



Ethnographies of Breastfeeding: Cultural Contexts and Confrontations

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Breastfeeding is an intimate and deeply rooted bodily practice, as well as a highly controversial sociocultural process which invokes strong reactions from advocates and opponents. Touching on a wide range of issues such as reproduction, sexuality, power and resources, and maternal and infant health, the controversies and cultural complexities underlying breastfeeding are immense.

Ethnographies of Breastfeeding features the latest research on the topic. Some of the leading scholars in the field explore variations in breastfeeding practices from around the world. Based on empirical work in areas such as Brazil, West Africa, Darfur, Ireland, Italy, France, the UK and the US, they examine the cross-cultural challenges facing mothers feeding their infants.

Reframing the traditional nature/culture debate, the book moves beyond existing approaches to consider themes such as surrogacy, the risk of milk banks, mother-to-mother sharing networks facilitated by social media, and the increasing bio-medicalization of breast milk, which is leading its transformation from process to product.

A highly important contribution to global debates on breast milk and breastfeeding.

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