Surrogate Motherhood
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What Does The Word Surrogate Mean?

- **Surrogate**: One that takes the place of another

- **Surrogate Mother**: A woman who is paid to bear a child for another woman
But, What Does It Mean?

- A doctor combines a woman’s egg with her husband’s sperm and then grows the baby in surrogate mother. She then gives the baby to the parents immediately upon birth.

- If a man and woman are unable to provide the egg or sperm, you can buy donated sperm and eggs.

- Surrogate mothers get paid for any expenses they encounter while being pregnant including but not limited to: food cravings, gas for doctor visits, hospital stays, massages, time off work and maternity clothes. Pretty much anything legal or medical is all that should be paid for by the couple who hired the surrogate.

Random Statistics

- The first surrogate birth was in 1976
- An estimated 15,000 to 16,000 babies have been born to surrogate mothers in the U.S.
- The Average payment for a surrogate mother is between $10,000 and $15,000, this comes out to $1.50 per hour of pregnancy
- 10 to 15 % of married couples cannot have children
- It is up to the individual state to decide who is going to be listed as the mother and father of the baby prior to the birth. This means who is going to be listed on the birth certificate
- Wisconsin does not have a surrogacy agency at this time
- There are statistically more problems with the intended family than there is with the surrogate when it comes time for them to take home the new baby
Why Would A Couple Need A Surrogate Mother?

- Cardiac disease
- Brittle diabetes
- Potentially dangerous drugs (drugs that can harm developing fetus) e.g.: Accutane
- History of ectopic pregnancies
- Emotional factors
- Physical disabilities (weight gain causing stress on back and legs)
- Malformed uterus
- Hysterectomy
- Infertility
- Homosexual couples

Who Is Commonly A Surrogate Mother?

- Your typical surrogate, is usually in her 20s or 30s, most agencies limit the age to 38
- Married with kids of her own
- Catholic or Protestant
- She derives a sense of power from her ability to give two people the one thing they want most: a baby.
- Educated and Employed women
How To Become A Surrogate Mother

- The woman undergoes a series of tests prior to the planting of the egg and sperm.
  - Hysteroscopy/HCG, this is a procedure which determines if the fallopian tubes are clear as well as the size and shape of the uterus
  - Infectious disease test, to ensure there are no contagious diseases present such as AIDS, hepatitis, or most STDs
  - A common pap smear to check for a healthy uterus and STD’s
  - A physical, to see if there are any physiological obstacles that would hinder the surrogate in carrying the baby such as diabetes, or
  - Checking the length of uterus to find out how far to insert the embryos
- Psychological testing, to check inspiration, attitudes, and commitment
  - Make sure there is not a past of post partum depression, frequent anxiety attacks and mental stability
  - See that she understands she will not be able to keep the baby, nor will she hardly be able to hold it in the hospital minutes after birth if ever.

Costs of The Usage Of A Surrogate Mother

- How much a surrogate is paid is very tightly maintained by the law. A surrogate is typically paid $10,000.00 for the birth of the baby completion of her contract.
- If she backs out she get no money.
- If the pregnancy results in a miscarriage, the surrogate receives only a partial payment.
- If for any reason payment is out of order, it is looked upon as having the baby only for the purpose of selling it. This is also known as "reproductive prostitution". The law is against baby selling and in many states it is classified as a felony and punishable by heavy fines and many years in prison.
Surrogate Motherhood is Ethical and A Great Practice!

- Sterility affects nearly 1 out of every 5 American couples
- People want to have their own child, conceived of their own sperm and egg
- Having Children is what adult life is in America, there is great pressure put on it
- If a couple wants to pay for a child why should they be denied?

Laws Protecting Couples Who Choose Surrogacy

- Law says it's a crime for surrogate mothers to ask for payment beyond their expenses, which need to be documented and approved by both the agency and lawyers involved. There have been women who in the past have charged anywhere from the common $10,000 to $100,000 simply for their own monetary gain
- The law prohibits women from arranging surrogacy simply for money, as these women are not careful during pregnancy and can then hurt the fetus.
Laws Continued…

- Laws say that it's not right to offer children for sale, or for women to be turned into baby making machines for others.
- Laws have made written contracts which need to be notarized, and witnessed by both parties, as well as the lawyers involved that state the baby will be given to the parents as well as what rights the surrogate mother will have to the child after birth.

How To Protect Yourself If Using A Surrogate:

- **Have a loved one serve as your surrogate**: It's not as common as you would think, less than 5 percent of couples even ask a loved one to do this for them. However by doing so these couples avoid both the agency's and the surrogate's fees.

