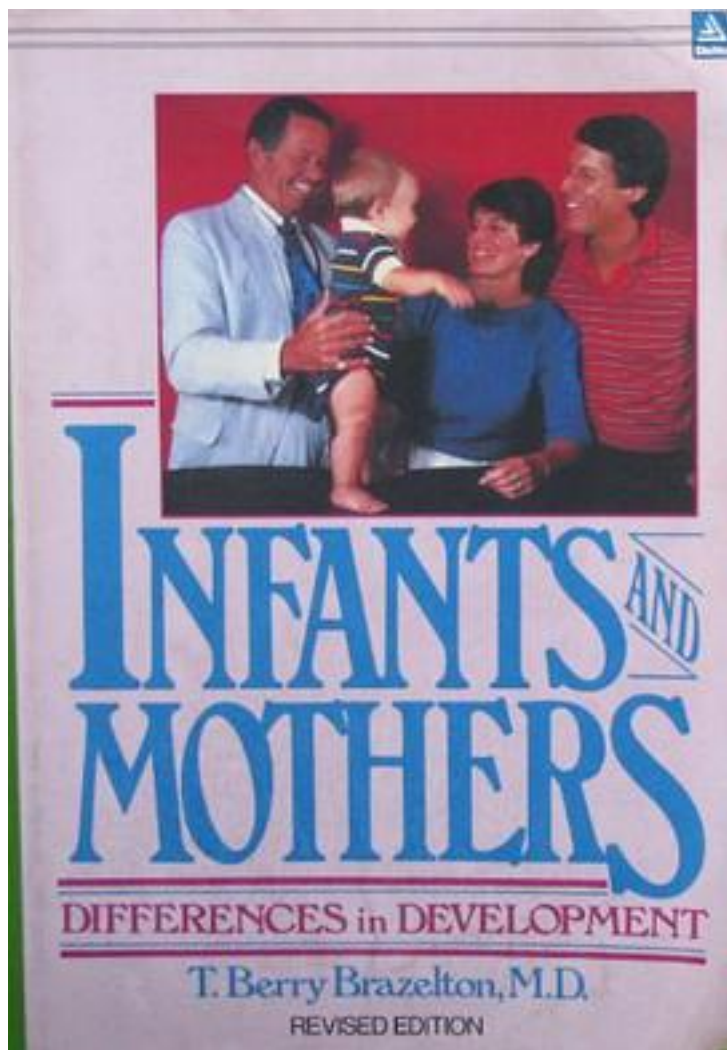


Infants and Mothers



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TO FIRST EDITION
There is a zest and vitality in human infancy that shows itself at every turn. The infant looks with absorption—he drinks in his environment well before he "knows how" to do anything about taking hold of it. He scouts his world for every sign of what is novel and monitors not only what goes on right before him but what is happening at the edges of his world. At the start in the opening weeks of life—the baby is either alert—"turned on"—and in a mood to explore—or he is—"turned off"—in the total way that young infants have of turning off. Gradually alertness spreads over longer periods and the infant begins on new tasks—social life—manipulation of things—and the gradual lacing together of the world of the eyes with the world of the hands. A career of self-projected travel begins early—perhaps when the baby can turn from his back to his tummy—and the realm over which control extends expands as no empire ever has. There are memorable landmarks. There is the first time the child sustains his look into his mother's eyes and begins on a career of social exchange of such complexity that no grammar has yet been devised to explicate it. There is the first smile—earlier than the books say—and a genuine expression of pleasure—in spite of early detractors—who suspected gas pains. There is the first time that the infant is able to go on looking at the world around him while still feeding at breast or bottle—probably the opening achievement of the art of doing two things at once—which will burgeon later on. There is the first visually guided reach for an object—hand wide spread—attention long sustained—and a final capture with object delivered for inspection to the mouth—the mouth—the lighthouse in the midline—the all-purpose sense organ. And on it goes. For those of us who study the growth of infant competence—the mysteries are no less deep than for any other observer. We are only beginning to appreciate how subtle the processes of growth are—

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