

= Mom and Dad =

Mom and Dad ( known as The Family Story in the United Kingdom ) is a feature @-@ length 1945 film directed by William Beaudine , and largely produced by the exploitation film maker and presenter Kroger Babb . Mom and Dad is considered the most successful film within its genre of " sex hygiene " films . Although it faced numerous legal challenges and was condemned by the National Legion of Decency , it went on to become one of the highest @-@ grossing films of the 1940s .

The film is regarded as an exploitation film as it was repackaged controversial content designed to establish an educational value that might circumvent U.S. censorship laws . Babb 's marketing of his film incorporated old @-@ style medicine show techniques , and used unique promotions to build an audience . These formed a template for his later works , which were imitated by his contemporary filmmakers . In 2005 , the film was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being " culturally , historically , or aesthetically significant " .

= = Plot = =

Mom and Dad tells the story of Joan Blake ( June Carlson ) , a young girl who falls for the pilot Jack Griffin ( Bob Lowell ) . After being sweet talked by Griffin , she has sex with him . The girl requests " hygiene books " from her mother Sarah Blake ( Lois Austin ) ; however , the mother refuses because the girl is not yet married . The girl later learns from her father Dan Blake ( George Eldredge ) that the pilot has died in a crash . She tears up a letter she had been writing to him , and lowers her head as the film fades into intermission .

The film resumes at the point when the girl discovers that her clothes no longer fit , sending her into a state of despair . She takes advice from her teacher , Carl Blackburn ( Hardie Albright ) , who had previously been fired for teaching sex education . Blackburn blames her mother for the problem , and accuses her of " neglect [ ing ] the sacred duty of telling their children the real truth . " Only then is the girl able to confront her mother .

The film then presents reels and charts that include graphic images of the female anatomy and footage of live births - one natural and one Caesarian . In some screenings , a second film was shown along with Mom and Dad , and contained images portraying syphilis and venereal disease . Mom and Dad is believed to have had a number of endings , although most typically concluded with the birth of the girl 's child , sometimes stillborn and other times put up for adoption .

= = Cast = =

Hardie Albright ? Carl Blackburn , the teacher .

Lois Austin ? Sarah Blake , the mother .

George Eldredge ? Dan Blake , the father .

June Carlson ? Joan Blake , the teen @-@ age girl .

Jimmy Clark ? Joan 's brother .

Bob Lowell ? Jack Griffin , the pilot .

Jane Isbell ? Mary Lou , Joan 's friend .

Jimmy Zaner ? Allen Curtis , Joan 's hometown boyfriend .

Robert Filmer ? Superintendent McMann .

Willa Pearl Curtis ? Junella , the Blake family 's African @-@ American maid .

Virginia Van ? Virginia , Dave 's girlfriend .

Forrest Taylor ? Dr. Ashley , the obstetrician .

Jack Roper ? The coach .

The official credits also acknowledge The Four Liphams as well as the California State Champion dancers of the jitterbug .

= = Production = =

Despite the commercially successful run of Babb 's debut film , Dust to Dust ? a reworked version of the 1938 film Child Bride ? his production company Cox and Underwood disbanded , forcing him to form his own unit , Hygienic Productions . Having attended a meeting in Burkburnett , Texas , that discussed the alleged impregnations of young women by G.I.s from nearby Sheppard Air Force Base , Babb was inspired to shoot a film based on the subject . His future wife Mildred Horn drafted a screenplay which later evolved into Mom and Dad . Babb located 20 investors willing to fund the movie , and hired William Beaudine as director .

Production of the film cost Babb and his investors a total of \$ 63 @, @ 000 . The movie was shot in five separate studios over six days in 1944 , and was spread across various Monogram Pictures lots ; co @-@ producer J. S. Jossey was a Monogram stockholder . On January 3 , 1945 , Mom and Dad premiered at the Warner Bros. theatre in Oklahoma City , Oklahoma .

The plot is padded with a large amount of filler . Films of this type were usually produced quickly and at minimal cost , and while filler was sometimes used to increase the production value , the usual motivation was to extend its running time to qualify for feature length status . Eric Schaefer notes that the " primary purpose " of the plot of Mom and Dad was to " serve as the vehicle onto which the spectacle of the clinical reels can be grafted " , such as the live birth scene . The marketing materials suggest the latter reason also , and many posters for the film promised that " You [ will ] actually SEE the birth of a baby ! " The dialogue is carefully worded , and uses period euphemisms rather than explicit terms that may have been controversial at the time . In particular , at no time does the film specifically mention sexual intercourse or pregnancy .

