a few minutes together.

Appreciation : Feeling appreciated by others is one of the basic human needs. In course of scoring questionnaires and conducting interviews, a team of researchers found that the quantity of appreciation family members expressed to one another was greater than anticipated.

In this context, a couple said that appreciation had literally changed their life together. "We fell into a trap early in our marriage," the wife said. This was partly because of some couples we saw socially. They considered themselves to be very sophisticated; nothing quite measured up to their standards. We hadn't realised their fault-finding and belittling were rubbing off on

us. We saw things in a negative way. We decided to stop. First, we found new friends. Then we began to accept the positive. We also conditioned ourselves to look at what we have, rather than what we lacked."

Communication: Psy-

chologists know that good communication helps to create a sense of belonging, and eases frustrations as well as fullblown crises. Strong families emphasize good communication does not necessarily happen; it usually takes time and practice. Strong families work at deciphering one another's message. One husband wrote 'My wife would say, 'Are there any good movies downtown?' and she'd mean I would like to go to a movie. I'd answer the question literally, by telling her what was playing. Rarely did I suggest the idea of going to a show. Then I'd be surprised when she sulked Eventually we figured this pattern out. She's better off by saying I'd like to - instead of hinting, and I'm better about checking to be sure I understand what she really means."

Spiritual well-being: This was defined by strong families as a caring centre with each of us that promotes sharing, love and compassion

others. For many. spirituality manifests itself as concern for those around them, or adherence to a moral

Strong families express their spiritual dimension in daily life. They literally practise what they preach. "Our family." one participant wrote" has certain values - honesty. responsibility and tolerance to name a few. But we have to practise those in everyday life. can't talk about honesty and cheat on my income-tax return. I can't yell responsibility and turn my back as a neighbour who needs help. I'd know I was a hypocrite, and so would the children and everyone

Coping with crisis : Strong families are not without problems. But they have the ability to surmount life's necessary for coping with crisis are: focusing on the positive, skill in communication, adaptability and spiritual resources.

A healthy family is a place we enter for comfort, development, and regeneration; a place from which we go forth renewed with power for positive living. As one woman once said, "I put love into my family as investment in their future. my future - our future. It's the

bottle pop and froth all over the aircraft cabin. jeep safaris to watch the nimble tappers shin up the trees. swaving backwards in their

inevitable challenges when they arise. Many of the tools these families identified as

best investment I can make."

HE voung soldiers who Rosemary Long writes from Banjul recently seized power in

Palm wine tappers shinning up trees to get to the sweet-sour white liquid are a part of life in The Gambia, as elsewhere in West Africa. But the country's new military rulers are out to stop the practice.



tion and for the enjoyment of tourists. It is a milky white freshly drawn but more potent when it has fermented for a few days, so potent that there are tales of tourists taking samples home and having their Holidaymakers are taken on constructed from a fine loop of tion both visually and for the product they gather every morning in the bottles tied But the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council led by Captain Yahya Jammeh, who snatched power from elder

> come a hot item on the Gambian agenda. Almost the only places where it is possible to see what real forests must have looked like a century ago are Abuko nature reserve and Bijilo Forest Park, where the black velvet plum, gingerbread plum, silk cotton, fig. guinea peach, smooth newboldia and ironwood, among many more species, laced with creepers. cast dark, tangled shadows where monkeys and exotic

birds play in secret. The claim that tapping destroys the tree is contested and the tappers feel that they are being targeted for unfair persecution. More than 200 gathered recently in the village the ban from the milftarily-appointed Commissioner of the Western Division. Captain Lamin Bayo, and the area chief, neither of whom chose to appear. The meeting went ahead anyway Malang Gomez, chairman of

of Sanyang to seek a lifting of

the Palm-Wine Tappers Committee, has written an open letter to Chairman Jammeh requesting a meeting. Tapping. he says is economically, culturally and socially significant and helps stop rural-urban drift among youths. Many traditional non-Muslim marriages

cannot do without palm wine. He stresses: Palm wine tappers adore and nurture

Bunging the Palm Wine Flow Brews up Trouble their trees. It neither kills palm trees nor has any connection with palm oil and kernel production. Palm wine contains vitamin A and glu-

> He complains of harassment and beatings and high fines, and fears that "this sort of thing easily brews up into tribal and civil conflict.'

> One tapper, Amai Demba, told the Sanyang meeting that his bicycle and tapping gear were seized by youths at Madiana village. He managed to get his bike back but his gear

was destroyed, he complained. Another speaker, Sam Korea, said he had been beaten and injured while going about his trade. Others made similar claims. Commissioner Bayo is said to be insistent on the ban, and rumbles of discontent swell through the Manjago and Karoninka settlements.

For decades, these cultural groups have lived in hamlets separate from other villages, principally inhabited by Muslim Gambians, who regard the production of alcohol in any form as unacceptable. Nevertheless, they have always lived and worked side-by-side, and it is as likely to be a nominally Muslim youth who sit in the shadows swigging the sweet-sour white liquid as a Christian or animist

It is into this last category that most tappers fit, worshipping stone, trees and other natural phenomena.

"They are attacking us because we aren't Muslims,' moans Musa, a regular subject of safari snapshots. 'Yet most of what I sell is bought by

Far more serious in most neutral eyes is the chopping down of healthy trees for firewood and charcoal production. the razing of the once-beautiful coastal areas for sand-mining, the indiscriminate burning of bush and forest to make way for farming and the killing of the few small animals that remain in the coastal areas, from monitor lizards to ground squirrels.

on, and it threatens to increase in potency as the beatings and sentences increase in frequency. — Gemini News

But the wine war bubbles

About the Author: Rosemary Long is a freelance journalist based in the Gambia.