



ODYSSEY

CITY OF SAN BERNARDINO
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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EDITOR'S COLUMN

THE TEMPLE THEATER, located near 3rd and "F" Streets, was never what an avid movie fan would call a first-run house, running mainly "B" features, corny serials and kid's cartoon shows. As surrounding business houses folded and surplus stores and cheap bars took their places, the Temple took on the same seedy look and in a last ditch effort to avoid bankruptcy, started showing mild sex movies and horror films, with pseudo-nurses and doctors in attendance.

One such presentation was called "Birth of a Baby." Some of my older, more-sophisticated student friends at Sturges Junior High bragged about attending its premier showing by lying about their age and luridly described the shocking aspects of the film, thereby making it difficult to keep one's meals down for a few days. For a short time the braggarts were kings of the walk until a surprising event took place that relegated them to the ranks again.

Several days later, a large advertisement appeared in the Telegram stating the sensational "Birth of a Baby" would be held over because of the huge attendance. Placed in the center of the ad was a large, clear photograph of the audience taken at its first showing, shot from the stage, and there -- boldly seated in the front row and grinning like cheshire cats -- were my elder friends.

Needless to say, most of them found it hard to sit down for awhile after their respective parents came home that evening and read the newspaper.

Only a short time later the Temple expired. The "Birth of a Baby" was its last big hit.

...F.H.

