THE THIRD PERSON



A National Film Board North West Studio Production



of Canada

Film Board national du film du Canada

The Third Person

"And there she was. It seemed everything was over, the hard part was done.

> - Linda Robson, commenting on the birth of her first child, Zoë.

"The whole thing was overwhelming. I'd never worked so hard in my whole life to satisfy someone's needs.'

> Linda Robson, commenting on her first months as a mother.

A film for expectant and new parents. The Third Person documents the range of emotions experienced by one couple, Linda and Tom Robson, as their expectations of parenting clash with reality during the first three months after the birth of their healthy, first child, Zoë. Like the Robsons, many expectant and new parents fall initially victim to the Super Mom and Super Dad myths. They think that with a little hard work and study they should be the perfect parents of a perfect baby, whereas the reality of parenting is always a mixture of love, fears, overwhelming frustration and deep satisfaction.

Background

Just prior to this film the Robsons had moved from Toronto, where Linda left behind a high stress, high profile job. She decided to stop looking for work in Calgary when she found herself pregnant, and to stay home for her pregnancy and the child's first years. Linda was 33, Tom, 36, at Zoë's birth.

Tom's occupation has been sales. Although he maintained an office in his home in the months after Zoë's birth, he frequently had to be away overnight and averaged one day a week working in his home office.

Suggested Discussion Questions

Before showing the film to expectant parents (or new parents):

- 1. What are (were) your expectations about the joys and difficulties of your new life as parents?
- 2. What changes in your lifestyle or special activities - e.g., freezing meals ahead, cleaning the house - are you completing (did you complete) in the weeks before the birth to help you adjust physically and mentally to being a new parent? Did you arrange (are you arranging) for any extra help to care for your infant right after birth?
- 3. What changes in your life do you think a new baby will bring (has brought)? In your self esteem? In your work patterns? In your energy levels? In your attitude towards the future?
- 4. What do you think (did you think) your child will be like (would be like) in appearance and personality? How much, why, and when do you think your baby will cry? Sleep? Eat?

After showing the film:

- 1. What surprised you about the Robsons' experiences with Zoë? Why?
- 2. What happened in the film that you expected? Do you think your experience will be (is) similar to that of the Robsons'? How do you think it will be (is) different? Why?

Suggested Uses

- Pre-natal Support Groups
- · Post-natal Support Groups
- · Family Study Programs
- · Family Life Programs
- · Community Health Nurse Training **Programs**
- Further Education Programs for Family Counsellors and Social Workers

Related Films

An Unremarkable Birth (Bien Naître)

Child: Part 1 Jamie, Ethan and Marlon:

The First Two Months

Child: Part 2 Jamie, Ethan and Keir:

2 - 14 Months

First Born

New Born — Birthright

Post Partum Depression

The Start of a Lifetime

Child Birth: The Changing Sounds

With

Tom, Linda and Zoë Robson

Director

Wendy Hill-Tout

Cinematographer Andrew Jaremko

Location Sound

Don Adams

George Tarrant

Peter McGowan

Editor

Per Asplund

Assistant Editor

Peter Svab

Original Music John Bienvenue Douglas Berguist

Re-recording Barry Jones

Post-production

Roberta Mayer Unit Administrator

Margaret Smith Producers

Anne Wheeler Dale Phillips

Executive Producer Tom Radford

Produced by National Film Board of Canada, North West Studio, in collaboration with Marie-Ann Films. the Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers, and NFB Studio D

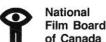
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Screening time:

18 minutes 27 seconds

16 mm: 106C 0184 088 3/4" : 116C 0184 088 VHS : 113C 0184 088 Beta : 114C 0184 088

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