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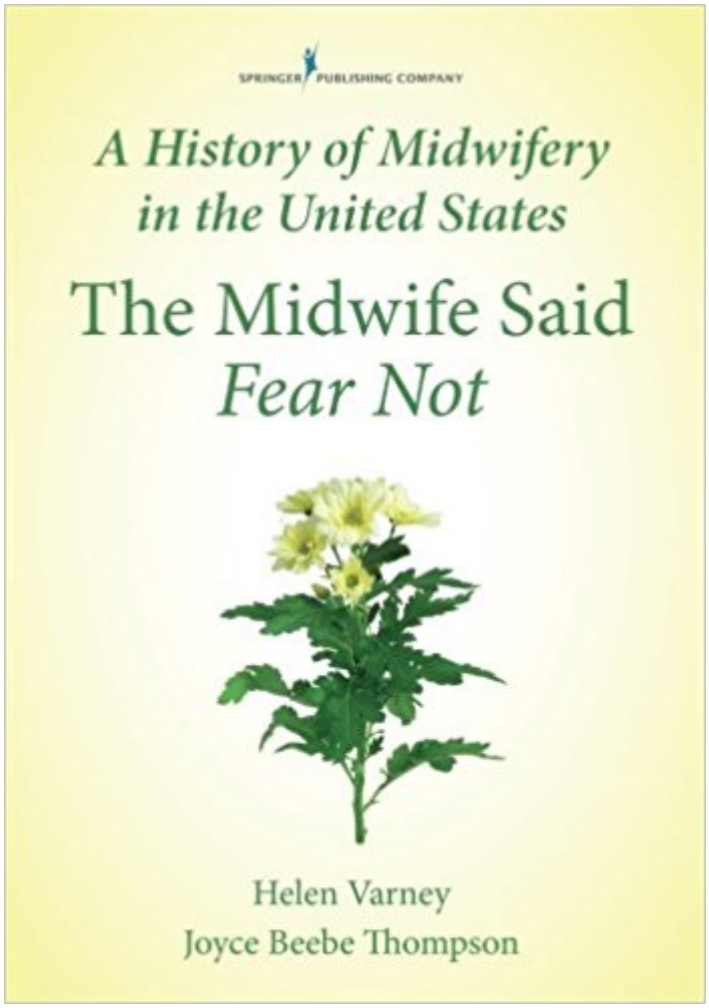
A History Of Midwifery In The United States: The Midwife Said Fear Not



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Synopsis

Written by two of the profession’s most prominent midwifery leaders, this authoritative history of midwifery in the United States, from the 1600s to the present, is distinguished by its vast breadth and depth. The book spans the historical evolution of midwives as respected, autonomous health care workers and midwifery as a profession, and considers the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities for this discipline as enduring motifs throughout the text. It surveys the roots of midwifery, the beginnings of professional practice, the founding of educational institutions and professional organizations, and entry pathways into the profession. Woven throughout the text are such themes as the close link between midwives and the communities in which they live, their view of pregnancy and birth as normal life events, their efforts to promote health and prevent illness, and their dedication to serving women wherever they may be and in whatever health condition and circumstances they may be in. The text examines the threats to midwifery past and present, such as the increasing medicalization of childbearing care, midwifery’s lack of a common identity based on education and practice standards, the inconsistencies in its legal recognition as a profession, and reimbursement issues for midwifery practice. Illustrations and historical photos depict the many facets of midwifery, and engaging stories provide cultural and spiritual context. This is a "must-have" for all midwives, historians, professional and educational institutions, and all those who share a passion for the history of midwifery and women. KEY FEATURES: Encompasses the most authoritative and comprehensive information available about the history of midwifery in the United States Considers the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities for midwifery Illustrated with historical photos and drawings Includes engaging stories filled with cultural and spiritual content, introductory quotes to each chapter, and plentiful chapter notes Written by two preeminent leaders in the field of midwifery

