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Annotated Summaries of Articles Eggs & Blood: Gifts & Commodities Module

Katayoun Chamany, Associate Professor of Biology, Department of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts. chamanyk@newschool.edu

Alexa Riggs. B.A., Double Major in Interdisciplinary Science and Psychology and Minor in Gender Studies. MPH candidate

A note on organization

Alphabetically organized 41 in total

Title -

Key-words - **describing the article adapted from the journals their published**

Summary

Relates to topics – **broad themes/concepts common in an intro to feminist survey course**

Specific texts – **texts that an article relates to in the module**

Alexa Commentary - **student perspective what she likes/dislikes**

Title: Acero, L. 2009. The commodification of women's bodies in trafficking for prostitution and egg donation. *JFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 2(1):25-32.

Key Words: gender subordination, commodification

Summary: Liliana Acero responds to Widdow's article "Border disputes across bodies: Exploitation in trafficking for prostitution and egg sale for stem cell research," in four parts. Widdows argues that transnational feminism is negatively affected by debates on egg donation. International feminists responses should revert to a "traditional" feminist position opposing gender subordination. Acero begins their response by borrowing from Carole Pateman's gender subordination perspective and a Marxist approach: gender subordination is closely related to the female body and female labor exploitation. Acero makes a distinction between practical and strategic gender needs. While practical gender needs are defined as health necessities inside prescribed gender roles, strategic gender needs tries to redefine prescribed gender roles when planning feminist activism. According to Acero, Widdows uses a strategic gender perspective but does not untie the complicated practical and strategic gender need relationship in reproductive labor including egg selling and prostitution. Acero's second response makes problematic the banning of egg donation because it does not sufficiently protect women against illegal markets. The third response is based on the concept and framing of choice. Acero expands Widdows' argument from a neoliberal and neo-feminist concepts of exploitation to include a critique of the frames surrounding "choice." I.e. a free market framework v. a social inequality model. One values capital and the other fairness. The last response Acero makes to Widdows is the disparity in reproductive labor in capitalism. Reproductive labor is part of capitalism and therefore power is given to the bodies of women participating in this system, but there is still a lack of power prescribed to women in underdeveloped countries. Therefore the global south is still excluded from the conversation and Acero ends on a positive note by stating the Widdows paper opens up new conversations regarding internationalization of stem cell research.

Relates to topics: commodification, transnational feminism, trafficking

Specific Texts: Widdows, H. (2009). Border disputes across bodies: Exploitation in trafficking for prostitution and egg sale for stem cell research. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 2(1): 5-24.

Alexa Commentary: This paper doesn't make sense to assign in a curriculum without the Widdows paper. However, one of the most interesting points raised by Acero is the practical v. strategic gender needs discussion. This could be easily applied to a gender studies course because it presents possible theories for activist groups to frame their work. It is bothersome that the title still remains unclear to me even after reading the article. They do not unpack the "In trafficking for prostitution," which makes me uncomfortable. But it does semi-point to the idea that people with ovaries going across borders to sell eggs could also participate in prostitution.

Title: Almeling, R. 2009. Gender and the Value of Bodily Goods: Commodification in Egg and Sperm Donation. *Law and Contemporary Problems*. 72 (3): 37-58.

Key Words: Commodification, reproductive goods, egg agencies, sperm banks

Summary: This is an observational/interview qualitative study conducted in 2002-2006 of 26 people working in egg agencies and sperm banks along with 9 historical interviews to better understand the complex relationship between biology, feminism, and the commodification of bodies. The article is presented in four parts. Introduction defines the terms 'sex' and 'gender' placing more emphasis on the biology behind sex. The second section titled *Theoretical framework* builds on Viviana Zelizer's model of economic, cultural, and structural factors to address markets by adding biological factors. Based on this model Almeling gives three possible scenarios to the way men and women's reproductive goods will be valued: equally, women's goods valued over men's, or men's goods valued over women's. The third portion of the paper describes some of the history behind in vitro fertilization (IVF) illustrating the inequities in these so-called parallel reproductive goods. Almeling uses the interviews to further depict ways in which contemporary agencies and sperm banks do not treat reproductive goods equally – for example women's pictures are presented along side their eggs unlike men with sperm. Part four affirms that while sperm donation is paid less, it is seen as a job, while egg donation is seen as a donation that is often recognized in kind with substantial compensation in the form of gifts emphasizing that point that commodification of the body is closely tied to socially constructed ideas of 'sex' and 'gender'.

Relates to topics: The Male Gaze (egg donations options come with a picture while sperm options do not), social consecution theory, distinction between sex and gender

Specific Texts: Martin, E. Spring 1991. The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male- Female Roles. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*. 16(3): 485-501.

Alexa Commentary: I liked this article because we hear the voices of the employees in egg agencies. The interviews were raw and crude - very clearly displaying the commodification and objectification of women. It was helpful that Almeling compared this objectification with sperm banks because the disparities are clear. It is one of the only articles that juxtaposes egg donation and sperm donation and connects it back to the larger structures of socially constructed sex and gender.

Title: Anonymous. 2003. Eggs shared, given and sold. *The Lancet*. 362(9382): 413.

Key Words: IVF, egg sharing, medical risks

Summary: The first successful IVF baby Louise Brown was born in 1978, but it wasn't until 1991 that the Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority (HFEA) began offering federal licensing to fertility clinics in Europe. In 2003, some of the original members of the Louise Brown birth team were brought together for a reunion, they mentioned that the eggs were donated by women on a list for sterilization. It was "a little bit of a bribe" to get the women to participate in egg donation. In 1993 a lack of eggs for IVF prompted an egg-sharing program where one IVF couple is offered a speedier IVF process if they agree to share their eggs with another couple. 2001 began an egg-giving program that called for a donor to give away her first harvest of eggs in exchange for cheaper treatment. Where as U.K. egg

donors are only compensated based on minimum expense the U.S. egg donors can earn up to 10 000 dollars. This large amount of money raises questions about informed consent and the risks involved in the procedure.

Relates to topics: Reproductive labor, motherhood

Specific Texts: Empire State Stem Cell Board. 2008; **Statute Establishing NYSTEM Ethics Committee in the ESSC Board Statute.** :265-c-265-d.

Crowley, C. Abortion foes challenge pay for egg donors. Timesunion.com.

<http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Abortion-foes-challenge-pay-for-egg-donors-552897.php>

Alexa Commentary: This short news release has a lot of buzzwords or key concepts even though it is only a page long. I can easily see it in an introductory course because short news articles engage students quickly. This outlines many important things such as standards of disclosure, undue inducement and risks. It also includes a nice outline of the history up until 2003. It defines egg-sharing and egg-giving unlike some of the other articles.

Title: Anonymous. 2006. Safeguards for donors. *Nature*. 442 (7103):601.

Key Words: commodification, payment, compensation

Summary: This article exclusively addresses the issue of egg payment. Should federal money be allotted for the payment of oocytes for embryonic stem cell research? Should we be compensating donors for time and effort related to egg donation procedures? This article cites Hyun's "for compensation" argument that relies on international review boards and regulations to balance the amount of money for compensation so as not to obscure the risks. Compensation and informed consent is complicated by unknown risk factors like the possibility of hormone-induced cancers. One possible alternative to subjecting healthy women to ovulation stimulating hormones for stem cell research are egg-sharing programs that ask IVF participants to donate surplus eggs to research for a lower cost of IVF. However this does not negate the ethical stipulation of money and participation. In 2005 the US National Academy of Sciences issued compensation guidelines stating that donors should only be reimbursed for direct expenses.

Relates to topics: commodification of the female body

Specific Texts: Almeling, R. 2009. Gender and the value of bodily goods: Commodification in egg and sperm donation. *Law and Contemporary Problems*. 72(3): 37-58.

Hyun, L. 2006. Fair payment or undue inducement? *Nature*.442:629-630.

Alexa Commentary: Another good short news piece. I think it might be nice to have a bunch of articles like this in the teaching arsenal depending on the class dynamic. It goes around the debate for compensation and for direct payment. What is the actual difference in terms of undue inducement if donors are receiving money?

Title: Anonymous. 2007. Victory for female stem cells in battle of the sexes. *Regenerative Medicine*. 2(3): 231.

Key Words: stem cells

Summary: A study found that in comparison, female derived muscle stem cells (DMSC) were more efficient at regenerating muscle than male DMSC. When stem cells were injected into mice with a genetic disease called Duchene muscular dystrophy, regardless of the sex of the host, the female derived DMSC produced more muscle tissue. This article states that the sex of the donor is important for future research. The article uses regenerative index (RI) to show the effectiveness of female DMSC. The main difference in RI was observed after exposure to stress. The article further

attributes this differentiated response to stress as an innate sex difference between women and men. The article ends with the implication that sex difference stem cells could drastically impact future research.

