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REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND THE LAW

Second Edition

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Dedication

For Eric and our beloved sons,

Evan, Jared, Adam and Ryan
Preface to the Second Edition

Tracking a field that is in constant motion poses unique challenges and opportunities. In the six years since the first edition of this book appeared, the field of assisted reproductive technologies (ART) has, at the same time, advanced, matured, stabilized and stalled. Each of these trajectories is explored alongside the particular area to which they attach. This new edition invites readers to plumb the origins of the world of assisted conception and then trace its development to the present day. Now that the world has welcomed more than 5 million children born via ART, and nearly 3 out of every 100 babies born in the United States are the product of assisted conception, the impact and import of the field cannot be overstated.

While the book contains an array of new cases, statutes, policies and commentaries, the fundamentals remain largely unchanged. ART continues to develop as an interdisciplinary field in which physicians and scientists work to create and improve techniques for family formation, and more recently medical therapy, while lawyers and lawmakers strive to understand and organize society’s response to each new development. As more ART laws pepper the legal landscape, and demand for the technologies grow, so too will the need for informed practitioners who can represent the interests and needs of each stakeholder in the complicated equation. This book is designed to pique interest in ART as an academic discipline, as well as a robust and satisfying practice option.

This new edition is the work product of many generous students, colleagues, assistants and readers who have contributed their insights and efforts to help produce a book that is worthy of today’s ART enthusiast. First, I want to thank the countless students who have pondered the book’s material and reached out to share their thoughts and comments, many of which are incorporated throughout the pages that follow. Next, enormous credit and gratitude go to my tireless research assistants who have exhibited nothing but good cheer in responding to myriad requests over several years. My sincere thanks to Gerrick Warrington, Megan Emmer, Michael Ruttle and Nelly Ispiryan, all RAs extraordinaire. Finally, our institution is enormously benefitted by the services of an outstanding staff, including two members who worked with me throughout the writing process. Special thanks to Jennifer Maniscalco for her consistently superb administrative assistance and Rosalie Robles for her keen editing eye. Above all, any modicum of success this book or its author enjoys is made possible by the loving support of my husband Eric and our four sons. You are the light in my life.

Judith Daar

May 2012
The world of assisted reproductive technologies is a relative newcomer to the law school curriculum, making its perceptible entrance only within the past two decades or so. Yet the discipline mixing law and assisted conception seems to have established firm roots, sustained by a nearly daily dose of activity somewhere around the globe. The study of reproductive technologies has branched out from its founding in the late 1970s with the introduction of in vitro fertilization, to a field that includes such emerging topics as posthumous reproduction, embryonic stem cell research and human cloning. These topics often take center stage in our political and social world, making them ideal for dissection in the law school classroom.

This casebook is designed to introduce our students to the essentials in science, medicine, law and ethics that underpin and shape each of the topics that combine to form the law of reproductive technologies. As each new technology is introduced, an effort is made to fully inform the reader about the clinical application of the technique — that is, how the procedure is used to treat patients facing infertility or produce advances in medical research. Once comfortable with the science, students can then contemplate the legal parameters that do or should accompany the technology. Since so much of the law in this area is either nascent or wholly unformed, students are free, and indeed encouraged, to design legal systems that meet the needs of patients, parents, children and society at large — participants all in the world of assisted reproduction.

A cautionary note about the intensity of feelings that often attaches to discussions about the essential core of this book. At the heart of reproductive technologies beats the debate over the moral status of the early human embryo, and no book could do justice to the topic without fully exposing the depth and complexity of that debate. Early on, and continuing throughout the book, students are asked to contemplate, and even reveal, their views on the status of early human life so as to shape the various lenses through which the class will see the panoply of issues that implicate embryonic development. In my experience, this classroom discussion has been among the richest, often displaying a wide range of views yet always breeding respect for difference and the rights of expression that follow.

