

Deception, Dignity, and Design: IVF and Ethics

Emily Redelman

This paper investigates the practices commonly involved with in vitro fertilization, seeking to determine its moral implications as a technique used to bypass infertility. Throughout history, humans have responded to infertility with petition to the divine, lifestyle changes, and various remedies. In the 20th century, scientific breakthroughs concerning the manipulation of gametes and embryos lead to the first IVF success in 1978, and, since then, Big Fertility has grown to be the largely unregulated, multi-billion dollar industry that it is today. The in vitro procedure is an assisted reproductive technology which removes the sperm's fertilization of the egg into the lab before transferring one or more embryos into a woman's uterus with the hopes of a live birth, but, unfortunately, most embryos created never make it out of the clinic, besides a deluge of other ethical conundrums. Infertile couples should avoid in vitro fertilization in its almost universally practiced form because it desecrates the sanctity of life, violates God's design for marriage, causes psychological damage, and inflicts physiological exhaustion and significant medical risks. Ultimately, IVF fails to therapeutically restore the body's proper functioning and, more profoundly, threatens to profane the meaning of human life by implying that children are not a gift of God, but an act of human will and selection.