Relates to topics: Battle of the sexes

Specific Texts: Martin, E. (1991). The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*. 16(3): 485-501.

Alexa Commentary: This article doesn't really fit into the syllabus at first glance. However, I paired it with the Martin piece because it does involve gender stereotypes. We might associate muscle-ness with males and therefore assume that male DMSC would be more efficient than female and they aren't. The fact that this article calls for more sex difference research is both problematic and important because it could lead to more sexism in science or less. Also reminds me of Rebecca Jordan Young's research for that same reason.

Title: Ballantyne A. and DeLacey, S. Fall 2008. Wanted-Egg donors for research: A research ethics approach to donor recruitment and compensation. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 1 (2):145-164.

Key Words: Research ethics, healthy volunteers, compensation

Summary: The authors present an exploration of the downstream effects of treating egg donors as healthy research volunteers largely in response to Insoo Hyun's article calling for a research ethics framework on determining compensation for egg donors. The authors present two main principles of research ethics 'just participant selection' and payment for patients and healthy volunteers. They argue for distinction between the two classes of participants and separate approaches to recruitment for these two groups (IVF donors and healthy volunteers). Specifically the recruitment varies in terms of manipulation and opportunity to donate and presence/opinion of the clinician/institution. Just participant selection means no one group of people should be exploited because of convenience unless they are directly benefiting from the research. The authors then present three ideas with respect to the research ethics approach: exploitation, undue inducement, and commodification. The authors acknowledge the platform of the pro-life and pro-choice group called Hands Off Our Ovaries raises valid concerns about the long-term risks for donation. But, if women are donating their eggs they should be compensated justly.

Relates to topics: Hands Off Our Ovaries, transnational feminism, ethics, and exploitation.

Specific Texts: Hyun, Insoo. 2006. Fair payment of undue inducement? *Nature*. 442: 629-630.

Papadimos, TJ, et al. 2004. The student and the ovum: The lack of autonomy and informed consent in trading genes for tuition. *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*. 2 :56-62

Nahman, Michal. 2008. Nodes of Desire. Romanian Egg Sellers, 'Dignity ' and Feminist Alliances in Transnational Ova Exchanges. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. 15(2): 65-82.

Alexa Commentary: This is one of the articles that I've included in the top 7. In the concept map this article is the strongest in terms of research ethics. I think this article is more important for a biology class but that doesn't mean it isn't useful for gender studies. This article gets at the distinction between IVF donors and donors for research. If we use just participant selection as Ballantyne calls for we must make these two groups distinct.

Title: Bamford, R. 2011. Reconsidering risk to women: Oocyte donation for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 11(9): 37-39.

Key Words: Biomedical research, ethics, health policy, research ethics, stem cell research

Summary: Bamford responds to the argument presented by Ellison and Meliker in the American Journal of Bioethics. Bamford beings their critique with the statement that Ellison and Meliker's literature review is based on samples of women with fertility problems. Bamford also states that Ellison and Meliker also overgeneralize their findings to populations of women that are not applicable. Bamford also critiques their article on the basis of lack of analysis on women from an economically vulnerable position. Bamford uses the Baylis and McLeod 2007 solution for undue inducement and exploitation. 1. altruistic donation with compensation for direct, receipted expenses and 2. accept the short supply of eggs for research. Bamford further critiques altruistic donation philosophy stating that it too is exploitative. The conclusion, like Ellison and Meliker, calls for further research not policy intervention.

Relates to Topics: Exploitation and commodification

Specific Texts: Ellison, B., & Meliker, J. 2011. Assessing the risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome in egg donation: Implications for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 11(9):22-30.

Dickenson, D., & Idiakez, I. A. 2008. Ova donation for stem cell research and international perspective. *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 1(2):125--144.

Dickenson, D. 2002. Commodification of human tissue: Implications for feminist and development ethics. *Developing World Bioethics*. 2(1): 55-63.

Klitzman, R., & Sauer, M. V. 2009. Payment of egg donors in stem cell research in the USA. *Reproductive BioMedicine Online*. 18(5): 603-608.

McLeod, C. 2007. For Dignity or Money: Feminists on the Commodification of Women's Reproductive Labour. *The Oxford Handbook of Bioethics*, 258-281.

Alexa Commentary: The end section on payment and compensation does a very concise job of explaining some complications in compensation. Although it does not use language like for dignity or for money. We can see those two sides of the issue. We also see some discrepancies in feminist approaches to undue inducement and both Dickenson articles are cited which I think is interesting because they say very different things. I think this article does a very nice job of discounting Ellison and Meliker. If that article is included I believe this one should be as well

Title: Batzer, F., & Daar, J. 2011. Harmony and compensation for oocyte providers. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 11(9):39-41.

Key Words: Biomedical research, ethics, health policy, research ethics, stem cell research

Summary: Bazter and Daar use two descriptions for the impact of Ellison and Meliker's research: medical perspectives and legal and ethical perspectives. The medical significance of Ellison and Meliker's findings show that hCG hormone or the hormone of early pregnancy is correlated with OHSS and now developments of surrogate hormones like Luteinizing hormone (LH) reduce the risk of OHSS. One of the main risk factors of OHSS is the underlying condition polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) leading cause of infertility. Donor screening eliminating participants with PCOS reduces risk of OHSS. Legal and ethical perspectives point to the fact that in California providing eggs for research should not be compensated. Bazter and Daar explain this position is motivated by politics and paternalism. Stem cell research requires public support and therefore paying egg donors would make stem cell research opposed. The argument that "women participating in egg donation cannot evaluate the risks" is overly protective and paternalistic according to Bazter and Dar. Ellison and Meliker assert that reduction of the OHSS risk calls for uniformity in the assessment of risk profiles for egg providers. Bazter and Dar use this to frame the treatment and compensation of participants as something that should be harmonized and fair. Finally Bazter and Dar make problematic altruism in egg provision and informed consent.

Relates to Topics: informed consent, autonomy, pro-life feminists, Hands Off Our Ovaries, paternalism

Specific Texts: Ellison, B., & Meliker, J. 2011. Assessing the risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome in egg donation: Implications for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 11(9): 22-30.

Papadimos, T., et al. 2004. The student and the ovum: The lack of autonomy and informed consent in trading genes for tuition. *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*. 2:56-62

Alexa Commentary: This article has a good section on the policy of donation. I like the ethical and legal discussion. It shows the very clear discrepancy in the way egg donors for research are treated that no other participants are. I think the first half of the article is interesting but I think the points made about hCG and LH are done in the previous articles.

Title: Beldecos, A, et al. 1988. The importance of feminist critique for contemporary cell biology. *Hypatia*. 3(1):61 -76.

Key Words: Cell Biology, reproductive goods

Summary: Beldecos et al. treat feminist critique of science as an experimental control, one that has to be critically evaluated, as are all controls in all experimental protocols and investigate negative consequences of gender subordination in biological research. How does gender subordination influence which questions are being asked and which are not? The article chronologies gender bias in science from Aristotle's view on fertilization through Sir Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thompson's seminal work in 1890 that proposed gender specific energies: anabolism (female) and katabolism (male). A section called The Sperm Saga explores gender bias in language and the story that the sperm is active and the egg is passive; "martial gang rape" and words such as "penetration," "suitsors," etc. are presented within the context of the story. In the section titled A Nuclear Family, the authors reflect on the 1930's marriage trope within the context of relations between the structure of the family and the cell furthermore, a black American scientist E.E. Just views it from the context of an oppressed person, thus the nucleus is taking orders from the cytoplasm. The authors then move on to organic chemistry and the notion of fast energetic molecules are male, and loose stable molecules are female.

Relates to topics: Gender subordination, patriarchy, intersectionality, social construction

Specific Texts: Martin, E. 1991. The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*. 16(3):485-501.

Schatten, G., et al. 1983. The energetic egg. *Sciences*. 23(5):28-35

Alexa Commentary: Love this text. Sometimes the references to multiple scientists are boring if you don't know the literature or care about the literature. But still a very strong article, which students enjoyed in an intro to biology class.

Title: Crowley, C. Abortion foes challenge pay for egg donors. [Timesunion.com. http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Abortion-foes-challenge-pay-for-egg-donors-552897.php](http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Abortion-foes-challenge-pay-for-egg-donors-552897.php)

Key Words: Pro-life Feminists, Choice, and Autonomy

Summary: This reviews the Feminists Choosing Life lawsuit against New York State Stem Cell Science (NYSTEM) for compensation to women who provide oocytes for stem cell research (SCR) on the grounds that it might entice vulnerable marginalized women to undergo unnecessary health risks. NYSTEM board argues that paying for research oocytes is arguably more beneficial to society than paying for oocytes for private reproductive purposes because there may be scientific and health benefits to come from ESC. The Board also acknowledges, "compensation is allowed for women who donate their eggs for IVF" therefore compensation should be applicable for women donating for SCR.

