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The resources of reproduction: eggs, sperm and wombs for sale



Box 10.3 Activity: Small group discussion

Restoring donor anonymity will probably lead to an increase in gamete donation. So donor anonymity should be restored.

Participants should be divided into small groups and asked whether or not they agree with this claim. They should be allowed 15 minutes for discussion before feeding back to the whole group to whom the discussion should then be opened.

It would be interesting to ask after the whole group discussion whether anyone has changed their mind. This will involve taking a poll before starting the exercise.



Box 10.4 Activity: Creative writing

Imagine you are an impoverished student wondering whether to sell your gametes to pay off your debts. Ask yourself what your parents would think, how you will feel about yourself later on, how it would feel to know you had children you'll never know. . .



Box 10.6 Activity: Group discussion

Many people are happy that the sale and purchase of gametes is illegal. But some would like to see it:

- (i) decriminalised (such that the law has no interest whatsoever in the buying and selling of gametes, rather as the law has no interest in the buying and selling of sweets).

Others would like to see it:

- (ii) legalised (such that the law regulates it as it regulates the sale of alcohol, imposing conditions on its sale, such as 6 months of storage to check for disease).

Divide the group into three. Allocate to each group one of the moral theories discussed in Chapter 4 and give them 20 minutes to discuss whether theorists of their kind would be for or against decriminalising or legalising the sale of gametes.



Box 10.7 Activity: Creative writing

Write 500 words from the perspective of a child conceived from an egg harvested from an aborted foetus.

You might like to consider the following:

- Had it not been for your grandmother's willingness to donate her foetus' oocytes, you would not exist.
- Isn't it better that your mother should at least have had a child even if she never had a life?
- Has your life been blighted by the discovery of your origins?
- Would it have been better that you were never born?
- Would it have been better for you never to have known your origins?



Box 10.10 Activity: Creative writing

Write a short story about the use of chimera for reproductive purposes. Consider the feelings of the parents, the grandparents and the child itself.



Box 10.11 Activity: Group discussion

Participants should discuss:

- (i) whether society has an obligation to help those whose infertility stems from the inability to produce fertile gametes.
- (ii) by which (combination of) means society should help.

Participants should remember that egg donation differs from sperm donation to such an extent that some may think they should be treated differently.

Alternatively the group could restrict the discussion to one aspect of this debate as follows:

- Should payment for eggs be permitted?
- Should anonymity for sperm donors be restored?
- Is the use of eggs from aborted fetuses morally permissible?
- Is the use of artificial gametes morally permissible?
- Would it be morally acceptable for single sex male couples to produce a child with one of them providing the egg, the other the sperm?



Box 10.12 Activity: Paired discussion

Najima Vohra from near Anand in India is being paid £2,750 to carry a child for an American couple. She plans to buy a brick house, invest in her husband's business and pay for her children's education: 'My daughter wants to be a teacher', she says, 'I'll do anything to give her that opportunity.'

One thing Vohra is doing to give her daughter this opportunity is living a lie. Her extended family, friends and neighbours 'think that immoral acts take place to get pregnant. They'd shun my family if they knew'. She, her husband and children have temporarily moved to another village to hide what she is doing.⁴²

Discuss with a partner whether the commissioning parents are exploiting Najima or helping her to give her children a future.

**Box 10.14 Activity: Group discussion**

If a woman is capable of carrying her own child, she should do this. It would be wrong to pay a surrogate in the absence of a medical need.

Half the group should take one side of this argument, the other half the other side.

**Box 10.15 Activity: Opinion poll**

Amongst your friends and family conduct an informal opinion poll on attitudes to artificial wombs. Prepare by constructing a list of pros and cons for people to read, then note their responses.

Classify these responses in terms of the ethical theories discussed in Chapter 4. Then use the results to stimulate group discussion.