Writing this book has been nothing short of glorious. The mysterious world of a law professor is filled with many joys, from watching students blossom in the classroom to advancing one’s own fund of knowledge through dialogue with gifted colleagues. For my already ideal academic world, the experience of preparing this casebook added an exquisite dimension that served to buoy my enthusiasm for this subject and for the art of writing in general. Though writing is a solitary sport, its very existence rests in the good graces of the many who patiently support the writer in her pursuit of the perfect turn of phrase. For me, those supporters were many and my gratitude is deep.

I want to first thank my dear friend Stacy Herman who assured me that she did indeed want to read the entire manuscript as each page slowly emerged from the printer. In her precious spare time, she diligently read every word, editing and making suggestions that undoubtedly added to the overall quality of the work. In life, such friends are rare and to be zealously cherished. Equal thanks are due Rosalie Robles, my law school assistant, who aided throughout the writing process, showing particular strength in helping secure
permission to include works from the many folks whose writing I have relied upon to present a comprehensive view of the field.

Finally, and most importantly, I am profoundly grateful to my husband Eric, whose unconditional love and abiding support has been the pillar of my existence for nearly a quarter century. Together we have been blessed with the privilege of reproduction four times over, and with the birth of each son I gained a further appreciation for the quest of parenthood that, when elusive, can shake one to the core. I hope this book helps and inspires our students to probe deeply into that quest, whether for academic or personal satisfaction.

Judith Daar

May 2005
# Table of Contents

**Preface**

**Acknowledgments**

**Chapter 1**

**HUMAN REPRODUCTION: NATURAL AND ASSISTED METHODS OF CONCEPTION**

SECTION I: THE WONDERS OF HUMAN REPRODUCTION

A. Natural Conception
   - Lawrence J. Kaplan & Carolyn M. Kaplan, *Natural Reproduction and Reproduction-Aiding Technologies*
   - Notes and Questions

B. Infertility: When Natural Conception Does Not Occur
   1. Defining the Causes of Infertility
   2. Defining the Incidence of Infertility
      - Notes and Questions

SECTION II: JUDICIAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE MODERN ROLE OF REPRODUCTION

A. An Introductory Case
   - *Bragdon v. Abbott*
   - Notes and Questions

SECTION III: ASSISTED CONCEPTION

A. A Brief History of ART
   1. The Earliest Years
   2. Human Artificial Insemination
      - *Gursky v. Gursky*
      - Notes and Questions

B. Conception in the Laboratory — In Vitro Fertilization
   1. Investigating the Possibility of Conception Outside the Body
   2. Advances in IVF and the Future of ART
   3. A Glossary of ART Terms

C. Successes and Failures in ART Medicine
   1. Is ART Effective?
      - Notes and Questions
   2. Is ART Safe for Children and Adults?
      a. Safety to Children
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

George Kovalevsky, Paolo Rinaudo, and Christos Coutifaris, *Do Assisted Reproductive Technologies Cause Adverse Fetal Outcomes?* ........................................... 48
Notes and Questions ................................................. 49
b. Safety to Adults .................................................. 53
Edward G. Hughes and Mita Giacomini, *Funding In Vitro Fertilization Treatment for Persistent Subfertility: The Pain and the Politics* ........................................... 53
Notes and Questions ................................................. 54

### SECTION IV: WHAT IS THE NATURE AND STATUS OF THE HUMAN EMBRYO? ............................................. 56
A. The Biological Status of the Human Embryo ................. 56
   Howard W. Jones, Jr. and Lucinda Veeck, *What Is An Embryo?* .... 56
   Notes and Questions ................................................. 59
B. The Legal Status of the Human Embryo ......................... 60
   1. An Introductory Case ............................................ 60
      *Davis v. Davis* .................................................. 60
      Notes and Questions ................................................. 69
   2. Legal Responses to the Status of the Human Embryo .......... 70
      Timothy Stoltzfus Jost, *Rights of Embryo and Foetus in Private Law* .................................................. 70
      Notes and Questions ................................................. 73
C. The Moral Status of the Human Embryo ......................... 74
   Notes and Questions ................................................. 76

### Chapter 2  PROCREATIONAL LIBERTY: CONSTITUTIONAL JURISPRUDENCE AND THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCE ............................................. 81