Relates to: Defining Feminism. Is there such thing as a right-wing feminist? Looking at 19th century feminists on reproductive issues and aligning them with the Tea Party movement. Critiquing the framework – not the argument (although the lawsuit brings up a good point, it is coming from a problematic framework).

Specific Texts: Alcoff, L. 1992. The Problem of Speaking for Others. *Cultural Critique*.20: 5-32.

Alexa Commentary: I used to think this wasn't necessary to include in the syllabus but almost everyone in their response essays addressed this article. It gave cause for student to be concerned. I think this works really well with

Hands Off Our Ovaries and the right wing feminist discourse in the gender studies course. I like that it provides a concrete example of a lawsuit.

Title: Dickenson, D. and Idiakez, I. 2008. Ova donation for stem cell research and international perspective. *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 1: 125-144.

Key Words: International policy, commodification, egg sharing

Summary: Dickenson reviews the increasing need for oocytes for stem cell research (SCR), and the differences in both practice and regulation of these providers even though the role of women as participants has largely been ignored. Dickenson explains the Hwang scandal in Korea regarding number of donation cycles, payment, and OHSS risk, and the responses by various lobbying groups in South Korea, UK and elsewhere. The author also refers to legislations worldwide on both SCNT and oocyte payment/ donation and new work on low dose hormonal administration for reproductive purposes that would not be applicable to oocyte providers because of the need for multiple oocytes. Dickenson also addresses egg-sharing policies in the UK: egg sharing compromises both the clinicians and patient's interests because the standards for IVF and research are different. The article ends by shifting the dialogue from whether or not to pay to other ethical concerns like long-term risks.

Relates to topics: Transnational feminism, activism

Specific Texts: Dickenson, Donna. 2002. Commodification of human tissue: implications for feminist and development ethics. *Developing World Bioethics*. 2 (1): 55-63.

Alexa Commentary: The policy parts are not terribly interesting but there is a lot of very useful information. This is one of the clearest representations of egg sharing. It also explains the Korea situation nicely. This is also one of the only mentions that IVF policy and stem cell research could have different standards of procedure.

Title: Dickenson, D. 2002. Commodification of human tissue: implications for feminist and development ethics. *Developing World Bioethics*. 2 (1): 55-63.

Key Words: Capitalism, Reproductive labor, Commodification, and Exploitation

Summary: Dickenson uses a Marxist framework to explore commodification of women's bodies and the growing concern of exploitation and undue inducement. This commentary is brought on by the lack of critique in the literature on potential exploitation of ovum donors in the Global South. Dickenson begins with a discussion of intellectual property and property of the body and also how technology utilizes women's reproductive goods for medicine. As the potential for stem cells increase so does the commercial value of women's bodies and thus far no legislation is in place to protect women. Instead most debates focus on altruism. Yet, Dickenson points out the effects of capitalism push altruism to the side and "we have not 'incomplete commodification' but complete commodification with a plausibly human face."

Relates to topics: Marxism, Oppression, Patriarchy, Reproductive labor

Specific Texts: Nahman, M.2008. Nodes of Desire: Romanian Egg Sellers, 'Dignity' and Feminist Alliances in Transnational Ova Exchanges. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. 15(2): 65-82.

Alexa Commentary: The language that particular Feminists need to protect other women is really problematic. I don't think the Marxist frame is well thought out. I think the 2008 Dickenson does a much better job and less paternalism.

Title: Dolgin E. 2012. Stem Cell Discovery Puts Women's Reproduction On Fertile Ground Nature Medicine 5' Video

<http://blogs.nature.com/spoonful/2012/02/video-stem-cell-discovery-puts-women%E2%80%99s-reproduction-on-fertile-grounds.html>

Key Words: biology, stem cells, ovarian stem cells

Summary: The dogma that women are born with a “bank account of eggs” at birth and menopause begins once the eggs are “used” up has prevailed in the dominant discourse. However, in 2004 this dogma was slowly challenged by research that showed stem cells in mice ovaries could give rise to new eggs. It was not well received from the scientific community or the community at large reminding Tilly that people are not mice. It was not until recently, in 2010, when Tilly acquired eggs from Japanese people undergoing sex reassignment surgery that scientific attitude began to change. With these eggs, Tilly showed stem cells are found in adult ovaries and once they are purified and placed into a live mouse they will become new eggs. This could mean that an unlimited amount of eggs are available for stem cell research. But the work is still considered contentious.

Relates to topics: motherhood mandate

Specific Texts: Schatten, G, et al. 1983. The energetic egg. *Sciences*. 23 (5):28 -35.

Alexa Commentary: Really astounding research and a great way to bring biology into the classroom without having to do much work. The video speaks for itself. This could change the whole industry! Nice way to introduce the science heuristic.

Title: Ellison, B., & Meliker, J. 2011. Assessing the risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome in egg donation: Implications for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 11(9):22-30.

Key Words: Biomedical research, ethics, health policy, research ethics, stem cell research

Summary: This article reviews the most cited argument against egg donation for stem cell research: ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS). The article argues the OHSS risk posed to oocyte donors for somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) alone is not enough to warrant policy prohibiting oocyte donation. Ellison and Meliker review the literature surrounding OHSS risk based on geographic location, timeliness, and appropriates from Medline, PubMed, and ScienceDirect. They suggest OHSS risks are largely due to underlying fertility problems in IVF patients and other biological processes related to pregnancy. The outline some of the procedure involving donation with poses the threat of OHSS, mainly ovulation-stimulating hormones and egg retrieval. Some research Ellison and Meliker use to support the claim that OHSS risk is minimal is Roest et al 1996. Their retrospective study shows polycystic ovarian syndrome is a major risk factor for OHSS. Furthermore, deaths after successful IVF pregnancy patients were unrelated to OHSS in their sample. Papanikolaou et al 2005 show, in an observational study, that severe OHSS is more common after pregnancies. Naveu et al. 1987 show the hormone stimulant GnRH increases OHSS risk by six fold. These findings indicate a conflation in the population of people donating eggs for research purposes and people donating for IVF cycles. Ellison and Meliker call for a shift away from conflating these populations and conclude with a list of reasons why OHSS risk is of little importance. 1. claiming SCNT donors donate for altruism. 2. OHSS risks are no more than risks associated with manual labor and clinical trials. 3. Society poses many risks to its participants and we should not inhibit research because of the OHSS risk.

Relates to Topics: male regulated labor, oppression, OHSS, Hands Off Our Ovaries

Specific Texts: Giudice L, et al. 2007. Assessing the Medical Risks of Human Oocyte Donation for Stem Cell Research: Workshop Report. National Academies Press.

Pollack, A. 2003. Complicating power in high-tech reproduction: Narratives of anonymous paid egg donors. *Journal of Medical Humanities*. 24(3): 241-263

Alexa Commentary: This article has more information on what is actually done with the egg after it is donated and information about the procedure of donation. However, I think the argument against OHSS is completely daft. The first reason they cite against OHSS is that donors are altruistically motivated, which is something so deeply explored by authors like Klitzman that I don't know how this article got published. The second claim, that donors have no more risks associated than other manual laborers and clinical trial participants ignores the fact that donors for SCNT alone are not receiving any health benefits from this process. It also doesn't allow for the possibility that egg donors are already part of a manual labor population and ignores how compensation for egg donation complicates understanding of risk. Finally the idea that society poses risks to many and all participants and that this is for the greater good should not be an excuse to justify donation. That is the same argument science has used to defend countless acts of injustice including Tuskegee and Henrietta Lacks' cells. I do not think this is an appropriate article for students to read unless it's going to be torn apart because it does not add anything relevant or new to the material.

Title: ESSCB. June 11th, 2009. "Statement of the Empire State Stem Cell Board on the Compensation of Oocyte Donors"

Key Words: Compensation

Summary: This is the official declaration of the Empire State Stem Cell Board (ESSCB), which uses the rationale that because it is ethical for women who provide oocytes for reproductive private purposes to be paid women donating for SCR should also be compensated. ESSCB will compensate women up to \$ 10,000 for their expense, time, burden, and discomfort for providing oocytes or embryos for research purposes. The Board acknowledges that compensation for oocyte provision may act as undue inducement. Therefore, compensation is unrelated to the quantity or quality of oocyte(s) collected and there are policies in place to insure the full disclosure of risks making compensation ethical.

Relates to topics: Male gaze how are men and women viewed differently, Objectification and commodification

Specific Texts: Klitzman, R., & Sauer, M. V. 2009. Payment of egg donors in stem cell research in the USA. *Reproductive BioMedicine Online*. 18(5): 603-608.

