

Book Review

Roy, R. N., Schumm, W. R., & Britt, S. L. (2014). *Transition to parenthood*. New York, NY: Springer.

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Although researchers and family professionals have had no problem finding books on pregnancy or parenting, finding information about the transition to parenthood required compiling literature from multiple places until the publication of this book. Through their combined expertise, the authors provide the reader with a comprehensive look at this important phase of parenting. Dr. Roy specializes in the study of the transition to parenthood. Dr. Shumm co-developed the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and teaches family courses. Dr. Britt's expertise is in family economics and finances.

The authors ground the reader by presenting foundational information first and then addressing specific phases of the transition to parenthood. First, they cover the history of fertility in the United States. Next, they discuss the various theories used to analyze families and parenting. The next few chapters focus on issues such as voluntary versus involuntary childlessness, family roles, and parental demographics. Chapter 6 discusses prenatal and postnatal expectations as well as unfulfilled expectations. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on relationship maintenance and the cost of raising a child. Chapter 9 addresses the difficulties parents face when they have children with special needs. The concluding chapter evaluates various parenting programs and intervention programs.

This book delves into areas that highlight the complexity of the transition to parenthood. For example, they address the emotional and financial toll that fertility treatments or adoption can take on parents. They also cover the differing experiences of working class versus middle class mothers in terms of support networks and expectations about parenthood. Their discussion of expectations outlines both prenatal and postnatal expectations and some of the consequences of unfulfilled expectations. They explain how to recognize when a marital or couple relationship is faltering and provide strategies for dealing with the inevitable stress that comes with partnerships. Their coverage of the transition to parenthood with a special needs child not only illustrates the daily stress involved but also highlights the unique joys that the parents experience. Their evaluation of parenting programs includes detailed information as well as contact information for multiple family support programs.

I strongly recommend this book to anyone who studies or works with families, especially during this critical phase of parenting. This book would make an excellent text or supplement to undergraduate or graduate courses. Because the authors cover the transitional phase for new parents ranging from single mothers to married couples to adoptive parents, the reader gains an

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understanding of the complexity of the transition to parenthood. The only possible complaint that some readers may have is that there is almost an overwhelming number of statistics in some of the chapters. However, I suggest that the

statistics provide the reader with a much deeper understanding of the many factors involved in transitioning to parenthood. Overall, this book certainly meets its goal of filling the gap in the literature.