



# **Is Breast Best?: Taking on the Breastfeeding Experts and the New High Stakes of Motherhood (Biopolitics)**

*Joan B. Wolf*

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Why has breastfeeding re-asserted itself over the last twenty years, and why are the government, the scientific and medical communities, and so many mothers so invested in the idea? In *Is Breast Best?* Joan B. Wolf challenges the widespread belief that breastfeeding is medically superior to bottle-feeding. Despite the fact that breastfeeding has become the ultimate expression of maternal dedication, Wolf writes, the conviction that breastfeeding provides babies unique health benefits and that formula feeding is a risky substitute is unsubstantiated by the evidence. In accessible prose, Wolf argues that a public obsession with health and what she calls 'total motherhood' has made breastfeeding a cause celebre, and that public discussions of breastfeeding say more about infatuation with personal responsibility and perfect mothering in America than they do about the concrete benefits of the breast. Parsing the rhetoric of expert advice, including the recent National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign, and rigorously questioning the scientific evidence, *Is Breast Best?* uncovers a path by which a mother can feel informed and confident about how best to feed her thriving infant whether flourishing by breast or by bottle.

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