Alexa Commentary: This article is really important to include because it is a primary source of information. This statement uses IVF donations to justify ova donation for SCR intertwining the two populations of egg providers. This does mention undue inducement and how the number of eggs will not be influenced by the amount of money instead it is based on time effort etc. Is this really true? To what extent? How does the medical professional restrict themselves from bias?

Title: Fiore, R. N., & Hirsch, M. K. 2011. Oocytes for Research: Reevaluating Risks and Compensation. *The American Journal of Bioethics*. 11(9): 42-43.

Key Words: Risk, Compensation

Summary: Fiore et al. argue against the argument Ellison and Miliker make claiming the risk of OHSS is lower enough not to make mandates against it. Fiore plainly states several concerns for donors left out by Ellison and Miliker. Fiore begins by stating that what we know about risk is not from a diverse sample of women therefore we do not know what are elevated risk factors for minority women. Furthermore, OHSS is not the only health risk because we don't know much about future likelihood of hormone dependent cancers. Also assisted reproductive technology is an unregulated industry therefore there is no follow up data and the centers for disease control require any information on the donors involved. Finally, because once the eggs become anonymous the donors are not considered human research subjects therefore there is no budget to start a registry for data collection on risk. Fiore and Hirsch use these points to continue a conversation on compensation. Donors for ART can be grossly compensated and donors for research cannot, except in NY.

Relates to topics: patriarchy, motherhood mandate, compensation, capitalism

Specific Texts: Empire State Stem Cell Board. 2008; **Statute Establishing NYSTEM Ethics Committee in the ESSC Board Statute.** :265-c-265-d.

Stein, A. L. (2011). The conundrum of oocyte donation, human research, OHSS, and ethics. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*, 11(9), 35-37.

Alexa Commentary: I think this is a really great article. We used it in the last run of the case study and it went over well I think. It makes the case for a distinction between eggs for ART and SCR, which is important. This article also cites the endometrial cancer risk, which usually is not mentioned. Additionally, this article explains that once eggs and cells become anonymous the donors are not human research subjects, which leads to a whole host of ethical concerns and connects nicely with HeLa and other themes in the course.

Title: Fowler, J. June 13, 2008. "Pro-Life Dem Lawmaker Blasts Embryonic Stem Cell Research Plan," <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/164536/pro-life-dem-lawmaker-blasts-embryonic-stem-cell-research-plan/jack-fowler>

Key Words: Embryonic Stem Cell Research, and Choice

Summary: In response to a 600 million dollar draft plan this blog post on The Corner from the National Review Online pastes verbatim the letter from New York Senator Ruben Diaz to Judy Doesschate JD of (Empire State Stem Cell Board) ESSCB. Diaz urges the board not to spend taxpayers money on embryonic stem cell research (ESCR) by comparing ESCR to alchemy and Joseph Mengele's experiments in Nazi Germany. Diaz supports his argument with false claims about the source of stem cells. He ends his letter by stating that induced pluripotent stem cells, umbilical cells and adult stem cells are promising and Diaz demands ESSCB refrain from using tax dollars on cloning or destroying embryos and using aborted tissue.

Relates to topics: Fear politics, How do feminist fit into bipartite political system? "Oppression" Marylin Frye, where is our radical third party?

Specific Texts: Crowley, C. Abortion foes challenge pay for egg donors. Timesunion.com. <http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Abortion-foes-challenge-pay-for-egg-donors-552897.php>

Alexa Commentary: Again this was one of the articles that were vigorously attacked in gender studies course in the student response essays. Associating SCR with Nazi Germany is really intense and a lot of students used this in their essays. Basically, I hate reading this piece but its important to include in the case study I can see that now.

Title: Franklin, S. 2006. Embryonic economies: The double reproductive value of stem cells. *BioSocieties*. 1 (1):71-90.

Key Words: Labor, Economies, UK Policy

Summary: Franklin uses a double reproductive model, which juxtaposes in vitro fertilization (IVF) and human embryonic stem (hES) cell research to examine embryonic economies including sourcing, distribution, management and reciprocities. The "IVF-stem cell interface" Franklin explains is building on a larger body of work because stem cells are a special case of human tissue with dual reproductive identity. Franklin details at length UK Stem Cell initiative and their aims 1. produce, test and release well-characterized seed stocks of adult, foetal and embryonic stem cell lines within a stringent quality framework; 2. promote basic research in the UK and abroad through the provision of "Research Grade" cell banks; 3. provide stringently tested, safe "Clinical Grade" cell banks under EU cGMP conditions as starting material for therapeutic uses; 4. Work with the scientific and clinical communities, commercial organization

and regulatory agencies to assure the quality of human stem cell lines used in research and clinical therapy and disseminate best practice. Franklin uses these aims to frame her later argument on the IVF and stem cell research interface. The author begins with their experience exploring the special reproductive value of stem cells in a 2003 lab visit in which she discusses biological colonies. After discussing the lab visit Franklin returns to 'the interface,' (how will future stem cell research benefit IVF and the physical interface) and double reproductive value. Franklin concludes by stating that in an economy like stem cell research the embryo will never be completely separated from social contexts.

Relates to topics: Labor, Marx, and Policy

Specific Texts: Widdows, H. 2009. Border disputes across bodies: Exploitation in trafficking for prostitution and egg sale for stem cell research. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 2(1):5-24.

Alexa Commentary: As a student the most interesting portion of the article was the lab visit, which was not very relevant to the embryonic economies model. But it was as interesting parallel between the etymology of colony etc. It was more frustrating that she was making up all these phrases to describe stem cell politics that were not adding anything new. For example, "IVF-stem cell interface," "dual reproductive identity," "double reproduction" "one way and two way model." This article is dense and hard to digest; I would not recommend it for an Intro class.

Title: Giudice L, et al 2007. *Assessing the Medical Risks of Human Oocyte Donation for Stem Cell Research: Workshop Report*. National Academies Press .

Key Words: Medical risks

Summary: This is an executive summary of a workshop aimed to researching the medical risks for donating human oocytes. This report is the result of a contract put forward by the California Institute Reproductive Medicine to the National Academy of Sciences to identify what is currently known about the risk of oocyte donation for stem cell research (SCR), what needs to be known, and what can be done to minimize risk via a Committee on Assessing the Medical Risks of Human Oocyte Donation for stem cell research and workshop on Sept 28, 2006 in San Francisco. The risks are presented in three parts: risks of ovarian stimulation, risks of egg retrieval surgery, and the psychological risks of oocyte donation. The risks of ovarian stimulation are laid out quite plainly – fertility drugs could lead to greater risk for hormone-dependent cancers like breast cancer. The other main concern in this section is ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome, which the article states only .1- .2 percent of women experience. The risks of the actual egg retrieval surgery based on IVF data are also low. The psychological risks could be quite different from donating to in vitro fertilization (IVF) because of the motivation to donate. The three subrisk categories are issues associated with the screening process, problems surrounding the donation procedure, and the post-donation adjustment to the donation. The summary ends with 'directions for the future' stating that possibly the most pertinent health risks could be the long-term unknowns, which we need more research on.

Relates to topics: Patriarchy, Ana Maria Garcia (1982) *La operación*. Latin American Film Project

Specific Texts: Empire State Stem Cell Board. 2008; **Statute Establishing NYSTEM Ethics Committee in the ESSC Board Statute**. :265-c-265-d.

Alexa Commentary: In the gender studies course many students used this to explain the risks – it is a very clear and concise article, which makes it very easy to digest and incorporate into response papers. However, it does seem to minimize the risks and present them in a manner that makes them seem insignificant.

Title: Hyun, Insoo. 2006. Fair payment of undue inducement? *Nature*. 442: 629-630.

Key Words: Healthy research volunteers, informed consent, undue inducement

Summary: Insoo Hyun argues it is unethical to treat women donating their eggs to stem cell research differently from other healthy research volunteers. Where as women donating eggs are to be compensated for direct expenses; healthy research volunteers are compensated for time, effort, and inconvenience. Hyun argues this claim by outlining the 'painful procedure and some of the short-term risks involved with egg donation which easily compare with procedures like bone marrow donation therefore it is only ethical to compensate donors like healthy research volunteers. Hyun acknowledges that money may act as undue inducement for women to donate their eggs and thus compromises their informed consent. However, Hyun ends by stating compensation is a reasonable way to acknowledge women as healthy research volunteers.

Relates to: Autonomy, Choice, and Commodification

Specific Texts: Ballantyne A. and DeLacey, S. Fall 2008. Wanted- Egg donors for research: A research ethics approach to donor recruitment and compensation. *IJFAB International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 1(2):145-164.

Alexa Commentary: Another article that argues for money or for payment because oocyte donors should be treated as healthy volunteers. Stop labeling women as gifters because they are women and under capitalism people don't gift. Still operating within the 'for dignity' or 'for money'. Hard to break out of this in the literature surrounding oocytes.

