



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on May 1, 2023

Forget IVF: Technology Will Soon Create Babies Without Eggs or Sperm

Explaining the birds and the bees has always been uncomfortable for some parents — but one day it may get so complicated that someone will have to explain it to the parents.

That is, if new technology that may affect the way they become parents is made reality.

Called in vitro gametogenesis (IVG), it could in the not-too-distant future be used to create babies not only without sexual congress, but even without those requirements for in vitro fertilization (IVF): eggs and sperm.



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A process with both promise and perils, IVG may someday be used to “provide a cure for many types of infertility, to slow or even turn off biological clocks, and to enable the kind of embryo selection that sends chills up many spines,” [wrote](#) *USA Today*’s Karen Weintraub last week. This gets at the main problem:

This “embryo selection” involves destroying unwanted embryos — in other words, killing nascent human beings.

In fact, this could entail the destruction of an “unlimited amount of embryos,” [wrote](#) Freethink in 2019, as people filtered them looking for the “designer baby” they craved.

Moreover, some believe this will become status quo. “‘In 20 to 40 years, people will still have sex. But when they want to make babies, they’ll go to a lab,’ predicts Stanford University Professor Henry T. Greely,” Freethink further informs. “It’s also the premise of his book — *The End of Sex and the Future of Human Reproduction*.”

MIT Technology Review explained IVG last year, [writing](#):

An embryo forms when sperm meets egg. But what if we could start with other cells — if a blood sample or skin biopsy could be transformed into “artificial” sperm and eggs? What if those were all you needed to make a baby?

That’s the promise of a radical approach to reproduction. Scientists have already created artificial eggs and sperm from mouse cells and used them to create mouse pups. Artificial human sex cells are next.

The advances could herald the end of infertility — there’s no need to worry about a lack of healthy eggs or sperm if you can create new ones in the lab.

Yet IVG could do something else as well. The *Review* continues:



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It would open up alternative routes to parenthood as well. Same-sex couples could have genetically related children. If a ... woman could create her own sperm cells, she could use them to fertilize the egg of a partner. Likewise, a ... man could produce his own eggs to be fertilized by the sperm of his partner. And why stop there? The technology would allow four parents to make equal genetic contributions to a baby, for example. Or a single person could produce both the sperm and the egg that create an embryo.

“Why stop there?” Ex-academic and former homosexual Robert Oscar Lopez — who was raised by a same-sex couple — has his answer. Having for years outlined the problems inherent in same-sex-couple child-rearing, he [calls](#) homosexuals’ acquisition of children “slavery,” the “buying [of] people like livestock and owning them.”

More recently, other concerns were expressed at a three-day meeting the week before last at the National Academies of Sciences. While researchers enthusiastically discussed their work and others touted IVG’s benefits, ethicists issued warnings.

“‘The search for a “perfect” race, “perfect” baby, “perfect generation” is not science fiction,’ Amrita Pande, a sociologist at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, told the group Thursday [before last],” the aforementioned Weintraub also related. The *USA Today* writer later wrote:

“It is a perversion of the sanctity of procreation as a fundamental aspect of human life,” said Ben Hurlbut, a bioethicist and historian of science at Arizona State University, before the meeting. “It makes it into an industrial project that responds to and also inspires and cultivates the desires of their future customers.”

Already several startups backed by private venture capital are looking to commercialize the creation of lab-made eggs and sperm, perhaps first in farm animals.

One ethical question raised by IVG is who benefits from this kind of work.

“The child that would be created exists not for its own sake but for the sake of others,” Hurlbut said. “That child is the expression of other people’s desires.”

Several people at the conference raised the specter of 90-year-olds having offspring in this way, or babies having babies, or long-dead people.

Hurlbut also cut to the matter’s heart. “It’s a quite fundamental norm that you don’t experiment on children, and yet this in vitro cultivation of a technology is also cultivation of desires and of a potential market that at the end of the day fundamentally entails experimentation on children,” he stated.

Speaking of which, Weintraub mentions that it’s unknown if IVG would ever be safe for humans. Yet this is clearly untrue: If the technology involves discarding embryos, then it’s absolutely unsafe for the nascent humans who’d be destroyed.

Furthermore, Hurlbut’s “industrial project” concern is why good theology informs that sexual relations must include both a procreative *and* a “unitive” aspect, the latter of which, of course, is reflected when a couple engages in the conjugal act. And where recreational sex — whose goal is pleasure and avoiding conception — eliminates the procreative aspect, IVG would eliminate the unitive one.

Of course, it’s understandable that people with fertility problems would, like most everyone else, want



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biologically related offspring. Yet one could wonder: What of the many orphaned children requiring homes?

Circumventing infertility via extreme technological interventions, though generally well-intended, shrinks the adoptive-parent market. In fact, people of faith might even suggest that some infertile couples' divine calling is to provide loving homes for lonely orphans.

What's for sure is that if society were far closer to God, we wouldn't have to worry so much about IVG or any other modern-marvel tool being misused.



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