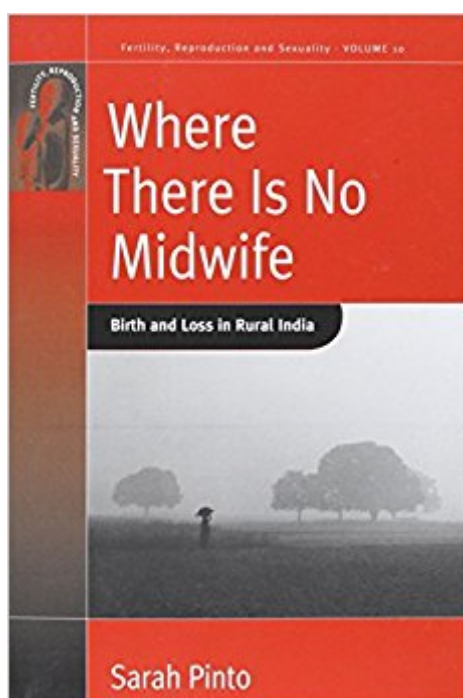


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# Where There Is No Midwife: Birth And Loss In Rural India (Fertility, Reproduction And Sexuality: Social And Cultural Perspectives)



## Synopsis

In the Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh, an agricultural region with high rates of infant mortality, maternal health services are poor while family planning efforts are intensive. By following the daily lives of women in this setting, the author considers the women's own experiences of birth and infant death, their ways of making-do, and the hierarchies they create and contend with. This book develops an approach to the care that focuses on emotion, domestic spaces, illicit and extra-institutional biomedicine, and household and neighborly relations that these women are able to access. It shows that, as part of the concatenation of affect and access, globalized moralities about reproduction are dependent on ambiguous ideas about caste. Through the unfolding of birth and death, a new vision of "untouchability" emerges that is integral to visions of progress.

## Book Information

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"The book constantly changes between the micro level of the village with good, long quotes or stories from the field to the geopolitics and theories of development. The former really brings the topic to life for the reader, whilst the latter sets the book in the wider socio-economic and political context of India today...Pinto tells a lovely story of applied research ethics, which many who have conducted research in developing countries and/or with marginalised people have experienced...an exciting and useful book for those interested in 'Development Studies'; 'Reproductive Health'; 'Women's Studies', the 'Sociology of Health & Illness' as well as, of course 'Medical

Anthropology'. "Sociological Research Online "...a fascinating new ethnography on birth and infant death and the ways in which these twin events serve as sites for the construction of political subjectivity in areas of rural North India where multiple development projects and discourses converge, leaving in their wake both excess and lack...it provides provocative insights into some of the forces that set our globe offkilter." Medical Anthropological Quarterly "Drawing on the theoretical literature of medical anthropology as well as that of psychoanalysis, this is a complex, multilayered work. Pinto is a fine writer, and throughout the book her ethnography... [that] holds together brilliantly... beautifully illuminates her theoretical argument... [and] makes a significant contribution to the literature on reproduction, globalization, and development in India." South East Review of Asian Studies "...[the] ethnography is...rich, topical, and thought-provoking." JRAI "Pinto masterfully intertwines reproductive health experiences of women in Uttar Pradesh with wider concerns...Pinto's book is a valuable contribution to the anthropology of childbirth in India. The author has produced an insightful work enriched with detailed ethnographic descriptions, intense case studies, and nuanced personal reflections on her fieldwork and the production of ethnographic knowledge" Anthropos

Sarah Pinto is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Tufts University. She teaches courses on medical anthropology, gender, and feminist and social theory, with particular attention to cultures of biomedicine, kinship, and political, cultural, and epistemological concerns related to the human body. Her geographic area of specialization is India. She is co-editor of *Postcolonial Disorders* (University of California 2008), and author of numerous articles on medicine and health intervention in South Asia. She is completing an ethnography of psychiatry's treatment of women patients in urban India, asking how kinship and legal processes related to family life shape clinical practice, and how clinical practice informs subjectivities in and of intimacy. This work is particularly interested in the stakes of mental illness for divorced or divorcing women in India, and asks what these circumstances can tell us about the place of gender in framing culturally relevant ethical frameworks. Pinto is currently developing a research project on the transnational history of hysteria, focusing on dialogues on hysteria between India and Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries and their role in shaping contemporary etiologies.

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