Title: Ikemoto, LC. 2009. Eggs as capital: Human egg procurement in the fertility industry and the stem cell research enterprise. *Signs*. 34 (4):763-781

Key Words: Egg, capital

Summary: Ikemoto details the ways in which the two seemingly separate industries of assisted reproductive technology and stem cell research are inevitably bound. Each of these industries is connected through the utilization of eggs for separate purposes, but the market industry and the normalization of such practices link them together. The transformation from eggs into capital is deeply troubling and Ikemoto uses the historical cases of John Moore to illustrate this point.

Relates to topics: IVF/SCR markets, capitalism, commodification

Specific Texts: Hyun, Insoo. 2006. Fair payment of undue inducement? *Nature*. 442: 629-630.

Alexa Commentary: I really liked this article! I think this might be the one that refers back to history the most seamless while also delineating the difference and similarities between IVF and SCR very clearly. Definitely one of my top choices!

Title: Johnston, J. 2006. Paying egg donors: Exploring the arguments. *Hastings Center Report*. 36 (1):28-31.

Key Words: Voluntariness

Summary: Johnston begins her editorial with the Hwang scandal in Korea to illustrate the "need" for payment for oocyte donors. Johnston outlines the problems with the Hwang scandal that emerged in 2004 shortly after the publication of the fraudulent SCNT work: 1) some donors were employed by Hwang 2) some were paid \$1400 3) some were escorted by researchers during oocyte removal 4) lied about 1 and 2. Johnston then explains the distinction between research subjects "benefiting from the research" and "therapeutic misconception." A woman acting as a research subject is not receiving any direct therapeutic benefit and financial benefit is not part of a therapeutic benefit. Johnston acknowledges that payment for body parts is illegal and therefore women are paid for time and effort although Lori Andrews argues that women have the autonomy to treat their bodies as property. Johnston also

discusses how society frames eggs versus sperm. Johnston ends by returning to Hwang stating women in Korea are donating for national pride.

Relates to topics: Patriarchy framing men and women's reproductive goods, transnational feminism, ethics

Alexa Commentary: Didn't enjoy this article because it's hard for me to follow but it was included in the SCSJ case study 2012 which was important because one student represented Feminist Korean Women Activist and this article addresses the Hwang scandal that those women have responded to with a lawsuit.

Title: Kalfoglou, A. L., & Sauer, M. V. 2011. A precautionary approach to oocyte donation for stem cell nuclear transplantation. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*. 11(9): 31-33.

Key Words: Biomedical research, ethics, health policy, research ethics, stem cell research

Summary: While Kalfoglou et al. does agree that oocyte donation should not be prohibited altogether because of OHSS risks they respond to Ellison and Miliker in a tripartite critique. Kalfoglou et al. states the literature review presented in Ellison and Meliker is based on infertile women, not SCNT donors alone, they ignore other complications arising from within the oocyte donation population, and other serious complications associated with the procedure. For example, Kenney and McGowan 2008 show that women were not adequately informed of the physical risks associated with the procedure. Furthermore, They argue that Ellison and Meliker seriously misinterpreted the information in their literature review and fall victim to self-selection bias, trivialize the percentage of people at risk for OHSS, minimize the risk of mild and moderate OHSS, and ignore accidental pregnancies due to oocyte donation. They end their article by stating we should not be blaming donors, but instead should be improving the informed consent process and studying the long-term effects of donation. We should the proposed oocyte donation guidelines Carson et al., the NIH funding in 2009 should be used to study the long-term risks beginning at least with a donor registry.

Relates to Topics: Risk OHSS, long term cancer risk, compensation debate

Specific Texts: Ellison, B., & Meliker, J. 2011. Assessing the risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome in egg donation: Implications for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*. 11(9):22-30.

Alexa Commentary: I like this article because it does not trivialize OHSS but is still in support of egg donation. I think they do a good job of balancing this view and provide risk mitigation strategies at the end of the article. I think it is one of the clearest critiques of the research procedure of Ellison and Meliker but some other articles hit the social justice critique better.

Title: Klitzman, R, et al. 2009. Payment of egg donors in stem cell research in the USA. *Reprod Biomed Online*. 18 (5): 603-608.

Key Words: assisted reproductive technology, egg sharing, embryo ethics

Summary: This research paper uses data collected from 230 women donating for assisted reproductive services to investigate women's attitudes towards stem cell research. Klitzman gives extensive background on egg sharing, compensation history, ethical concerns and some models for compensation. The results are displayed in two tables, which show women will not provide oocytes without compensation and basing policy on altruism is not appropriate. Sample questions ask, "Knowing that the process for donating eggs for research and for reproduction is the same, would you be willing to donate your eggs for medical research?" The other part of the questionnaire asks women to state the minimum amount of money that would be acceptable for egg donation for medical research answers vary from free to upwards of \$10,000. The discussion urges for compensation for egg donors, but acknowledges that too will not be without its own ethical concerns. Klitzman ends by stating that institution review boards and ethics committees need to carefully monitor payment and recruitment practices.

Specific Texts: Nahman, M. 2008. Nodes of Desire. Romanian Egg Sellers, 'Dignity' and Feminist Alliances in Transnational Ova Exchanges. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. 15(2): 65-82.

Commentary: I think it is very important to use women donating their eggs already in IVF setting to guide policy, but from the two tables in the article the research is not very compelling.. It could complement the other readings in the Intro class nicely.

Title: Lahl, J. Eggsplotation 2009 *Center for Bioethics and Culture* Film <http://www.eggsplotation.com/>

Key Words: Exploitation, commodity, risk

Summary: Eggsplotation is a documentary by The Center For Bioethics and Culture that tells the story of three egg providers for reproductive services. The documentary also includes interviews from experts in the field as well as advertisements from the fertility industry and interviews from people on the street. Each provider's story details the severe medical consequences each experienced that are not recorded in any data collection or registry. Additionally, the providers explain some of the more superficial screening procedures they underwent such as an IQ test instead of screening for risk factors. Eggsplotation states these women are recklessly endangering their health all for a commodity.

Relates to topics: exploitation, paternalism

Specific Texts: Giudice L, et al 2007. Assessing the Medical Risks of Human Oocyte Donation for Stem Cell Research: Workshop Report. National Academies Press

Alexa Commentary: I did not enjoy this movie. However it is the only thing like it out there and therefore its important. I thought that the way the editors broke up the film with people of color against a dark background with a harsh white spotlight and also because their mouths were covered up was a real issue. It made it look like a white woman's issue instead of an issue for everyone. I think also the frame that this is not a form of labor for some people is also lacking in the film and discussion.

Title: Levine, A. D. 2010. Self-regulation, Compensation, and the Ethical Recruitment of Oocyte Donors. *Hastings Center Report*. 40(2): 25-36.

Key Words: Self-regulation, Commodification, Advertisements

Summary: This article presents a study conducted by Aaron Levine on the ethics of egg donor recruitment by collecting advertisements placed in college university newspapers. The aim of the research was to determine the effectiveness of the self-regulation in the fertility industry in terms of recruitment. As of now, there are guidelines in place by the (American Society for Reproductive Medicine) ASRM Ethics Committee, but the research shows there are problems with the self-regulation process. One of the findings showed that about half of the advertisements exceed the amount deemed appropriate for egg donation compensation. Levine collected the advertisements and then used summary statistics to illustrate different variables that may correlate with amount of money advertised (like the university that carried the ad). There appears to be a correlation with the average SAT scores of a school and advertisements placed by individual couples (as opposed to fertility clinics). The article ends with an urge for stronger guidelines to make certain 'donors are recruited and compensated in an ethical manner'.

Relates to topics: Classism, Capitalism, Privilege – Who has access? Who is placing the ads? Private/Public

Specific Texts: Empire State Stem Cell Board. 2008; **Statute Establishing NYSTEM Ethics Committee in the ESSC Board Statute.** :265-c-265-d.

Alexa Commentary: Love this article. I might want to include this one instead of Papadimos. Although they really work well together because they are both about the same populations: young, white, college-aged females. Of course this is important to include but Levine really gets at the heart of the issue and Papadimos may be difficult to read according to my instructor. My fear with Papadimos is that it's too smooth of an argument and hard to read critically. This article on the other hand is easier to have a dialogue with while still connecting to college students.

Title: Martin, E. 1991. The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society.* 16(3):485-501

Key Words: social construction, sexism, biology

Summary: This article reviews three major scientific discoveries surrounding fertilization and male bias. Martin draws on previous work from Schatten & Schatten's seminal work *The Energetic Egg* quite a lot. Martin argues through content analysis of medical and biology textbooks that because science is a male dominated field, men are the creators and perpetrators of patriarchal stereotypes about women and men and, consequently, the egg and sperm. =. Martin likens the application of engendered language as similar to the social Darwinism movement that claimed to be based on Darwinian evolutionary biology. Martin suggests neutral terms be applied to biological processes.

