



Mommy Knows Worst: Highlights from the Golden Age of Bad Parenting Advice

James Lileks

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Don't throw out the baby with the bathwater!

Ahhhh, the 1940s and '50s . . . a time when parents everywhere strove for the American Dream—manicured lawns, a shiny car in the driveway, and perfect children playing in the yard. Raising kids was simpler back then, or was it?

In *Mommy Knows Worst*, you'll be treated to a visual feast of past parenting neuroses—as well as insight into why concerned moms and dads were driven to buy “delicious” baby laxatives, douse their baby in oil and put him in the sun, and strap Junior into a car seat that bore a strange resemblance to scrap metal. If you're a baby boomer who lived through this childhood torture, well, we're sorry. But if humor really is the best medicine (rather than bicarbonate of curd and mustard plaster, as was previously recommended for childhood ailments), then *Mommy Knows Worst* is cheaper than therapy.

Photographs, advertisements, magazine articles, and government-issue parenting guides, which seemed so helpful in their day, are given a whole new slant by the master of the genre, James Lileks. *Mommy Knows Worst* is a rollicking tribute to old-fashioned parenting that gives us a whole new reason not to forget our past—it's hilarious!

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Ira Knudsen:

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