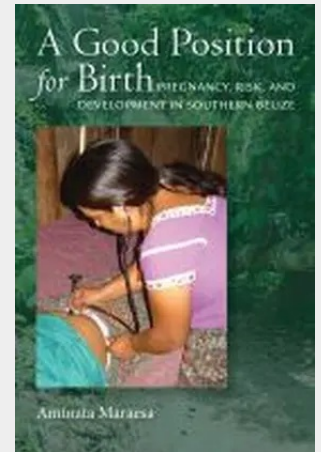


A Good Position for Birth

In order to understand the local realities of health and development initiatives undertaken to reduce maternal and infant mortality, the author accompanied rural health nurses as they traveled to villages accessible only by foot over waterlogged terrain to set up mobile prenatal and well-child clinics. Through sustained interactions with pregnant women, midwives, traditional birth attendants, and bush doctors, Maraesa encountered reproductive beliefs and practices ranging from obeah pregnancy to 'nointing' that compete with global health care workers' directives about risk, prenatal care, and hospital versus home birth. Fear and shame are prominent affective tropes that Maraesa uses to understand women's attitudes toward reproduction that are at times contrary to development discourse but that make sense in the lived experiences of the women of southern Belize.



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