Relates to topics: Gender bias in language, metaphors, personification, patriarchy

Specific Texts: Schatten, G, et al. 1983. The energetic egg. *Sciences.* 23 (5):28-35

Beldecos, A, et al. 1988. The importance of feminist critique for contemporary cell biology. *Hypatia.* 3 (1):61 -76

Alexa Commentary: I do really enjoy this article. It's a tough question whether this article is more successful or not than Schatten and Schatten and gender group. One of the greatest strengths of this article is that it references Schatten and Schatten so much that you get a lot of the energetic egg. However, the in gender studies course as well as the intro stem cells course students perceived Martin as oversensitive and just one person's opinion. They didn't really believe that just because there is a language bias it relates to patriarchy. In order to combat this Feminist fatigue Lisa Rubin and Michael Pettinger have suggested the Beldecos article because it gives examples of gender bias throughout the history of biological processes instead of just fertilization in textbooks. I think this is one of the better articles because it connects to Almeling in a way the others do not.

Title: McLeod, C. .2007. "For Dignity or Money: Feminists on the Commodification of Women's Reproductive Labour" *The Oxford Handbook of Bioethics:* 258-281.

Key Words: labor, dignity, money

Summary: Society often places women in double binds or, as Marilyn Frye describes, situations where options are so limited any action results in penalty. The concept of for love or dignity places women in a double bind because either option results in consequence. As reproductive technologies become more and more popular women have the option to treat their reproductive labor as a commodity thus gaining financial independence and liberation. Like many other scholars McLeod calls for a feminist response to these technologies. McLeod argues commodification places women in a double bind by setting up a dichotomy between dignity and money. Feminist responses claiming women are autonomous individuals with the right to commodity their bodies are "for money" and those against this are "for dignity". McLeod also uses a comparison between providing oocytes and contract pregnancies throughout the paper. Commodification and alienability are both defined at length with a Marx framework: something becomes

commoditized once it becomes an item of trade which is neither benign or malignant. Most Feminists, according to McLeod are pro commodification and turn to regulation to solve the problems like a 5,000-dollar limit on compensation for oocytes. McLeod ends with a call for future feminist inquiry, which must acknowledge this double bind as well as look at other scholar's work on commodification feminist and otherwise.

Relates to topics: Marxism, commodification, capitalism, dignity, Kant, care ethics

Specific Texts: Nahman, Michael (2008). Nodes of Desire: Romanian Egg Sellers, 'Dignity' and Feminist Alliances in Transnational Ova Exchanges. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 15(2), 65-82.

Papadimos, TJ, et al. 2004. The student and the ovum: The lack of autonomy and informed consent in trading genes for tuition. *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*. 2 :56-62

Alexa Commentary: The article began with a compelling case study and continued with interesting theory. The beginning of the article covers a lot of topics like autonomy, choice, commodification, Marx and dignity – but it isn't overwhelming for the reader because McLeod very clearly outlines the progression of the paper. Writing a personal summary and overall comprehension was much easier because of the organization. Furthermore, none of the other articles discuss the double bind in such detail and most papers do not mention contract pregnancies. Also this article connected to two other papers, which I cited a lot in the other feminist resource section of my summaries, Marilyn Frye's *Oppression* and Carole Pateman's *Sexual Contract*. I really enjoyed reading this paper and think it would be an excellent choice to include. However, it claims that feminists fall into two categories dignity and money which most do not. That being said it could be an excellent teaching moment to disrupt this idea. It could also be used in conjunction with feminist porn wars in the 70s and 80s.

Title: Mertes, H., & Pennings, G. 2011. Ethical concerns eliminated: Safer stimulation protocols and egg banking. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*. 11(9): 33-35.

Key Words: Biomedical research, ethics, health policy, research ethics, stem cell research, protocol

Summary: This article is not a critique of Ellison and Meliker's research but an expansion on how OHSS risk can be reduced by new protocol. The article begins by restating the fact that OHSS risk for the population of women undergoing IVF cannot be transferred to oocyte donors for SCNT alone. Two points are presented in this article: 1. new stimulation protocols can reduce OHSS risk 2. 'spare' oocytes will become available enough so that there will be less of a need for ovulation stimulation for research alone. Developments to reduce risk are banning the hormone hCG and using the hormone GnRH has shown to minimize OHSS complications. Also oocyte-freezing efficiency is improving, which leads to freezing oocytes instead of embryos. Freezing oocytes is ethically different than freezing embryos and leaves participants with three options 1. destruction, 2. donation for science, 3. donation for assisted reproduction. Mertes et al. claim that because donation for science has less ethical dilemmas a large amount of oocytes are expected to be donated.

Relates to Topics: Sexism in science

Specific Texts: Ellison, B., & Meliker, J. 2011. Assessing the risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome in egg donation: Implications for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*. 11(9): 22-30.

Fowler, Jack. (2008). Pro-Life Dem Lawmaker Blasts Embryonic Stem Cell Research Plan

<http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/164536/pro-life-dem-lawmaker-blasts-embryonic-stem-cell-research-plan/jack-fowler>

Giudice L, et al 2007. Assessing the Medical Risks of Human Oocyte Donation for Stem Cell Research: Workshop Report. National Academies Press

Alexa Commentary: This article is more successful than Ellison and Meliker because instead of a retrospective literature review they use current methods and protocol to argue a lower risk of OHSS. This article also incorporates egg freezing and embryonic freezing something that is not explained in other articles. This article could be used as an optional text in relation to the Giudice piece.

Title: Nahman, M. 2008. Nodes of Desire. Romanian Egg Sellers, 'Dignity ' and Feminist Alliances in Transnational Ova Exchanges. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. 15(2): 65-82.

Key Words: Agency, Choice, Feminist Alliances, Ova Donation, Transnational Feminism, Dignity, and Desire

Summary: This article uses qualitative research conducted at a Romanian ova extraction clinic to frame a potential transnational feminist response to reproductive technology by interviewing the donors themselves. Nahman begins with citations to Jyotsna Gupta's 2006 article which frames a feminist response in terms of Kantian ideas of human dignity. Nahman addresses the Romanian donors not as passive objects but actively engaged sellers. There are three interviews included in the article and each interview addresses themes of dignity, agency, class, privilege, labor and desire. Desire for neoliberal culture, Nahman states is problematic for Western Feminists. As a response to these technologies a group called "Hands Off Our Ovaries" calls for a "moratorium" on egg extraction until true informed consent can be achieved. Nahman points to the harsh and problematic language used in the manifesto of the group stating it is reminiscent of an imperialistic time where white western feminist were trying to save others from their oppression. Nonetheless Nahman states because of multiple desires (capitalistic, and reproductive etc.) women are selling their eggs and there needs to be a transnational feminist response that does not take away women's autonomy and choice.

Relates to: Kantian Philosophy, Transnational Feminism, Right Wing Feminism, and Activism

Specific Texts: Papadimos, TJ, et al. 2004. The student and the ovum: The lack of autonomy and informed consent in trading genes for tuition. *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*. 2 :56-62

Alexa Commentary: I've really enjoyed using this piece over and over again because I think it really tries to give people with ovaries selling their eggs a voice and no other paper we've read does that including Almeling. Unfortunately there are certain methodological problems and what seems like a bias in the article that is Othering and problematic but I hope to address that through teaching notes.

Title: Papadimos, TJ, et al. 2004. The student and the ovum: The lack of autonomy and informed consent in trading genes for tuition. *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*. 2:56-62

Key Words: Autonomy, Informed Consent, Understanding, Exploitation, Standards of Disclosure (Professional, Personal, and Subjective).

Summary: Authors in the department of Anesthesiology at the University of Toledo claim female college students choosing ova donation cannot act autonomously (autos= self and nomos = law or rule), because their financial predicaments compromises informed consent. The authors present background on rising tuition costs and the commercialization of healthcare then carefully dissect 'autonomy' by referencing Emmanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill's ideas of dignity and freedom. The authors claim three categories that can compromise autonomy, 1) Coercion- a threat delivered to control a person 2) Persuasion- which causes someone to believe in something by appealing to "reason"; when one is "in need" reason may not prevail and 3) Manipulation- through which a manipulator intercedes in such a way to gain something the manipulator wants through means that can be informational in the manner of withholding info, or emotional. The authors then breakdown the concept of informed consent into voluntariness, competence and capacity, understanding, disclosure (professional, personal and subjective), and consent arguing that a female college student is influenced and therefore not voluntary, competent but not capacitated, limited in understanding, and not fully disclosed (because of the professional standards of disclosure). Disclosure heavily relies on how the physician frames the risks of a procedure in order for the patient to make an autonomous decision and the framing is shaped by what other physicians deem to be the norm. Finally, the authors state that college females are being exploited because of lack of informed consent and future vigilance is needed to protect "women of the third world and Eastern Europe".

