



## Breastfeeding in public

[AIMS Journal 2013, Vol 25 No3](#)

I thought it was ok  
I could understand their reasons  
They said 'There might be young children or a nervous man seeing'  
this small piece of flesh that they weren't quite expecting  
so I whispered and tiptoed with nervous discretion.  
But after six months of her life sat sitting on lids  
Sipping on her milk nostrils sniffing up piss  
Trying not to bang her head on toilet roll dispensers  
I wonder whether these public loo feeds offend her?

Cos I'm getting tired of discretion and being 'polite' as my  
baby's first sips are drowned drenched in shite,  
I spent the first feeding months of her beautiful life  
Feeling nervous and awkward and wanting everything  
right.  
Surrounded by family until I stepped out the house  
It took me eight weeks to get the confidence to go into  
town  
Now the comments around me cut like a knife  
As I rush into toilet cubicles feeling nothing like nice.  
Because I'm giving her milk that's not in a bottle  
Wishing the cocaine generation white powder would  
topple  
I see pyramid sales pitches across our green globe  
and female breasts banned. Unless they're out just for  
show.



**Alison Pridmore and baby Thomas, hat courtesy of Sharon Spink from Boobie and the Beads**

And the more I go out, the more I can't stand it,  
I walk into town feel I'm surrounded by bandits  
Cos in this country of billboards covered in 'tits'  
and family newsagents' magazines full of it  
W H Smith top shelves out for men - Why don't you

complain about them then?

In this country of billboards covered in 'tits'

and family newsagents magazines full of it

W H Smith top shelves out for men, I'm getting

embarrassed

In case a small flash of flesh might offend.

And I'm not trying to 'parade' this, I don't want to make a

show

But when I'm told I'd be better just staying at home

And when another friend I know is thrown off a bus

And another woman told to get out the pub

Even my grandma said maybe I was 'sexing it up'.

And I'm sure the milk makers love all this fuss

All the cussing and worry and looks of disgust

As another mother turns from nipples to powder

Ashamed or embarrassed by comments around her and

As I hold her head up and pull my cardy across and she

sips on the liquor made by everyone's God, I think

For God sake, Jesus drank it

So did Sidhartha, Muhammed and Moses and both of

their fathers

Ganesh and Shiva and Brighid and Buddha and I'm sure

they weren't doing it sniffing up piss as their mother s sat

embarrassed on cold toilet lids



In a country of billboards covered in 'tits'  
In a country of low cut tops, cleavage and skin  
In a country of cloth bags and recycling bins and as I  
desperately try to take all of it in,  
I hold her head up  
I can't get my head round  
The anger towards us and not to the sounds  
of lorries offloading formula milk  
into countries where water runs dripping in filth  
In towns where breasts are oasis of life  
now dried up in two for one offers, enticed by labels and  
logos and gold standard rights  
claiming 'breastmilk is healthier powdered and white'  
packaged and branded and sold at a price so that nothing  
is free in this money fuelled life.  
Which is fine  
If you need it or prefer and can afford to use bottles,  
where water is clean and bacteria boiled,  
but in towns where they drown in pollution and sewage  
bottled kids die and they knew that they'd do it  
In families where pennies are savoured like sweets  
We're now paying for one thing that's always been free  
In villages empty of hospital beds

babies die, diarrhoea fuelled that breastmilk would end  
So no more will I sit on these cold toilet lids  
No matter how embarrassed I feel as she sips  
Cos in this country of billboards covered in 'tits'  
I think I should try to get used to this.

*Hollie McNish*

video available at [www.holliemcnish.com](http://www.holliemcnish.com) and at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiS8q\\_fifa0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiS8q_fifa0)