

MY CHILDREN

What I have been writing is primarily for my children, so including pieces about my children seems superfluous. (Writing the word superfluous reminded me of a story Sylvia told me. I assume it was in junior high school. A teacher asked a student to use the word, and the student replied, "she had superfluous hair on her legs." The only context in which she had seen the word. The teacher was horrified. Getting back to writing about my children: I wrote something about the birth of Carol. (Sounds like the birth of Jesus.) I wrote about Lewis, and about David. Now to write about Martha.

1962 was a significant year for both Sylvia and me. It certainly was not superfluous. Sylvia was pregnant for the third time. I was contemplating a job change for the second time. Carol was born in the Camp Gordon Army Hospital in 1955. Lewis was born in a Brooklyn hospital in 1958. This time Sylvia wanted to give birth in New York Hospital which I believe was at York Avenue and 77 St., which was OK with me as long as it was OK with the Obstetrician.

I suspect it is significant that I have very little memory of Sylvia's pregnancy. Who was the obstetrician, where was his office, how was Sylvia doing? It was her department. I do remember thinking it did not make sense to me to give birth in Manhattan when we lived in Brooklyn. Suppose there were complications. Suppose even without complications, there was a traffic tie-up. I figured out the fastest way to get from our house to the hospital, and the next best way. I kept my fingers crossed that when Sylvia was due there would be no complications and no traffic tie-ups.

And so it came to pass that on July 27, we drove to New York Hospital in plenty of time, the obstetrician did his thing, and Martha was born. Sylvia liked her surroundings. I believe she could see the East River and Brooklyn from her hospital window. Sylvia had commented that her hospital stay when both Lewis and Martha were born was like a vacation. It may have been five or six days. She was pampered by the nurses, friends and family visited, the food was good, and Martha was an angel. And she had dark hair. We joked that she was the only one of our three children that looked like us. When the time came to take Sylvia and Martha home, I parked as close as I could to the hospital...and got a ticket.

Martha was a beautiful baby, and as with Carol and Lewis before her, I took lots of pictures. Sylvia breast fed, Martha was with us in our bedroom and we had switched bedrooms with Carol and Lewis who were 6 ½ and 4 respectively.

I had accepted a job as Education Director of the Amalgamated Laundry Worker Union, and was winding up at the Jewish Labor Committee.