### SECTION I: TRADITIONAL REPRODUCTION AND THE CONSTITUTION ............................................. 81
A. Establishing Reproduction as a Fundamental Right ........... 81
   1. The Early Cases .................................................. 81
      *Meyer v. Nebraska* .............................................. 81
      Notes and Questions ................................................. 85
      *Skinner v. Oklahoma* ............................................ 87
      Notes and Questions ................................................. 90
   2. State Support for Mandatory Sterilization ................... 92
      *Buck v. Bell* ..................................................... 92
      Notes and Questions ................................................. 93
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Paul A. Lombardo, *Facing Carrie Buck* .................................................. 95

B. The Right to Avoid Procreation ........................................................... 100

1. Emerging Advances in Human Contraception ........................................ 100
   *Griswold v. Connecticut* ................................................................. 100
   Notes and Questions ................................................................. 103
   *Eisenstadt v. Baird* ................................................................. 106
   Notes and Questions ................................................................. 108

2. Abortion .................................................................................................. 111
   a. The Seminal Case ................................................................. 112
      *Roe v. Wade* ................................................................. 112
      Notes and Questions ................................................................. 119
   b. The *Roe* Progeny ................................................................. 120
      *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* ................................ 120
      *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey* ... 123
      Notes and Questions ................................................................. 128
   c. The Latest Word on Abortion, For Now ........................................ 130

SECTION II: ASSISTED REPRODUCTION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT .... 130

A. Arguments for Recognizing ART as a Fundamental Right .................. 130

B. Arguments Against Recognizing ART as a Fundamental Right ........ 138
   Radhika Rao, *Constitutional Misconceptions* ................................... 138
   Ann MacLean Massie, *Regulating Choice: A Constitutional Law Response to Professor John A. Robertson’s Children of Choice* .... 143
   Notes and Questions ................................................................. 148

C. Judicial Perspectives on ART as a Fundamental Right ...................... 150
   1. Equating ART and Natural Conception ........................................ 151
      *Lifchez v. Hartigan* ................................................................. 151
      *Kass v. Kass* ................................................................. 154
      Notes and Questions ................................................................. 157
   2. Distinguishing ART from Natural Conception ................................ 158
      *Davis v. Davis* ................................................................. 158
      Notes and Questions ................................................................. 163
      *Gerber v. Hickman* ................................................................. 165
      Notes and Questions ................................................................. 171

Chapter 3 THE BUSINESS OF ART: SELLING, DONATING AND INSURING ASSISTED REPRODUCTION ........................... 173

SECTION I: UNDERSTANDING THE MARKET FOR REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES ........................................ 173

A. Fertility Clinics as Providers of ART Services .................................... 173
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. A Patient’s Perspective .................................................. 173  
   Notes and Questions ................................................... 174
2. The Physician’s Perspective ............................................. 179  
   Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine,  
   *Shared-Risk or Refund Programs in Assisted Reproduction*  ........ 179
B. Profiles of ART Clients .................................................. 182  

**SECTION II: SPERM AND EGG “DONORS”**  ........................................ 188
A. Sperm Donations: Assessing Risks and Benefits ..................... 188  
   1. Donor Disclosure: A Child’s Perspective .......................... 191  
      Notes and Problems .................................................. 194
   2. The Pitfalls of Sperm Donation ..................................... 196  
      *Johnson v. Superior Court* ........................................ 196  
      Notes and Questions ................................................ 204
B. Egg Donations: Assessing Risks and Benefits ...................... 205  
   1. The Business of Egg Donation ..................................... 207  
      Martha Frase-Blunt, *Ova-Compensating?; Women Who Donate Eggs  
      To Infertile Couples Earn a Reward — But Pay a Price* ........ 207  
      Notes and Questions ................................................ 213
   2. The Ethics of Egg Donation ......................................... 215  
      Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine,  
      *Financial Compensation of Oocyte Donors* ..................... 215  
      Notes and Questions ................................................ 219
   3. Informed Consent and Egg Donation ................................ 223  
      a. Informing Egg Donors of Risks and Benefits .................. 223  
         Judith Daar, *Regulating the Fiction of Informed Consent in ART  
         Medicine* ....................................................... 225  
         Notes and Questions ............................................. 227
      b. Informing Donors About Gamete Placement .................... 228  
         *Litowitz v. Litowitz* .......................................... 229  
         Notes and Questions ............................................. 232

