



## The Newborn as a Person: Enabling Healthy Infant Development Worldwide

By J. Kevin Nugent, Bonnie Petruska, T. Berry Brazelton

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Advances in the fields of psychology and psychiatry have bolstered the perspective that infants are not the passive recipients of sensory stimulation as it was once thought. Built on T. Berry Brazelton's paradigm-shifting work on the individuality of infants, this book provides relevant information on the necessity for family-centered intervention in the newborn period. Coverage is wide-ranging, authoritative, and practical. This landmark collection includes contributions from T. Berry Brazelton, Tiffany Field, Rachel Keen, and many others. Pediatric professionals will receive practical guidance to support families, immediately beginning in the newborn period.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

*The Newborn as a Person: Enabling Healthy Infant Development Worldwide* is a tribute to these 35 years of clinical and empirical use of the NBAS and attests to its immense impact on the way we conceptualize the infant. Its chapters are short and user friendly; provide concrete clinical examples; cover a range of topics; and are written by neonatalogists, pediatricians, psychologists, nurses, anthropologists, occupational therapists, social workers, and psychiatrists, all with hands-on experience in neonatal care. The first part of the book provides a historical perspective on newborn behavior and early relationship research, addressing some of the changes the field has experienced during the last three and a half decades.

In the second part, clinicians and researchers from around the world present current studies and contemporary practices of newborn care, discuss the effects of early interventions with infants and families, and describe new approaches to the education and training of health care professionals. This section presents a range of topics- from longitudinal follow-ups of premature infants that link long-term outcomes to NBAS factors measured at birth, to the effects of massage, to relationship-based interventions in rural and urban settings and across the world.

Of special interest to us is the description of the interface between neonate and culture, as discussed by Super and Harkness following their experience with the Kipsigis of Kenya. They demonstrate that cultural meaning systems, child care practices, and daily routines not only define the way mothers perceive their infants but also shape the newborn's actual functioning and areas of competence. Due to the fact that, at present, 94 percent of the studies on infant development come from North America or Europe (Celia, 2004), the knowledge we have of infant development, as well as the theoretical frameworks we have for interpreting it, is based on observations conducted in highly specific contexts. A cross cultural viewpoint is thus critical to afford a broader vision of the infant as he or she is shaped by a range of cultural contexts.

The last part of the book points to future directions. It opens the discussion on how the new body of knowledge gained through the NBAS should be integrated with the second major revolution of the century-- that of the brain--and incorporated into policy making and professional training for those who care for newborns and their families.

--Reviewed by Ruth Feldman and Dalia Silberstein (Online reviews *Journal of the American Psychological Association*. September 9, 2009 edition, Volume 54, Issue 36).

### **From the Back Cover**

A celebration of the individuality of every infant, preparing pediatric professionals and educators to support parents immediately in the newborn period

Recent advances in the fields of psychology and psychiatry support the perspective that infants are not, as it was once thought, passive recipients of sensory stimulation, but are instead competent and unique individuals, ready to interact with their caregivers from the very beginning of life.

Built on T. Berry Brazelton's standard-setting work on the individuality of infants, *The Newborn as a Person: Enabling Healthy Infant Development Worldwide* is a landmark, family-centered volume providing professionals with practical guidance to support families immediately in the newborn period.

Coedited by a team of experts in the field of child psychology, public health, and pediatrics, this insightful reference collects reports from internationally renowned researchers and clinicians on different aspects of

infant development. It thoroughly prepares professionals in psychology, psychiatry, public health, and pediatric medicine, as well as early childhood educators, with information that will aid in guiding and informing parents in their relationship with their newborn.

The Newborn as a Person features:

- Contributions from early childhood experts from a variety of disciplines, including: T. Berry Brazelton, Rachel Keen, John Kennell, Daniel Stern, Nadia Bruschweiler-Stern, Ed Tronick, Sara Harkness, and many others
- International perspectives on current research, early intervention, and training
- Information on state-of-the-art research and how that is influencing practice with infants and their families
- Thorough coverage of the relationship between newborn behavior and later developmental outcomes
- Recommendations on the role of the pediatrician in hospital newborn care
- Discussion of the challenges for improving treatment of infants and their families in the twenty-first century

The Newborn as a Person is grounded in a passionate commitment to giving children and their families the best possible start in life and is an essential reference for mental health professionals who work with children as well as pediatricians, educators, and academic researchers.

#### About the Author

J. Kevin Nugent is the founder and Director of the Brazelton Institute at Children's Hospital in Boston and is on the faculty of the?Harvard Medical School?in the Department of Pediatrics. He is also Professor of Child and Family Studies at?University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He is coauthor, with Dr. Brazelton, of the Neonatal Behavior and Assessment Scale.

Bonnie J. Petrauskas is the Director of Johnson & Johnson Corporate Contributions and Community Relations.

T. Berry Brazelton, PhD, is a noted pediatrician and author of many scholarly and popular books on infants and toddlers. He is the Chair of the Pediatrics Department of Harvard Medical School, creator of the Brazelton Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale, and is nationally recognized as "America's most celebrated baby doctor since Benjamin Spock."

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