Relates to topics: Global/Transregional Women's Studies, Autonomy, and Feminist Ethics, concept of care ethics

Specific Texts: Ballantyne A. and DeLacey, S. Fall 2008. Wanted- Egg donors for research: A research ethics approach to donor recruitment and compensation. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 1 (2):145-164.

Alcoff, L. 1992. The Problem of Speaking for Others *Cultural Critique*. 20: 5-32.

Keller, J. 1997. Autonomy, Relationality, and Feminist Ethics. *Hypatia*.12 (2): 152-164.

Alexa Commentary: I really like this article because I disagree with it. It does a good job of getting a strong reaction out of me. In the gender studies course we only read the abstract. The most difficult part of the article to read is the professional disclosure section, which I do not think is as important as the concept of compromised choice and autonomy. I like this article in the set of 7 because it sits really well in the 'for dignity' frame utilized in McLeod. It gives a philosophical definition of dignity and correlates dignity and degrading. Furthermore it connects to the Levine article. But now I'm thinking that you could choose either the Levine article or Papadimos to represent the young college female and the un-regulation in the market.

Title: Pearson. 2006 Health effects of egg donation may take decades to emerge. *Nature*. 442(7103): 607-608

Key Words: Long-term health effects, cancer

Summary: This article briefly outlines the importance for studying the long-term physical and emotional effects of egg donation on female donors. For the past 25 years women have been asked to donate their eggs for the sake of motherhood. Now that the framework is shifting from motherhood to stem cell research 'the question is receiving renewed scrutiny'. Although a large part of the conversation involves compensation for egg donation, infertility specialist, Kamal Ahuja calls for more research on the long-term health effects from donating. Short-term risks involve a range of complications from 'moodiness' to 'ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome'. Due in part to poor standards for reporting complications during donating the research is limited. The little research exists mainly focuses on cancers in women below the age of 50. The article concludes by connecting the unknown risks to the informed consent process of donating.

Relates to topics: Reproduction health laws, Informed Consent, Framing of 'Moothood,' Autonomy and Choice

Specific Texts: Ana Maria Garcia (1982) *La operación*. Latin American Film Project

Title: Reynolds, J. 2009. NY Stem Cell Research Nears Dangerous Line. *Newsday.com Sect. Genetics and Society News Feed*. <http://www.geneticsandsociety.org/article.php?id=4483>

Key Words: undue inducement, medical risk, research ethics

Summary: New York State has a large stem cell research fund and once President Obama lifts the ban limiting SCR to left over embryos from IVF NY may face a new ethical dilemma. The number one challenge for in stem cell research is the starting material: human eggs. Egg provision poses significant risks to young donors, but these risks are largely unknown. Furthermore, because the donor profile of an infertile women-undergoing IVF is different from a young healthy egg donor the science community knows even less about the risks. Backlash from these unknown risks are regulations and advisory bodies prohibiting payment for eggs and limited compensation to time and expenses. New York State will be the first state to allocate federal funding for the financial inducement for research-oriented egg extraction. Reynolds ends by stating The New York stem cell program should not cross this ethical line.

Relates to topics: Undue inducement

Specific Texts: Dickenson, D. (2002). Commodification of human tissue: Implications for feminist and development ethics. *Developing World Bioethics*, 2(1), 55-63.

Pearson, H. 2006. Health effects of egg donation may take decades to emerge. *Nature*. 442 (7103):607-608.

Alexa Commentary: A lot of fire in this one pager. It appears kind of neutral like this is just news brief about something going on. But it is really a call for prohibiting payment for 'research-oriented' egg extraction. I like that Reynolds makes the distinction between IVF and egg donor pool.

Title: Rowland T. 2009 Stem Cells Discovered in Menstrual Blood: Endometrial Regenerative Stem Cells *All Things Stem Cell*. <http://www.allthingsstemcell.com/2009/03/endometrial-regenerative-stem-cells/>

Key Words: Menstrual blood, stem cells

Summary: Rowland reports two laboratories independently discovering stem cells in menstrual blood to overcome two main challenges in stem cell research: obtaining large amounts of cells and obtaining these cells noninvasively. During a menstrual cycle, if pregnancy does not occur, the endometrium is expelled and provides a source of endometrial regenerative cells (ERC). Rowland makes a distinction between the ERCs in the menstrual blood and stem cells discovered in the intact endometrium. Stem cells in the endometrium are classified as mesenchymal stem cells (MSC) and have the capability to differentiate into a variety of cells. ERCs were reported not to have all of the characteristics of MSC however they did have the ability to differentiate into three germ layers: mesoderm, ectoderm, and endoderm. Menstrual blood research is still new, therefore, there are discrepancies in the data, which are mostly likely caused by variability in the quality of ERC and the methodology by which they're obtained. Industries such as Cryo-Cell International and Medistem Laboratories are researching the use of ERCs as more knowledge is gained.

Relates to topics: Reproductive goods, motherhood,

Specific Texts: Martin, E.1991. The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*.16(3):485-501.

Alexa Commentary: This article is still a little hard to read because of the biology jargon. But it is one of the only things we have on menstrual blood and stem cells. But what really makes this article difficult to read are the conflicting results that are not really teased out between potency and different research groups. Should be included in the primer that stem cells are present in menstrual blood and maybe not assign this article.

Title: Schatten, G, et al. 1983. The energetic egg. *Sciences*. 23 (5):28-35

Key Words: egg, biology

Summary: The energetic egg is a biological approach to reexamine the role of egg and sperm in fertilization. The authors begin by describing the historic 1895 photomicrographs of Edmund Beecher Wilson and the philosophical musing of Aristotle. Oscar Hertwig in 1876 proposed that "Fertilization is based on the fusion of sexually differentiated nuclei." Moving on to 20th century biology, the authors resurrect the work of Daniel Mazia and David Epel and Richard Steinhardt revealing rapid changes in the egg required for fertilization. Schatten and Schatten furthermore rewrite the gendered story of fertilization and sleeping beauty. Throughout the piece Schatten and Schatten use examples of chemistry and the structure of the cell to illustrate a mutual egg and sperm relationship.

Relates to topics: Patriarchy, motherhood mandate

Specific Texts: Beldecos, A, et al. 1988. The importance of feminist critique for contemporary cell biology. *Hypatia*. 3 (1):61 -76.

Martin, E.1991. The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*.16(3):485-501.

Alexa Commentary: I think its one of the most successful in making the case for gendered biology because it has enough examples to contextualize the material without it dragging on. The sleeping beauty story is the perfect example of fertilization. The art in this article is also great for visual learners because there are several artistic representations of egg and sperm. This article does the biology and the feminism.

Title: Stein, A. L. 2011. The conundrum of oocyte donation, human research, OHSS, and ethics. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*. 11(9): 35-37.

Key Words: Biomedical research, ethics, health policy, research ethics, stem cell research

Summary: Stein begins the article with a statement from the *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* that sets the tone for complications in egg donation practices including donor recruitment, informed consent, risks associated with procedure protocol and long-term care. Stein divides the article into several sections beginning with a call for universal terms and meanings. Stein then defines several terms including cloning, nuclear transfer, reproductive cloning, stem cells, and therapeutic cloning. The section title oocyte donor recruitment cites the Levine 2010 study that correlates SAT scores and college newspaper advertisement for oocyte donation. Prevention of OHSS during IVF is a small paragraph that includes the possibility of an ethical conflict relating to OHSS for the clinicians gathering eggs. Stein's next section titled long-term follow up responds to Ellison and Meliker et al. because according to Stein they disregard long-term risks and complications. Stein points to the importance of lowering the risk of ovarian hyper stimulation syndrome (OHSS) by using safer stimulation protocol. Stein's final section before the conclusion begins to explain some of the communication complications that arise from the interplay between recruitment agencies, labs, physicians, and researchers. Stein points out how limited institutional review boards and ethics committees are. Other complications Stein mentions are informed consent and the use of donated sperm. Stein ends with a call for non-exploitative recruitment, minimizing risk of OHSS, informed consent and long-term follow-up care.

Relates to Topics: commodification of women's bodies

Specific Texts: Ellison, B., & Meliker, J.2011. Assessing the risk of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome in egg donation: Implications for human embryonic stem cell research. *The American Journal of Bioethics: AJOB*. 11(9): 22-30.

Levine, A. 2010. Self-Regulation, Compensation, and the Ethical Recruitment of Oocyte Donors. *Hastings Center Report*, 40(2): 25-36.