**SECTION III: THE BENEFITS AND BURDENS OF AN ART MARKET** ............ 233
A. Should We Ban a Market for the Sale of Gametes? .................. 233  
   1. Arguments for Market Inalienability .............................. 233  
      Mary Lyndon Shanley, *Collaboration and Commodification in Assisted  
      Procreation: Reflections on an Open Market and Anonymous Donation  
      in Human Sperm and Eggs* ........................................ 234  
      Notes and Questions .............................................. 238
   2. Arguments In Support of a Gamete Market ....................... 239

xii
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Richard A. Posner, *The Ethics and Economics of Enforcing Contracts of Surrogate Motherhood* ........................................ 239

B. Should the ART Market Be Open to All Willing Buyers and Sellers? ............................ 243

1. Exclusions Based On Age .................................................. 243

   Judith Daar, *Death of Aging Mother Raises More Questions About IVF Rules* .................. 243

   Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, *Oocyte Donation to Postmenopausal Women* ............... 245

   Notes and Questions ......................................................... 247

2. Exclusions Based on Health Status ...................................... 247

   Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, *Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Infertility Treatment* .................................................. 248

   Notes and Problems ......................................................... 252

3. Exclusions Based on Marital Status and Sexual Orientation .................. 256

   *North Coast Women’s Care Medical Group, Inc. v. San Diego County Superior Court* ........... 256

   Notes and Questions ......................................................... 261

SECTION IV: INSURING ART SERVICES .................................... 262

A. The Market Landscape ...................................................... 262

1. The Status of Infertility Insurance Coverage ................................ 262

   a. Statutory Law .................................................................. 262

   b. Case Law ........................................................................ 266

      Lisa M. Kerr, *Can Money Buy Happiness? An Examination of the Coverage of Infertility Services Under HMO Contracts* .... 267

      Notes and Questions ......................................................... 270

      *Saks v. Franklin Covey* .................................................... 271

      Notes and Questions ......................................................... 279

2. The Politics of ART Insurance Coverage .................................. 280

   Edward G. Hughes & Mita Giacomini, *Funding In Vitro Fertilization Treatment for Persistent Subfertility: The Pain and the Politics* .................................................. 280

   Questions .............................................................................. 281

B. ART Insurance Coverage and the Effect on Clinical Outcomes ........... 282

   Problem .............................................................................. 283

Chapter 4 CHOOSING OUR CHILDREN’S TRAITS: GENDER AND GENETIC SELECTION IN ART .................................. 285

SECTION I: THE CURRENT STATE OF TECHNOLOGY .................. 288

A. Choosing a Child’s Gender .................................................... 289

1. Preconception Gender Selection ............................................. 292

   Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, *TABLE OF CONTENTS*
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **Preconception Gender Selection for Nonmedical Reasons** .......................... 292
- Notes and Questions ................................................................. 296

2. **Postconception Gender Selection** ............................................. 299
   - The Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, *Sex Selection and Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis* .......................... 299
   - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 305
   - John A. Robertson, *Extending Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis: Medical and Non-medical Uses* ......................................................... 308
   - The President’s Council on Bioethics, *Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness* ......................................................... 310
   - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 311

B. **Choosing a Child’s Genetic Make-Up** ........................................ 313
1. **Using Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis to Cure Illness** ................. 314
   - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 315
   - Susan M. Wolf, Jeffrey P. Kahn, John E. Wagner, *Using Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis to Create a Stem Cell Donor: Issues, Guidelines & Limits* .................... 316
   - *R (on The Application of Quintavalle) v. Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority* ................................................................. 323
   - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 331
   - Problem ......................................................................................... 333

2. **Using Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis to Avoid Illness** ............... 334
   a. **PGD and the Meaning of Disability** ......................................... 334
      - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 336
   b. **PGD and Adult-Onset Diseases** .............................................. 339
      - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 341