- **Hire a reputable agency**: The majority over 65 percent find their surrogate through an agency. This often means high fees to more people than need to be paid, and sometimes, although rarely, there are scams involved. Agencies are trained to conduct medical, psychological, and criminal background checks on surrogates to make sure they know what they are getting into and can handle it.

- **Don’t use the internet or news paper**: 30 percent of couples try to find a surrogate through the newspaper or the Internet. This is extremely risky, and not recommended by any professional.
How To Protect Yourself
Continued…

- Find a qualified surrogate: Whether you've found your surrogate on your own or through an agency there are several things you need to look for:
  - Make sure she has her own health insurance with maternity coverage, this will lower the costs for you as you will only have to pay her co pays rather than the entire hospital expense.
  - If possible make sure the surrogate has had one successful pregnancy. This will show you as well as doctors how she can handle a pregnancy as well as her fertility history.
  - Worried your surrogate might change her mind and want to keep the baby? There have been more than 72,000 births to surrogates in the world and there have only been 28 legal disputes! This is less than one percent of such arrangements that run into legal problems.

Choosing A Surrogate Is Better Than…

- Having a spouse either cheat or file for divorce because they want to have their own biological children and their partner is infertile
- Adopting from a family who can be hiding their history, including health problems and mental disorders
- Going throughout life without a child if that is something you value more than anything
- Research has shown that involuntary childlessness may cause people to feel unfulfilled, angry, and like they have no reason to live
- The time it takes to adopt can be almost twice as long as the process of finding a surrogate and having the baby
Surrogacy Is Unethical, As It Is Baby Selling!

- Surrogacy is gives the role of motherhood to another woman, which breaks down what a mother really is by the standards we Americans have.
- It is reproductive prostitution, baby trade, selling of body parts, and renting out of the uterus.
- It is unethical, and simply not logical to expect a woman who has just carried a baby for nine months to simply walk away without any emotional ties to the baby.
- Women who act as surrogate mothers just want to make money and still be able to stay at home with their own children.

Laws Protecting The Surrogates

- In the United States after the contracts have been signed and the implantation has taken place the only role of the surrogate is to have the baby, and after that baby is out of the surrogate all rights are forfeited and void. She is rarely even allowed to hold the baby that she has just given birth to.
- Basically, there are no laws protecting the surrogates.
Surrogacy Is an Unethical Practice

- In scripture, surrogacy was performed, but it caused much heartache and hatred between the women.
- The Bible depicts the man being selfish in wanting children with another woman.
- Some feel the reason for infertility is due to past sins they have committed.
- With in vitro fertilization, more than one egg is fertilized and the unused embryos are discarded.
- With in vitro fertilization, you are more likely to have multiple births, which can cause severe prematurity and higher risk for the babies not to survive.
- Another option with multiple births is to have a procedure performed to abort some of the embryos.

Surrogacy Is Unethical Continued...

- Women have feelings, thus after yanking out the baby and giving it to the awaiting mother instead of the woman who has sacrificed for the past nine months is cruel and very hard to handle.
- When a woman does this she knows what she is getting herself into, but she should not have to give up her own privacy. If she is the egg donor then yes she needs to share her family health history, but otherwise she should be allowed to go to work, hang out with friends and do anything that does not pertain to the baby alone, but instead she needs to tell her baby’s parents anything they enquire. She has to give up all privacy.
- Surrogate mothers ought to have some right to see the child if they want to, even if it is just through pictures or e-mails.
- There have been cases where the parents back out after the surrogate is pregnant for several reasons like divorce, lack of maturity or other miscellaneous reasons, leaving the surrogate with a child she didn’t intend to raise.
Homosexuals And Surrogacy

- Only option for the child to be genetically linked to at least one of the homosexual parents
- Helps homosexuals have children and lead their chosen lifestyle
- No research has shown that children raised by homosexuals have any more problems than a child raised by a heterosexual couple
- Thus if heterosexual couples can use surrogacy, then so can homosexuals
- Denying homosexuals the right to use surrogacy denies them the right to have children which in America is considered unfair, and illegal in many states.
- More than 2.6 million gay households in the USA include children, with surrogacy gaining popularity

Thoughts From A Surrogate…

- Rachel Levinson was a surrogate mother twice. “I think about my surrogate daughters every day, keep a photo album of each in my family room, and worry about how they'd feel when they grow up. Maybe these girls will come back and ask me, `How could you give me up? How could you walk away?' I'll be honest: It isn't easy. But I got to know their parents. I listened to their story. And these children will probably be more loved, if that is possible, because their parents went through so much to get them. Besides having my own children, being a surrogate is the best thing I've ever done.”
Bibliography…