



# Our Babies, Ourselves: How Biology and Culture Shape the Way We Parent

*Meredith Small*

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New parents are faced with innumerable decisions to make regarding the best way to care for their baby, and, naturally, they often turn for guidance to friends and family members who have already raised children. But as scientists are discovering, much of the trusted advice that has been passed down through generations needs to be carefully reexamined.

A thought-provoking combination of practical parenting information and scientific analysis, **Our Babies, Ourselves** is the first book to explore why we raise our children the way we do--and to suggest that we reconsider our culture's traditional views on parenting.

In this ground-breaking book, anthropologist Meredith Small reveals her remarkable findings in the new science of ethnopediatrics. Professor Small joins pediatricians, child-development researchers, and anthropologists across the country who are studying to what extent the way we parent our infants is based on biological needs and to what extent it is based on culture--and how sometimes what is culturally dictated may not be what's best for babies.

Should an infant be encouraged to sleep alone? Is breast-feeding better than bottle-feeding, or is that just a myth of the nineties? How much time should pass before a mother picks up her crying infant? And how important is it really to a baby's development to talk and sing to him or her?

These are but a few of the important questions Small addresses, and the answers not only are surprising but may even change the way we raise our children.

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