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Customer Reviews

Helen Varney Burst, MSN, CNM, DHL (Hon.), FACNM, is Professor Emeritus at the Yale University School of Nursing. When she retired in 2004, Yale University established the endowed Helen Varney Professorial Chair in Midwifery in the School of Nursing. Ms. Varney Burst practiced midwifery in a variety of in-patient and out-patient settings and birth locales, was a nurse-midwifery service director in two medical center tertiary hospitals, and was cofounder and president of a birth center. She directed three nurse-midwifery education programs (University of Mississippi Medical Center, Medical University of South Carolina, and Yale University) and served as a consultant to many others. She was the co-originator of the mastery learning modular curriculum design for nurse-midwifery education; developed the nurse-midwifery management process and the Circle of Safety; is a Consulting Editor (history) for the Journal of Midwifery & WomenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Health; and is the author of the first textbook for nurse-midwives in the Americas (1980), now in its fifth edition as VarneyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Midwifery, and used in a number of other countries. (The fourth edition was translated into Spanish.) Ms. Varney Burst has written numerous journal articles and given scores of speeches and presentations. She also wrote the Brief History of the Yale University School of Nursing (YSN) for its 75th anniversary (1923Ã¢â ¬â œ1998) and updated it for YSNÃ¢â ¬â„¢s 90th anniversary in 2013. Ms. Varney Burst served the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) in numerous capacities, including two terms as President (1977Ã¢â ¬â œ1981), Secretary (1972Ã¢â ¬â œ1974), Chair of the Bylaws Committee (1970Ã¢â ¬â œ1972), Chair of the Work Group on Bylaws Revision (2007Ã¢â ¬â œ2008), member and Chair (1975) of the Division of Examiners (1960sÃ¢â ¬â œ1970s), and Chair of the Division of Accreditation during most of the 1990s. She was a member of the founding Board of Governors of the Fellowship of the ACNM (Fellows of the American College of Nurse-Midwives [FACNM]) in 1993, is a Distinguished Fellow, and served as Chair from 2005 to 2008. She also has served as the ACNM representative to the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) as well as to many national interprofessional and interorganizational meetings and advisory groups. Helen Varney Burst is the recipient of a number of awards including the ACNM Hattie Hemschemeyer Award (1982), the YSN Annie W. Goodrich Excellence in Teaching Award (1999), and alumni awards from all her alma maters: Yale University

(MSN and CNM, 1963), University of Kansas (BSN, 1961), and Kansas State University (BSHE, 1961). In 1987, she received a Doctor of Humane Letters (honoris causa) from Georgetown University.Joyce Beebe Thompson, DrPH, CNM, FAAN, FACNM, is Professor Emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania and Western Michigan University, and an international consultant in midwifery education, womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s health, and human rights. She has a BSN and MPH from the University of Michigan, a Certificate in Nurse-Midwifery from Maternity Center Association, a DrPH from Columbia University, and a certificate in bioethics from the Kennedy Institute at Georgetown University. Dr. Thompson practiced midwifery in a variety of settings, including birth centers and tertiary hospitals. She established the nurse-midwifery education masterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s program and the nurse-midwifery private practice at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in 1980, where she received the universityÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching (1997). Among the various alumnae and leadership awards were the ACNMÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Hattie Hemschemeyer Award (1987), Fellowship of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN) and a founding member of the Fellows of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (FACNM; 1993), an honorary Doctor of Science from SUNYÃ¢â ¬â œDownstate Medical Center (1995), and an honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Dundee, Scotland (2007), in recognition of her passion and commitment to the health of women globally. Dr. Thompson has more than 50 years of midwifery practice in the United States and other countries and 40 years of leadership in various capacities within the ACNM, including two terms as President (1989Ã¢â ¬â œ1993), and various roles on the Division of Examiners (1976Ã¢â ¬â œ1987), Division of Accreditation (1975Ã¢â ¬â œ1980), and the Ad Hoc Ethics Committee (1987Ã¢â ¬â œ1988). In addition, she has more than 20 years of global leadership within the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), serving two terms as Director of the ICM Board of Management (1999Ã¢â ¬â œ2002; 2002Ã¢â ¬â œ2005), was Vice Chair of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery, Geneva, Switzerland (2001Ã¢â ¬â œ2007), and continues as an international midwifery education consultant, most recently in Latin America and the Caribbean. She has authored or coauthored more than 50 peer-reviewed articles, several books, and book chapters, covering topics on ethics, the preparation of teachers, and ICM global standards and competencies for midwives. Most recently, Dr. Thompson authored a companion document for WHOÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Midwifery Educator Core Competencies (2014). She will be heading the team of international colleagues writing the history of the ICM in time for the 100th anniversary in 2019.

A lot of information, but I feel like some historical aspects were heavier than necessary while others

could be elaborated on. Also, when looking for information I felt like I was jumping all around. New organization of the material could be beneficial

Fast delivery and exactly what I expected! !!

Meaningful.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, this is a uncritical hagiography of nurse-midwifery. More self-promotion than history, but then again, the authors are not historians. By titling it "A History of Midwifery" is an ironic act of appropriation. And "Fear not?" So much of the profession's leadership has acted from a place of fear--fear of offending the almighty father, organized medicine, above all. Still, some useful and provocative tidbits can be gleaned here and there.

History written by people who have lived it. A critical read for anyone in maternity care or women's health.

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