= = Marketing and presentation = =

In a Washington Post article covering Babb 's career , the film critic Kenneth Turan wrote that Mom and Dad did not " flourish because of its birth footage or because of its puerile plot , which Babb himself disparages . . . [ its ] success flowed , rather , from Babb 's extraordinary promotional abilities . " The film was exhibited across the United States , and over 300 prints were produced . In the weeks preceding the screening , local presenters sought to attract the attention of the town 's inhabitants by distributing letters to local newspapers and church leaflets protesting against the film 's moral basis . This strategy often utilized fabricated letters supposedly written by the mayor of a nearby city , who wished to register concern about local young women in his area who had seen the film and were awakened enough to discuss problems similar to ones of their own .

The campaigns were usually orchestrated by employees of either Hygienic or Hallmark Productions , and they nominally based their campaign from information provided by a standard and detailed pressbook containing cast and crew information , as well as other promotional and marketing materials . Babb 's marketing strategy centered on overwhelming small towns with advertisements and letters , in an attempt to create a controversial atmosphere . In keeping with his motto of " You gotta tell ' em to sell ' em , " the film became so ubiquitous that Time wrote that its presentation " left only the livestock unaware of the chance to learn the facts of life . "

The local pitch included a variety of limited screenings , including adults @-@ only showings , viewings segregated by gender , and a live lecture by the " Fearless Hygiene Commentator Elliot Forbes " which was often placed during the intermission . At any one time , a number of " Elliot Forbes " es would give simultaneous talks in a number of locations showing the film . In some predominantly African @-@ American areas , Olympic gold medalist Jesse Owens was hired to make appearances instead of an actor playing Forbes . The " Elliot Forbes " actors were usually people local to the production company , sometimes out @-@ of @-@ work performers . Along with " Forbes " , presentations were often held with " nurses " in attendance , ostensibly in the event that someone fainted due to the content of the film ; such " nurses " were often hired locally .

Modern Film Distributors later distributed the film , and sold over forty @-@ five thousand copies of the books Man and Boy and Woman and Girl following Forbes 's lecture . The text was written by Babb 's wife , and was filled with both biological and sexual education materials relevant to the film 's subject matter ; generating extra profit items for their distributors . The sales of these books netted

an estimated \$ 31 @, @ 000 for the distribution company , while Babb estimated the total sales for all distributions at 40 million copies .

Babb insisted that the program be followed closely ; a contractual agreement with theaters required that each presentation follow a similar approach . Because the Forbes lecture formed part of the viewing , extra newsreels or short films were not permitted , although previews were allowed . A contractual agreement disallowed matinee pricing , set specific times for the segregated viewings , and prohibited the screening of the film on Sundays .

= = Reception = =

Mom and Dad is the third highest grossing film of the 1940s in dollar value , and returned close to \$ 63 for each dollar invested by its backers . The Los Angeles Times estimates that the film grossed between \$ 40 million and \$ 100 million , and it has been cited as the most successful sex hygiene film ever released . It remains the most profitable pre @-@ 1960 exploitation film ; ranking among the top ten grossing films of both the 1940s and 1950s , even when scaled against those year 's mainstream releases .

The film was at the center of many high profile lawsuits and condemnations . The exploitation genre was pitched against numerous challenges during the 1940s and 1950s , and fought many local censorship battles , and fought bitterly against the motion picture censorship system . It has been claimed that nearly 428 lawsuits were laid against both Babb and Mom and Dad during the film 's run . Babb often used the supposed educational value of his films as an offer of defense , and recommended such tactic to theater owners in his pressbooks . One successful challenge was in New York City , where Mom and Dad remained censored until 1956 , when the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court overturned the ruling of the censorship board , deciding that human birth did not qualify as " indecent " .

According to Modern Film Distributors , as of the end of 1956 , the film has been dubbed into a dozen languages and attended by an estimated worldwide attendance figure of over 175 million people , at over 650 @, @ 000 performances . Card Mondor purchased the rights to exhibit the film in New Zealand and Australia during the mid @-@ 1960s , almost twenty years after the film 's debut . In the late 1970s , a story on Babb by the Press @-@ Enterprise estimated that the film had been dubbed into 18 languages .

The film 's success spawned a number of imitators , who sought to saturate the market with genre imitations . In particular , Street Corner recycled Babb 's plot , substituting a concerned physician for a concerned teacher . In 1948 , Universal produced a similar film , The Story of Bob and Sally , but was unable to screen it due to the production code , and eventually sold the rights . The volume of imitations led to the formation of Modern Film Distributors , a group of exploitation filmmakers , in an effort to minimize booking conflicts .

In 1969 , the film was submitted to the Motion Picture Association of America for a film rating , in order to allow the film be shown in traditional movie theaters ; it received an R rating . The film was such a success that it is still shown decades later around the world . In 2005 , a version was added to the National Film Registry .