3. **Using Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis to Achieve Pregnancy** ....... 341

### SECTION II: THE CURRENT STATE OF THE LAW .................................. 343
- Genetics & Public Policy Center, *Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis: A Discussion of Challenges, Concerns, and Preliminary Options Related to the Genetic Testing of Human Embryos* ................................................. 343
- Notes and Questions ................................................................. 347

### SECTION III: ETHICAL AND LEGAL DEBATE SURROUNDING GENDER SELECTION ................................................................. 352
A. **Constitutional Analysis** ............................................................. 353
   - Carl H. Coleman, *Is There a Constitutional Right to Preconception Sex Selection?* ................................................................. 353
   - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 355

B. **Ethical Analysis** ................................................................. 356
   - Rebecca Dresser, *Cosmetic Reproductive Services and Professional Integrity* ................................................................. 356
   - Notes and Questions ................................................................. 357
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**SECTION IV: ETHICAL AND LEGAL DEBATE SURROUNDING GENETIC SELECTION**

A. Ethical Dilemmas Surrounding Genetic Selection .............................. 358  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 362  
B. Legal Dilemmas Surrounding Genetic Selection ................................. 366  
   *Paretta v. Medical Offices for Human Reproduction* .................... 366  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 369  
   Problem .................................................................................... 370

**Chapter 5**

**FAMILY LAW ISSUES IN ART: QUESTIONS OF PARENTAGE AND PARENTAL RIGHTS** .................................................. 371

**SECTION I: EARLY DILEMMAS IN FAMILY LAW** ............................. 371  
A. Determining Paternity in AID Families ........................................ 371  
   *Strnad v. Strnad* ...................................................................... 371  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 372  
   *People v. Sorensen* ................................................................ 373  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 376  
B. Early Changes in the Law .............................................................. 377  
   *Jhordan C. v. Mary K.* ............................................................ 379  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 383  
C. The Problem of Known Donors .................................................... 384  
   *Ferguson v. McKiernan* ............................................................ 384  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 392

**SECTION II: BUILDING FAMILIES THROUGH SURROGATE PARENTING AGREEMENTS** .................................................. 394

A. An Introductory Case .................................................................... 394  
   *In the Matter of Baby M* .......................................................... 394  
   Notes and Questions .................................................................. 404  
B. Distinguishing “Traditional” and “Gestational” Surrogacy ............. 408  
   1. Traditional Surrogacy ............................................................. 409  
      *R.R. v. M.H.* ....................................................................... 409  
      Notes and Questions ................................................................ 413  
   2. Gestational Surrogacy .............................................................. 415  
      *Johnson v. Calvert* ............................................................... 415  
      Notes and Questions ................................................................ 422  
      *A.H.W. v. G.H.B.* ............................................................... 427  
      Notes and Questions ................................................................ 429  
   3. Profiles in Surrogate Parenting Arrangements ......................... 431  
      a. Profile of a Traditional Surrogate Mother ......................... 432
TABLE OF CONTENTS

b. Profile of a Gestational Surrogate Mother .......................... 433
c. Profile of an Intended Mother ........................................ 435
   Notes and Questions ................................................. 435
C. Statutory Responses to Surrogate Parenting Arrangements .......... 439
   1. Laws Regulating Surrogacy ...................................... 439
      a. Individual State Laws ....................................... 439
         Notes and Questions ......................................... 446
      b. Uniform Laws on Surrogacy ................................... 447
         Notes and Questions ......................................... 451
   2. Constitutionality of Surrogacy Laws .............................. 453
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 461

SECTION III: BUILDING FAMILIES THROUGH THE USE OF DONOR GAMETES ................................. 462
A. The State of the Art in Donor Gametes .............................. 462
B. The State of the Law in Donor Gametes .............................. 464
   1. Judicial Perspectives ........................................... 464
      In re Marriage of Buzzanca ................................... 464
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 470
   2. Statutory Perspectives on Donor Gametes ......................... 472
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 474

