



# The Earliest Relationship: Parents, Infants and the Drama of Early Attachment

*T. Berry Brazelton, Bertrand G. Cramer*

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T. Berry Brazelton, world renowned pediatrician and expert on infant development, and Bertrand Cramer, pioneer in mother-infant psychotherapy, have combined their lifetimes of research and practice in this unique and important book. Never before has research on newborn behavior and parent-infant interaction been fully integrated with psychoanalytic insight into parents' emotions and fantasies. Brazelton and Cramer provide a vivid glimpse of the parents' daydreams and narcissistic wishes which grow into a desire for a child, and they show how these feelings develop into important attachments to the unborn infant during pregnancy. The "power and competence" of the newborn born then challenges parental fantasies, desires, wishes and expectations, creating the beginnings of the bond between parent and child. Using the latest research, the authors clarify all the ways the infant participates in the dawning relationship and the ingredients of very early communication and interaction. They then unveil the "imaginary interactions" which lend meaning and drama to each gesture and expression. We see the baby as Tyrant, as Savior, or as the reincarnation of lost relationships. In the final and most important part of the book, the authors put their unique combined perspective to work in nine striking case narratives drawn from their own practices. Everyone who cares for mothers and babies-pediatricians, developmental and clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, early childhood specialists, nurses and social workers-as well as interested parents, will find this book of immediate value.

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