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J.M. Bronstein

**Preterm Birth in the United States**

A Sociocultural Approach

- Examines the unique profile of preterm births in the U.S. compared to other developed nations Integrates insights from sociology and anthropology into contemporary understandings of preterm birth in clinical medicine and epidemiology Shows how beliefs about pregnancy and the organization of the U.S. medical system influence the preterm birth rate and survival rates for preterm babies Places the ethical dilemmas concerning preterm birth in the U.S. in cultural perspective

This first-of-its-kind volume addresses the myriad of issues relating to—and reviews the plethora of responses to—premature births in the United States, both in national context and compared with other countries. In addition to current clinical data, it examines how preterm births in the U.S. fit in with larger social concerns regarding poverty, racial disparities, reproductive rights, gender expectations, and the business of health care. Comparisons with preterm birth phenomena in Canada, the U.K., and other Western European countries illustrate cultural narratives about motherhood, women’s status, differences across social welfare and abortion policies, and across health care financing and delivery systems, and how these may affect outcomes for newborns. The book sorts out these intersecting complexities through the following critical lenses:

- Clinical: causes, treatments, and outcomes of preterm birth
- Population: the distribution of preterm births
- Cultural: how we understand preterm birth
- Health care: delivering care for high-risk pregnant women and preterm infants
- Ethical: moral decision-making about preterm births

*Preterm Birth in the United States* synthesizes a wide knowledge base for maternal and child health professionals across diverse disciplines, including public health, social work, nursing, medicine, and health policy.



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