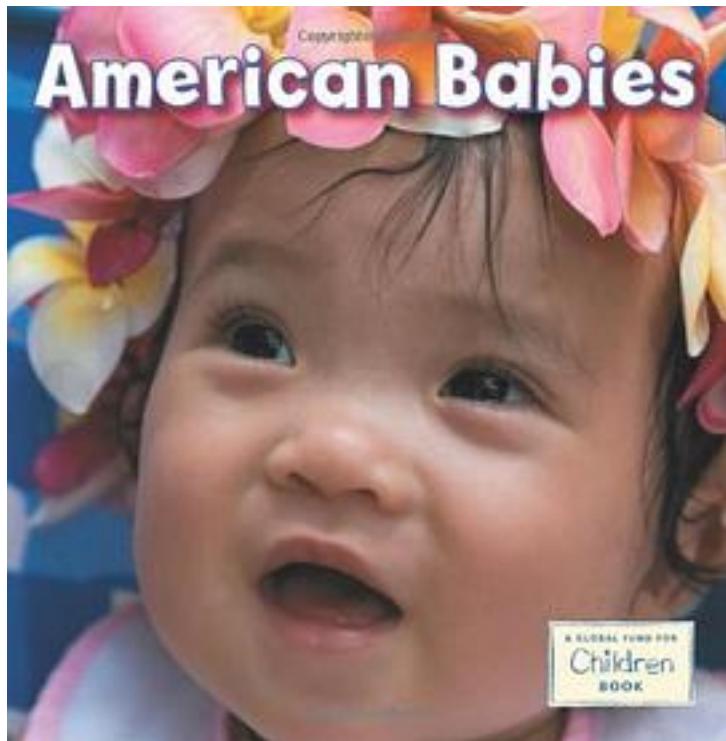


American Babies



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著者:Reedy, Elizabeth A.

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Being a baby isn't easy. Reedy recounts historical changes that have affected 20th century infants. Babies born in 1900 were often the sons and daughters of either extremely wealthy or extremely poor parents. The rise of the middle class in America dictated major changes in the ways babies were fed, cared for, and raised. No longer a financial necessity in an agrarian society, babies became a symbol of middle class prosperity. Social programs, often authorized by and regulated by the federal and state governments, became a reality in the 20th century. Progressive Era reformers focused on improving water and sanitation programs for all, which led directly to decreased

infection among infants and improved the dismal morbidity and mortality rates prevalent among all social classes. Modern medicine allows infants to be immunized against once deadly and disabling diseases and to survive congenital defects, premature birth, and infectious diseases.

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