

Sonia  
HOLLIMON-STOVALL

# Radioactive fallout

## Choosing single motherhood is not a tragedy

Just because it looks like I'm shoplifting a turkey underneath my shirt, the whole world's gone mad. People approaching me with open arms aren't giving me a hug — they just want to touch my tummy, ask me when the baby's due and offer me advice.

Stuff like, "don't hold the baby upside down because then she won't be smart."

Sounds pretty cozy, doesn't it, being treated like a cherished member of society because of the miracle going on inside of me.

That is, of course, until I'm found out. There are lots of different ways that my little "secret" is ferreted out. Some people ask if the band on my left hand is a family heirloom from my husband or ask if my husband really wanted a boy. That's when I give them my "madonna with child" smile and calmly tell them no. When they lean in for the explanation they believe is forthcoming, I just look them in the eye, smile contentedly and pat my tummy.

I believe that people would be more understanding of my being single and pregnant if I gave them some sob story about a failed marriage or a broken engagement. For some reason, an unsuccessful relationship is more socially acceptable than single motherhood.

Not feeling obligated to get married seems to make me a

member of some dank, undercover female army, with estrogen out of control and determined to destroy the nuclear family.

So far I have heard I am no longer a role model, and my status as a single expectant mother has placed me among the pathetic masses, those who are destined to struggle and mourn their ways through life.

Forgive me if I don't see the future as dismal. If Rosie O'Donnell is to be believed, I'm downright trendy, almost as cool as Rosie's best friend, the '80s pop icon we love to hate — Madonna.

In an excerpt from her "Vanity Fair" diaries, Madonna states, "Some people have suggested that I have done this for shock value. These are comments only a man would make. It's much too difficult to be pregnant and bring a child into this world to do it for whimsical or provocative reasons."

I don't anticipate being a single parent will at all be a trip through Bambi's meadow; however, I don't think it means I have somehow failed. Is single parenthood some<sup>2</sup> thing that must be overcome — like a bad cold or the chickenpox?

I find it ironic that the people most critical of single mothers tend to be women. Michael Jackson didn't get a lot of crap when he got his former nurse pregnant and THEN married her. (OK, OK. I'll take bids on whether or not HE really got her pregnant.)

Madonna, on the other hand

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received crap before she had even gotten pregnant, just for saying she was thinking about it, and just for the record, I'd say she was the better candidate.

As for the fathers in these situations, there's a lot of head shaking and tongue clucking, but other than fodder for "Montel," no one seems to say much. It's still the woman's responsibility to keep that nickel between her knees. Divorce, abandonment, abuse — there may be a few sympathetic nods in the direction from those suffering from those circumstances, but for the most part, that's about it.

So instead of allowing myself to become dispirited or allowing society to tack a big "A" on my forehead, I'll stick with those who can offer me encouragement. And because children are the hope of the future, I'll consider myself just a big bastion of hope.

Anyone will tell you you can catch more flies with honey — I

think the same idea holds true in life. Why would anyone be tempted to take advice from those who call them moral degenerates and slit their eyes?

The nuclear family as we knew it — Mom, Dad, Richie and Joni — is gone. Instead of focusing on what type of family is best, we should start supporting families, period.

Soon, my turkey will be done and while I'm partially terrified, I'm mostly thrilled. With only one more month to go, my family is frantically trying to decide who should have to hold my hand during labor and whether or not they should add extra coverage to their policy for that period of time. The suitcase will soon be packed and the baby things folded with flair and if society snubs me — guess what? I choose not to care.

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Kasey  
KERBER

# Absolutely 'fad'ulous

## Fashion gods: Armani, Lagerfeld ... Hasselhoff?

I'm not a fashion guru. My idea of fashion is finding something in my closet that doesn't smell or matches at least decently enough that my outfit could become

someone's ugly couch pattern.

This is not to say that I don't have a few opinions on fashion — after reading a few newspapers and magazines, it's hard for anyone

not to.

Case in point — deodorant. Now I think we'd all agree that it's fashionable to use deodorant. But according to the Dec. 28 Parade Magazine, students in Romania are taking deodorant a bit too far.

They're now wearing it on the outside of their clothes.

And if this is not bad enough, listen to the reasoning of this fad's founder, Jacob Kurblesky.

"It makes me feel as though I'm as tough as Bon Jovi and David Hasselhoff combined."

Huh?

You see, this is how "Baywatch" can be evil. Take one over-aged "Knight Rider," put him on the beach and now you've got a few million Romanian students walking around with Speed Stick caked under their arms.

Or in other words, fashion has gotten a bit crazy.

Now I'm not talking about the fashion you see on the runway. That's *always* been crazy — high-paid models walking around in fish nets, using barbed wire as bras and prancing around in what appears to be garbage bags.

I'm talking about fashion you're beginning to see on the street — which is scarier yet.

Take, for example, body piercing. I think it's now conceivable to have every square inch of your body pierced — but why?

What's so fashionable about having enough metal attached to your face to short circuit any metal detector at an airport?

Besides, if body piercing is just a fad — what are you going to do five years from now when having your nose pierced was cool "yesterday?"

You're going to have holes in your body and only a fad to explain it with. At least with bell-bottoms, mood rings and jelly shoes you could throw them in some drawer and forget about them.

But with body piercing — the damage is permanent. You'll have to come up with some pretty weird stories to explain the holes.

"Yeah it was a childhood accident involving a sewing machine. Tragic really, but I survived..."

And you've got to wonder where

bad fashion really starts. For many girls out there, it starts with the Calvin Klein Jeans Barbie.

Yes, there is actually a Barbie doll dressed head to toe in over-priced Calvin Klein mini-jean gear. She even has Calvin Klein underwear.

What's next? Black and white CK One commercials on television with Barbie saying "It's for you and me. ..." with Ken dancing around in the background like he's on drugs?

For me, such a Barbie doll can only spell the eventual transformation of a girl into a woman and from a woman to a woman with Bustine Enhancers.

Yes, this latest contribution to fashion is in the form of two gel-filled cups that you stick into your bra to "push up one bra size."

Sure, they do promise to feel "lifelike," mold to your personal bust and your own body temperature, but for me it's sad.

It's trying to become something you're not — which might very well describe fashion in general.

Too often we're conforming to someone else's style and not our own. Whether it's sticking an exterior breast implant in a bra or deodorant on the outside of our clothes — can anyone honestly stand back and say that we're doing this because it was our idea?



AARON STECKELBERG/DN

Or are we doing it to join the crowd?

Whatever the case — fashion changes, fads come and go and our styles of dress will change as the years roll by.

For me, fashion is a personal choice.

And if that means clothes that don't stink and could become an ugly couch pattern — then so be it.

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