SECTION IV: BUILDING FAMILIES IN SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS .......... 474
A. The Prevalence of Same-Sex Parents ................................. 474
B. Family Law Dilemmas For Same-Sex Parents ......................... 478
   1. Determining Paternity ........................................... 478
      C.O. v. W.S. ..................................................... 478
      Lamaritata v. Lucas .......................................... 479
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 481
      Adoption of Tammy ............................................. 483
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 487
      K.M. v. E.G. ..................................................... 489
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 496

SECTION V: MISHAPS IN THE LABORATORY: THE CHILDREN OF ART GAMETE MIX-UPS ......................... 498
A. Defining the Problem ................................................ 498
B. Judicial Perspectives on Gamete Mix-Ups ............................ 500
   1. The Case of Physician Malfeasance ............................... 500
      Prato-Morrison v. Doe .......................................... 500
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 504
   2. Cases of Physician Negligence ................................... 506
      Robert B. v. Susan B. ........................................... 506
      Notes and Questions ........................................... 509
TABLE OF CONTENTS

    Perry-Rogers v. Fasano ........................................ 510
    Leslie Bender, Genes, Parents, and Assisted Reproductive
    Technologies: ARTs, Mistakes, Sex, Race, & Law ........... 514
    Notes and Questions ........................................ 515

C. Legislative Perspectives on Gamete Mix-Ups .................. 517

Chapter 6 LIFE AFTER DEATH: POSTMORTEM
REPRODUCTION ........................................ 521

SECTION I: THE POSSIBILITIES FOR POSTMORTEM REPRODUCTION . 522
A. Freezing Sperm ........................................ 522
   1. Sperm Retrieval During Life ................................ 522
      a. Sperm Freezing — Past and Present ..................... 522
      b. Emerging Legal Disputes Over Frozen Sperm .......... 524
         Hall v. Fertility Institute of New Orleans ............ 525
         Notes and Questions .................................... 528
         Michael H. Shapiro, Illicit Reasons and Means for Reproduction: On Excessive Choice and Categorical and Technological Imperatives ........................................ 530
   2. Sperm Retrieval After Death .............................. 533

SECTION II: LEGAL DILEMMAS IN POSTMORTEM REPRODUCTION . 545
   In re Estate of Kolacy ....................................... 546
   Notes and Questions ........................................ 549
B. Probate Law: Awarding Inheritance Rights and Death Benefits .... 551
   Woodward v. Commissioner of Social Security .............. 551
   Notes and Questions ........................................ 556

SECTION III: STATUTORY FRAMEWORKS FOR EVALUATING THE RIGHTS OF
POSTMORTEM CONCEPTION CHILDREN ........................... 560
A. Uniform Laws Governing Postmortem Reproduction ............ 561
   1. The Uniform Parentage Act ............................... 561
      Notes and Questions .................................... 562
   2. The Uniform Probate Code ................................ 563
      Notes and Questions .................................... 564
B. Emerging Laws Governing the Rights of Posthumous Children .... 566
   Notes and Questions ........................................ 567
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

C. Model Laws and Task Force Reports ............................................. 569
   1. The ABA Model Act .......................................................... 569
      Questions ................................................................. 570
   2. The New York State Task Force on Life and the Law ............... 570
      Questions ................................................................. 571

Chapter 7  
ART AND DIVORCE: DISPUTES OVER FROZEN EMBRYOS .................. 573

SECTION I: THE POPULARITY AND FRAILTY OF EMBRYO CRYOPRESERVATION .............................................. 574
   Frisina v. Woman and Infant Hospital of Rhode Island ............. 575
   Notes and Questions ..................................................... 583

SECTION II: THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE SURROUNDING FROZEN EMBRYO DISPUTES ....................................................... 585
   A. An Introductory Case ..................................................... 585
      Davis v. Davis ............................................................ 585
      Notes and Questions ................................................... 589
   B. The Contract Approach ................................................... 591
      Kass v. Kass ............................................................... 591
      Notes and Questions ................................................... 597
      Litowitz v. Litowitz ..................................................... 604
      Notes and Questions ................................................... 611
   C. The Public Policy Approach .............................................. 612
      A.Z. v. B.Z. ................................................................. 612
      Judith F. Daar, Frozen Embryo Disputes Revisited: A Trilogy of Procreation-Avoidance Approaches ................. 618
      Notes and Questions ................................................... 621
      J.B. v. M.B. ............................................................... 625
      Notes and Questions ................................................... 632
   D. The Question of Parental Rights ................................... 634
      In re O.G.M. ............................................................... 634
      Notes and Questions ................................................... 637

