

Book highlights differences in preterm births in America and other countries

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Janet Bronstein, Ph.D. Credit: Springer Publishing

A University of Alabama at Birmingham professor, Janet Bronstein, Ph.D., wrote the book "[Preterm Birth in the United States: A Sociocultural Approach](#)," which provides a wide knowledge base for maternal and child health professionals across diverse disciplines, including public health, social work, nursing, medicine and health policy.

"The primary objective of this book is to explore multiple overlapping dimensions of [preterm birth](#) in the U.S. simultaneously, so that the view in each dimension can be illuminated, both by history and by an understanding of the view from the other dimensions," Bronstein said.

The first-of-its-kind volume addresses the numerous issues relating to premature births in the United States, both in national context and compared with other countries, which have much lower rates of preterm birth than the United States. In addition to current clinical and epidemiological data, it examines how preterm births in the United States fit with larger social concerns regarding poverty, racial disparities, reproductive rights, gender expectations and the business of health care.

Comparisons with preterm birth experiences in Canada, the United Kingdom and other Western European countries illustrate cultural narratives about motherhood, women's status, differences across social welfare and abortion policies, as well as across health care financing and delivery systems, and how these may affect outcomes for newborns.

The book breaks down preterm birth and these interesting complexities by addressing various aspects:

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

Overall, insights from sociology and anthropology are integrated into contemporary understandings of preterm birth in clinical medicine and epidemiology, showing how beliefs about pregnancy and the organization of the U.S. medical system influence the preterm birth rate and survival rates for [preterm babies](#).

"This book brings cultural perspective to the ethical dilemmas concerning preterm birth in the U.S.," Bronstein said.

The book is available online through the publishing company, Springer. More information is available on the book's Facebook page, Preterm Birth in the United States - J. Bronstein, Ph.D.

Provided by University of Alabama at Birmingham

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