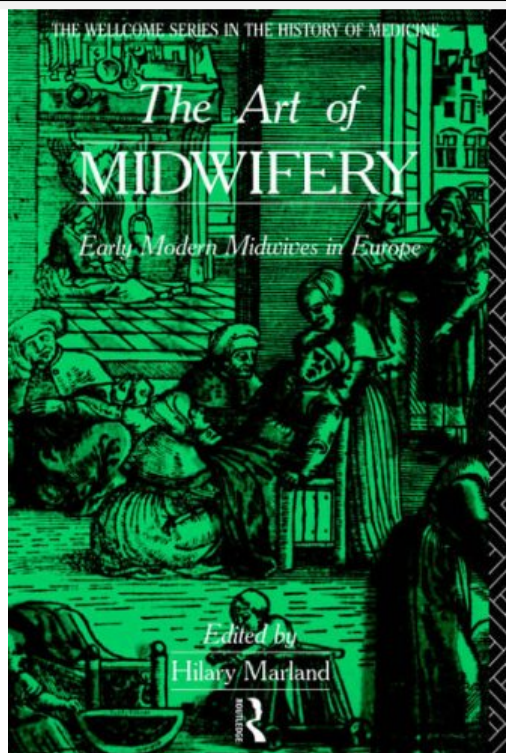

PDF Books The Art of Midwifery: Early Modern Midwives in Europe (Wellcome Institute Series in the History of Medicine) - Download



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Book Synopsis

The absorption of midwifery into medical practice is a recent development. In the western world this process has been linked to the diminishing role of the midwife, the greater involvement of male doctors in childbirth, and increasing hospitalization. However, while midwifery is recognized as the oldest female occupation, historians have focused on the decline of the midwife's prominence in obstetric work from the nineteenth century onwards. The Art of Midwifery is the first book to examine midwives in the early modern period. It explores the period before the decline' and challenges some of the long-held beliefs about the life, work and knowledge of midwives, as well as their place in public life. Drawing on an impressive range of manuscript and printed sources from England, Holland, Germany, France, Italy and Spain, the contributors show that the early modern period was a time of great diversity in midwives' status and practice throughout Europe. They show that this period was neither a golden age' for midwives, nor was it a time when midwifery was practised by aged, unskilled crones. In addition, The Art of Midwifery explores how wider religious, political and social forces had their impact on midwives. It will have a wide readership in medical and social history as well as women's studies and medical sociology.

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