



# The Doula Book: How A Trained Labor Companion Can Help You Have A Shorter, Easier, And Healthier Birth

*By Marshall H. Klaus, John H. Kennell, Phyllis H. Klaus*

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- Sales Rank: #469394 in Books
- Published on: 2002-11
- Released on: 2002-11-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .52" h x 6.96" w x 8.94" l, .90 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages



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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

World-wide renowned authorities on birthing and bonding, Klaus and Kennell (Bonding) team up once again in this new work, focusing on the role of the doula, a Greek word that means "woman caregiver." Today, the authors explain, doula has come to mean an experienced labor companion who provides parents-to-be with emotional and physical support during labor, delivery and, to some extent, postpartum. The three authors (Phyllis Klaus teaches psychotherapy at the Erikson Institute in California) describe how a doula can help the birthing process, detailing studies that indicate doula-supported births result in a major reduction in the length of labor, a greater than 50% drop in cesarean sections, a decrease in a mother's need for pain medication and fewer feeding problems for babies after birth. Over the past decade, the authors claim, "evidence for the benefits of doula support has been accumulating dramatically." Expectant parents will find this exciting information, and it may impact their birthing plans. With appendixes and photos (many of which, unfortunately, seem to date from the 1970s) detailing a doula's training, relaxation and visualization techniques, the book will also be vital for women considering entering this field. As usual, the team of Klaus and Kennell presents its work in a clear, compassionate manner, offering new insights and ways to make birthing a safe and positive experience for all involved.

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From Library Journal

A doula, from the Greek word meaning "woman caregiver," acts as a companion to a woman before, during, and, to a lesser extent, after labor. Unlike a midwife, she does not provide obstetrical care (i.e., deliver babies) but rather offers continuous and individualized emotional and physical support in order to foster a sense of reassurance, shorten labor, and decrease the need for pain killers and cesarean section. In this update of *Mothering the Mother* (1993), neonatologist Klaus, pediatrician John H. Kennell, and psychotherapist Phyllis H. Klaus carefully delineate the specific functions and characteristics of a well-trained doula, the criteria for selecting one, and the numerous benefits of using one. Real-life examples of the interaction among the doula, the mother, and her partner illuminate what it's like to work with a doula. Appendixes provide detailed information about the training of doulas, the techniques that they employ, and the results of clinical trials of labor support. The only drawback is that the photographs appear rather dated. A fine acquisition for public library pregnancy and health collections.

*Linda M.G. Katz, Drexel Univ. Health Sciences Libs., Philadelphia*

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About the Author

**Marshall H. Klaus, M.D.**, internationally known neonatologist and researcher, is the author or coauthor of several standard works in the field, including *Bonding*, *Care of the High Risk Newborn*, and *Mothering the Mother*. He teaches pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine. **Phyllis H. Klaus, C.S.W., M.F.C.C.**, teaches and practices psychotherapy at the Erikson Institute in Santa Rosa and practices in Berkeley, California. She is coauthor of *Mothering the Mother*, and *Bonding*.

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