



# **A Social History of Maternity and Childbirth: Key Themes in Maternity Care**

*Tania McIntosh*

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People are fascinated by stories of childbirth, and the sources to document maternity in Britain in the twentieth century are rich and varied. This book puts the history of maternity in England into its wider social context, highlighting areas of change and continuity, and charting the development of pregnancy and birth as it emerged from the shadows and became central to social debate.

*A Social History of Maternity and Childbirth* considers the significance of the regulation and training of midwives and doctors, exploring important aspects of maternity care including efforts to tackle maternal deaths, the move of birth from home to hospital, and the rise of consumer groups. Using oral histories and women's memoirs, as well as local health records and contemporary reports and papers, this book explores the experiences of women and families, and includes the voices of women, midwives and doctors. Key themes are discussed throughout, including:

- the work and status of the midwife
- the place of birth
- pain relief
- ante- and post- natal care
- women's pressure groups
- high-tech versus low-tech
- political pressures.

At a time when the midwifery profession, and the wider structure of maternity care, is a matter for popular and political debate, this book is a timely contribution. It will be an invaluable read for all those interested in maternity care in England.

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