Papadimos, T. et al. 2004. The student and the ovum: The lack of autonomy and informed consent in trading genes for tuition. *Reprod Biol Endocrinol*. 2 :56-62

Alexa Commentary: I really enjoyed this article. I may be biased because I recently read the *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* but that quote at the beginning of the article really hit home with me. And as a student it is really nice to see an article in a bioethics journal call for standard terminology to make academia more accessible. The sections are very easy to read and its a nice short article for students with a lot of information. I like that this article incorporates the Levine 2010 study and the use of sperm in stem cell research.

Title: Thompson,C. 2007. Why we should, in fact, pay for egg donation. *Regenerative Medicine*. 2(2): 203-209.

Key Words: Compensation, Risk Mitigation, Trafficking

Summary: Thompson argues that women should be compensated for donating their eggs. There are three main frames surrounding egg donation: the gift; the liberal commodification and sale; and trafficking. The key, Thompson

believes, lies in the intersection of these frames. Thompson makes a divide between “good” and “bad” reasons to advocate against compensating donors. Good reasons include risk mitigation by undue inducement and variations in policy, compromised informed consent and egg trafficking. Poor reasons are based on opposing hESC research in general, personal agenda, and sacred body politics. Thompson argues for paying donors by revisiting the so-called good reasons and urging that stem cell research needs the healthiest participants. The article also includes ten strategies for risk mitigation, which include reducing the comorbidity of donor pool and collecting long-term data on future donor fertility. The article ends by reiterating the fact that, in order to recruit the healthiest possible participants, we need compensation but that that is only one building block in a larger policy initiative that supports the health of oocyte providers.

Relates to topics: distributive justice

Specific Texts: Klitzman, R., & Sauer, M. V. 2009. Payment of egg donors in stem cell research in the USA. *Reproductive BioMedicine Online*.18(5): 603-608.

Alexa Commentary: I think this is a more successful article than Klitzman because it has better organization and provides possible solutions while Klitzman does not. It does the heavy lifting for the reader. It’s a bit judgmental on the bad reasons for advocating against stem cell research, but I was glad that there was some acknowledgement of an opposing argument. What Klitzman has that Thompson doesn’t is surveys from donors, which is immensely useful.

Title: Vidali A. IVF Procedure. A Simple Explanation of an In Vitro Fertilization Cycle. Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTy7ugrSFz4>

Key Words: Fertility, biology

Summary: Andrea Vidali, a reproductive endocrinologist at American Fertility Services NYC explains the process of IVF to an animation of the process. IVF utilizes a hormone loop in the body between the hypothalamus, the pituitary gland, and the ovaries. IVF interrupts this process and then starts it over again to predictably mature oocytes. This is done through daily hormone injections until it is time for a physician to collect the eggs. A physician collects the matured oocytes by piercing the vaginal and ovarian wall and aspirating the eggs. Once the eggs are removed they are incubated with sperm at a ration of 75 000 sperm to one egg. Once fertilization occurs, an embryo or sometimes more than one embryo is implanted to the person wishing to become pregnant. Since the first successful IVF birth in 1978 there are about 200 000 IVF babies are born each year.

Relates to topics: motherhood mandate

Specific Texts: Giudice L, et al 2007. Assessing the Medical Risks of Human Oocyte Donation for Stem Cell Research: Workshop Report. National Academies Press.

Alexa Commentary: great video. I show it a lot when I’m explaining IVF to people

Title: Waldby, C. and Cooper, M. 2011. From Reproductive work to regenerative labor: The female body and the stem cell industries. *Feminist Theory*. 11(1): 3-22.

Key Words: bioeconomy, reproductive labor, post-fordist

Summary: This article argues for the acknowledgment of women’s reproductive labor in stem cell research largely by redefining and expanding the definition of labor to include transformations, reproduction and research. In a section titled Post-Fordism Waldby places reproductive labor in our contemporary society then uses the gift economy and transactional economies to place women in a double bind. The Post-Fordism section also deals with the fact that oocytes can be sold in an unregulated market, which calls for a rethinking of a new “economy.” Waldby states the new

economy oriented to the potential, as does new biology research for example, the potential of stem cell research. The article ends with an examination of the institution context surrounding stem cell research and Marx's theory of alienation.

Relates to topics: Marx, Double bind

Specific Texts: Widdows, H. 2009. Border disputes across bodies: Exploitation in trafficking for prostitution and egg sale for stem cell research. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 2(1):5-24.

Pateman, C. 1988. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford, Calif. Stanford University Press

Franklin, S. 2006. Embryonic economies: The double reproductive value of stem cells. *BioSocieties*. 1 (1):71-90.

Alexa Commentary: This was a difficult article for me to read. I don't know very much about policy or the labor market. Prior knowledge would have been a big help especially in the post-Fordism section and all of the Marx references. Possibly a good alternative is the Waldby white paper.

Title: Waldby, C. Fall 2010/Spring 2011. Citizenship, Labor and the Biopolitics of the Bioeconomy: Recruiting Female Tissue Donors for Stem-Cell Research. The Scholar and Feminist Online. *Critical Conceptions: Technology, Justice and the Global Reproductive Market*. Barnard College. 9(2):1-9. <http://sfoonline.barnard.edu/reprotech/index.htm>

Key Words: biology, policy, reproductive justice, reproductive technology, science

Summary: Waldby details the evolution of tissue economies in the United States and abroad and applies this frame to new tissue economies including clinical trial outsourcing, surrogacy outsourcing, fetal tissue exchanges, cord blood banking and sale, and oocyte provision. Waldby explains that oocytes are vital for IVF as well as SCR. Waldby, also refers back to feminist debates in the 1970s and 80s surrounding reproduction to reconsider the current debates regarding oocyte provision. Furthermore, Waldby disaggregates the biological process of fertilization and uses a labor chain metaphor to understand both fertilization and commodification. The lecture ends with restating the idea that as new technologies develop we must redevelop our conceptions of biology and biological critique.

Relates to topics: labor chain, commodities, patriarchy,

Alexa Commentary: I liked this paper. I think maybe because it was an oral lecture the organization and terms were much clearer and I did not struggle to read it as I have previously. I think that it reflects back on important history even though it does take some time to get to the heart of the argument. There was no anti-sex work language like **trafficking** as in the White Paper. Furthermore, the Fordist economy description is easily located within a feminist discourse unlike the other paper I didn't like. On the section where she talks about biology she talks about disaggregating the biological processes in order to achieve pregnancy. I like this idea of using a labor chain to talk about the way biology is being treated. She also uses the term "superovulation," which I think has interesting connotations but it apt nonetheless. All in all, I like this better than either of the other papers considered by Waldby. And it's only 7 pages converted into a word doc so not too heavy.

Title: Widdows, H. 2009. Border disputes across bodies: Exploitation in trafficking for prostitution and egg sale for stem cell research. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*. 2(1):5-24.

Key Words: Exploitation, trafficking, classic feminism

Summary: Widdows argues for a transnational feminist response to new reproductive technology closer related to a classic feminist viewpoint, which is more concerned with opposing the subordination of women. Widdows attributes the tension in current feminist responses to the difficulty in defining 'exploitation' maintaining her idea that

exploitation can occur regardless of consent. She uses this model of exploitation with consent to compare trafficking for prostitution to egg donation for stem cell research. The first case study is on human trafficking and women where she outlines the neoliberal feminist view of economic options that should be regulated to avoid exploitation, and the old style feminist abolitionist; in this section she states many international quasi legal treaties etc. In the second case study on egg donation Widdows uses the Hwang Cloning scandal and the work of the South Korean Womenlink organization and 10 others that united as the Solidarity for Biotechnology Watch (SBW) in July 2005 to raise the ethical issues of Hwang's research, which eventually led to American scientist Schatten resigning from the team. Widdows then returns to a section titled Exploitation: Dignity, degradation, or disparity to explore some Marx models of goods, which relate to human tissue and bodies. Widdows ends by calling to an opposition of Carole Pateman's term *gender subordination* while evoking Pateman's work *The Sexual Contract* to connect egg donation to trafficking.

Relates to topics: Reproductive Brothel evoked by Andrea Dworkin, reproductive labor, domestic labor

Specific Texts: Pateman, Carole. 1988. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford, Calif. Stanford University Press

Franklin, S. 2006. Embryonic economies: The double reproductive value of stem cells. *BioSocieties*. 1 (1):71-90.

Alexa Commentary: The first time I read this article I really liked it. I thought it was very interesting to compare the relationship between trafficking and egg donation. Perhaps because it was new I was engaged. However reading it a second and third time I'm disenfranchised by the section on trafficking – it doesn't seem relevant at all and does not connect it well to egg donation. I don't think trafficking and egg selling are necessarily connected and certainly not parallel or feminist. The entire article acts like a contradiction stating we can't agree on a definition of exploitation so we have all this tension, yet Widdows solution for a return to the classic feminist stance is based on the exploitation of women.

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