Ethnographic Research in Maternal and Child Health

Dykes Fiona and Flacking Renée, Routledge © 2015, 224 pages, paperback, \$58.95

Available from: <https://www.amazon.com/Ethnographic-Research-Maternal-Child-Health/dp/1138792225>

This edited collection is a timely addition to contemporary debates and initiatives in maternal-infant-child health. Navigating smoothly between the language of the health professions and the language of ethnographic analysis and reflection, the book demonstrates the immediate relevance and long-term value of ethnographic approaches and mixed methods for the field of maternal and child health.

The first chapter provides a detailed introduction to the concepts and methods of ethnographic analysis, such as context, ethnocentrism, reflexivity, and the social complexities of building trust between observers and participants, through the dynamic process of participant observation. Subsequent chapters explore the applications of ethnographic approaches to the experience of birth and mother-infant dyads throughout the perinatal period, across multiple countries and several continents.

Contributors reveal the many benefits and possibilities of teamwork and collaborative fieldwork, along with the need for engagement, disengagement, and self-reflection. The role of technologies is highlighted insightfully across chapters, critically examining the ways in which technologies engender, determine, shape, or transform experiences in different sociocultural and geographic settings. Chapters carefully explore the tensions between the needs and roles of mothers, birth attendants, families, institutions, and policies, creating opportunities

for analysis, reflection, and synthesis across everyday disciplinary or professional boundaries.

This slim volume includes 10 chapters with common themes running throughout. Topics include the communal nature of decision making pertaining to prenatal screening; the impact of video as a problem-solving tool to facilitate skin-to-skin and ground-up implementation of Baby Friendly Hospital Initiatives; applications of ethnography to examine the lag between current research and adoption of best practices; comparative studies and evaluative uses of ethnography for nutrition research; and the emotional experiences of fathers in neonatal care wards, to name a few. Several chapters explore fertile realms of auto-ethnography, reflexivity, and ethical dilemmas.

The credentialed and experienced contributors are diverse in their geographic and professional training. Authors include several anthropologists, midwives, and nurses, who provide a balanced discussion of methodological concerns and theoretical perspectives, grounded in praxis.

This volume is a valuable resource for upper-level students, professionals, and researchers engaged in the study and promotion of maternal, infant, and child health, spanning the fields of midwifery, nursing, medical anthropology, science and technology studies, human development, and public health.

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Brief on Perinatal Mortality in the United States, From CDC

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics has published a new brief titled "Lack of Change in Perinatal Mortality in the United States, 2014-2016." Based on data from the National Vital Statistics System, researchers found that the U.S. perinatal mortality rate was essentially unchanged from 2014 through 2016: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db316.htm>

Source: USBC

Empowering Parents Campaign, From WABA

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action has launched the Empowering Parents Campaign. The campaign aims to empower parents with information and social protection measures that will enable them to make the best choice in infant feeding. WABA together with a broad alliance of partners/stakeholders will develop and advance a menu of actions to ensure that maternity, paternity and parental protection measures are recognized and included as part of social protection coverage that will ensure a healthy, just, gender equal society and survival as outlined in the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals. It also focuses on Parent-Friendly Workplaces by providing incentives through the Seed Grant Project: <http://waba.org.my/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/EPC-Concept-note-Jan2018.pdf>

Source: USBC