



# Reasoning with Ethics

APRIL 21, 2020

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*Ethics in action creates character.*

Use this blog to:

1. Lead class discussions in social studies, civics, ethics or advisory classes.
2. Teach students skills to analyze cases with core ethical values.
3. Recognize skills in support of SEE's Tri-Factor Model of ethical functioning.

[Visit the online Ethics Blog.](#)



## Wombs for Hire

New York State recently revised its surrogacy laws, which previously had banned the payment to pregnancy surrogates for bringing a baby to term and then delivering the child to the individual or couple making the payment. The complicated ethical questions associated with surrogacy include multiple issues. One issue pits those who resist the exploitation of women, with those who advocate for infertile and gay couples to have an opportunity for children with some of their DNA. Past cases have also involved the surrogates who changed their mind about giving up the child they carried for nine months.

Surrogacy can have a hefty price tag with estimates in recent articles noting the cost can range from \$20,000 to over \$200,000. The New York law appears to require a minimum of \$35,000 to be paid to the surrogate along with insurance and medical expenses during and after delivery of the child. The fees involved support the argument that poor women could be exploited by the wealthy.

Medical technology and changing social norms have created the opportunity for this modern-day ethical dilemma where public laws should be informed by ethical analysis. During this time of distance learning, students are encouraged to review the additional information on the links below and reflect on the following questions. How would you define (if any) the ethical dilemmas associated with the writing of surrogacy laws? What would you include in a surrogacy law and what core ethical values would this seek to demonstrate? What political skills would be helpful to get your surrogacy law passed by a legislature?

## Supplemental Links

NBC News Video, Surrogacy laws change in NY (4/3/20)-- <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/new-york-state-long-holdout-against-legalizing-surrogacy-overturns-ban-n1176071The>

Surrogate Pregnancy Pits Progressives against Feminists – NYTimes (6/12/19), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/12/nyregion/surrogate-pregnancy-law-ny.html>

Gotham Gazette, NY surrogacy battle, editorial argues against rights of surrogates- <https://www.gothamgazette.com/opinion/9191-cruel-surrogacy-proposal-new-york-reject-better>

Surrogacy gone mad, wealthy man fathers 16 children and wants more-- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/thailand-mitsutoki-shigeta-japan-sole-custody-baby-factory-surrogate-mothers/>

ABC News on changing NY Laws on surrogacy- <https://abcnews.go.com/US/video/andy-cohen-pushes-amended-reproductive-laws-63643906>