SECTION III: THE PROBLEM OF EXCESS AND ABANDONED EMBRYOS ................................................................. 638
   A. Excess Embryos and Patient Choice ..................................... 639
      1. Donate the Embryos for Research ................................ 639
         a. Type of Research .................................................. 639
         b. State Law Prohibitions on Embryo Research .............. 640
      2. Discard the Embryos After a Designated Time Frame ........ 641
      3. Maintain the Embryos in Frozen Storage ....................... 642
      4. Donate the Embryos to Another Couple ......................... 642
B. Excess Embryos and Lack of Patient Choice: The Problem of Abandonment .......................................................... 645

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 647

York v. Jones ............................................................................................................................. 648

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 652

Problem ....................................................................................................................................... 652

Chapter 8 REGULATING REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES .... 655

SECTION I: THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE FOR ART: AN INTRODUCTION .... 656

A. The Goals of Regulation ........................................................................................................... 656

Judith F. Daar, Regulating Reproductive Technologies: Panacea or Paper Tiger? .................. 656

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 657

B. The Current State of Regulation ............................................................................................. 659

1. Direct Regulation by the Federal Government ...................................................................... 659

2. Indirect Regulation by the Federal Government .................................................................. 661

3. Direct Regulation by State Governments ............................................................................ 662

4. Indirect Regulation by State Governments ........................................................................... 663

5. Self-Regulation by the Fertility Industry .............................................................................. 665

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 666

SECTION II: IS (INCREASED) ART REGULATION NECESSARY? .... 668

A. Protecting ART Patients .......................................................................................................... 669

1. Luring Patients: False Advertising and Deceptive Statements .............................................. 669

Karlin v. IVF America, Inc. ........................................................................................................... 669

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 672

2. Lack of Informed Consent ....................................................................................................... 673

Elements to Be Considered in Obtaining Informed Consent for ART ........................................ 673

3. Treatment Errors: Negligence, Theft, and Fraud ................................................................... 675

4. Protecting Patient Health ........................................................................................................ 677

B. Protecting ART Offspring ........................................................................................................ 680

Doolan v. IVF America (MA), Inc. ................................................................................................. 680

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 683

C. Protecting ART Physicians ...................................................................................................... 686

1. Enhancing Public Confidence ................................................................................................. 686

2. Authorizing Treatment Denials .............................................................................................. 687

The Ethics Committee of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, Child-Rearing Ability and the Provision of Fertility Services .......................................................................................................................... 687

Notes and Questions .................................................................................................................. 690

SECTION III: PROPOSED REGULATORY SCHEMES ............ 691
TABLE OF CONTENTS

President’s Council on Bioethics, Reproduction & Responsibility: The Regulation of New Biotechnologies ........................................ 693
Notes and Questions ........................................ 698

Chapter 9 HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH ........ 703

SECTION I: THE SCIENCE OF EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH ........ 704
A. Introduction to the Terms ........................................ 704
    Jennifer L. Enmon, Stem Cell Research: Is the Law Preventing Progress? ........................................ 704
    Notes and Questions ........................................ 706
B. Human and Animal Stem Cell Studies ........................................ 712
    Problem ........................................ 716
C. Framing the Debate Over Stem Cell Research ........................................ 717
    The President’s Council on Bioethics, Monitoring Stem Cell Research ........................................ 717

