

Surrogacy: Medicalization of Motherhood

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Abstract

Introduction: Surrogacy is one of the important new reproductive technosciences that contributes to medicalization of motherhood, providing an alternative method to natural fertility as well as a resolution to infertility. According to sociologists, medicalization is a multidimensional process by which natural and non-medical problems or conditions become defined, treated and managed as medical problems, using specialized vocabulary, professional approaches, particular instruments and interventions techniques. Reviewing socially constructed nature of surrogacy and its various social aspects and implications, this article shows how surrogacy serves to turn motherhood, a natural and vital experience in women's life, to the growing process of medicalization.

Materials & Methods: This paper seeks to provide a sociological analysis of the constructionist nature and implications of surrogacy by reviewing the body of knowledge and literature developed in sociology. Drawing on the notion of medicalization, the paper is to show how surrogacy has contributed and continues to contribute to the medicalization of motherhood.

Results: Sociological analyses show that the alternative methods to natural fertility or new paths to cure infertility including surrogacy are socially constructed and have numerous and far-reaching sociological aspects and implications. The novel technosciences like surrogacy play a central role in dealing with, redefinition and accordingly construction of human problems and experiences. Surrogacy, *inter alia*, introduces the new form of medicalization of motherhood by blurring the distinction between what is natural and what is made by mankind on the subject of motherhood.

Conclusion: Like most of new medical and reproductive technosciences, surrogacy provides a new configuration of women's lives and motherhood in particular that can be primarily characterized by medicalization or transformation of motherhood into jurisdiction of medicine.

Key Words: Medicalization, Surrogacy, Motherhood, Social Constructionism, Claim-making, Reproduction, Infertility, Technoscience.

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