SECTION II: THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK SURROUNDING STEM CELL RESEARCH ........................................ 718
A. Laws Relating to Aborted Fetuses as Sources of Stem Cells ........ 719
    1. Federal Law Relating to Aborted Fetuses as Sources of Stem Cells ........................................ 719
       National Bioethics Advisory Commission, Ethical Issues in Human Stem Cell Research ........................................ 719
       Notes and Questions ........................................ 722
    2. State Laws Relating to Aborted Fetuses as Sources of Stem Cells ........................................ 724
       National Bioethics Advisory Commission, Ethical Issues in Human Stem Cell Research ........................................ 724
       Margaret S. v. Edwards ........................................ 726
       Notes and Questions ........................................ 729
B. Laws Relating to Embryos as Sources of Stem Cells ........ 731
    1. Federal Law Relating to Embryos as Sources of Stem Cells ........................................ 731
       Kara L. Belew, Stem Cell Division: Abortion Law and Its Influence on the Adoption of Radically Different Embryonic Stem Cell Legislation in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany ........................................ 731
       Notes and Questions ........................................ 734
       Doe v. Shalala ........................................ 735
       Question ........................................ 741
    2. State Laws Relating to Embryos as Sources of Stem Cells ........ 741
       National Bioethics Advisory Commission, Ethical Issues in Human Stem Cell Research ........................................ 741
       Notes and Questions ........................................ 743

SECTION III: GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF STEM CELL RESEARCH ........ 745
A. Federal Funding of Stem Cell Research ........................................ 746
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. The First Presidential Proclamation: August 9, 2001 ............ 746
   Remarks by the President on Stem Cell Research ............. 746
   Notes and Questions ........................................... 749
2. Defending and Questioning the Bush Administration Policy ...... 751
   James F. Childress, An Ethical Defense of Federal Funding for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research .................. 756
   Notes and Questions ........................................... 758
   Problem ......................................................... 759
3. President Obama and a New Era of Stem Cell Research Policy ... 760
   The White House, Removing Barriers to Responsible Scientific Research Involving Human Stem Cells ............. 760
   Notes and Questions ........................................... 761
   Sherley v. Sebelius ............................................ 764
B. State Funding of Stem Cell Research ............................... 768
   1. California .................................................. 768
   2. New Jersey .................................................. 770
   3. Other State Activities ....................................... 772
   Problem ......................................................... 773

SECTION IV: INTERNATIONAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON STEM CELL RESEARCH ......................................................... 774
A. International Perspectives ......................................... 774
   Notes and Questions ........................................... 785
B. Religious Perspectives on Embryonic Stem Cell Research ....... 786
   Notes and Questions ........................................... 794

Chapter 10 HUMAN REPRODUCTIVE CLONING ......................... 797

SECTION I: THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN REPRODUCTIVE CLONING ..... 797
A. Three Types of Cloning .......................................... 798
   1. Reproductive Cloning ...................................... 798
   2. Therapeutic Cloning ...................................... 799
   3. Embryo Cloning ........................................... 800
B. Advances in Animal Cloning ...................................... 801
   1. Safety and Efficacy Concerns .............................. 802
   2. Purposes of Animal Cloning ............................... 804
C. Inroads Into Human Cloning ...................................... 805
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Judith F. Daar, *The Prospect of Human Cloning: Improving Nature or Dooming the Species?* ........................................ 807
Notes and Questions .................................................. 814
Problem ................................................................. 815

## SECTION II: THE POLITICS OF HUMAN CLONING ........................................ 816

A. Initial Reaction from the Federal Government ........................................ 816
   National Bioethics Advisory Commission, *Cloning Human Beings* ........ 816
   Notes and Questions ............................................... 819

B. Later Reactions from the Federal Government ........................................ 822
   The President’s Council on Bioethics, *Human Cloning and Human Dignity* .... 823
   Notes and Questions ............................................... 825

C. Reactions from the States ................................................ 826
   Notes and Questions ............................................... 829

## SECTION III: CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN CLONING .................. 831

A. Cloning and Procreational Autonomy ........................................ 831
   Notes and Questions ............................................... 841

B. Cloning and the Right to Scientific Inquiry ........................................ 842
   John Charles Kunich, *The Naked Clone* ................................ 842
   Notes and Questions ............................................... 846

## GLOSSARY ............................................................. 849

## TABLE OF CASES ..................................................... TC-1

## INDEX ................................................................. I-1
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xxiii
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