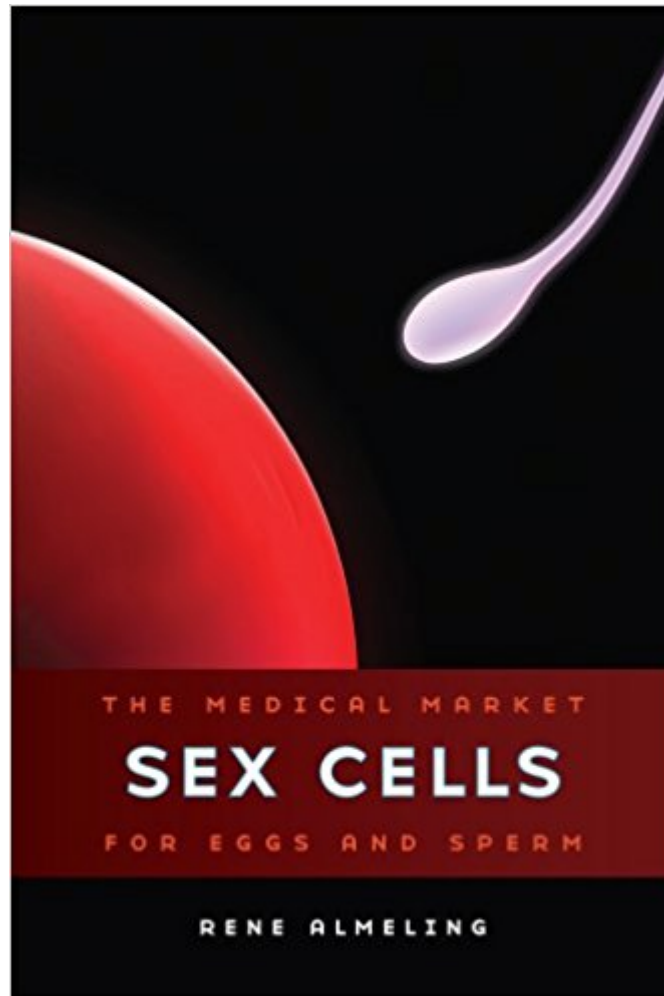




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Sex Cells: The Medical Market For Eggs And Sperm



Synopsis

Unimaginable until the twentieth century, the clinical practice of transferring eggs and sperm from body to body is now the basis of a bustling market. In *Sex Cells*, Rene Almeling provides an inside look at how egg agencies and sperm banks do business. Although both men and women are usually drawn to donation for financial reasons, Almeling finds that clinics encourage sperm donors to think of the payments as remuneration for an easy "job." Women receive more money but are urged to regard egg donation in feminine terms, as the ultimate "gift" from one woman to another. *Sex Cells* shows how the gendered framing of paid donation, as either a job or a gift, not only influences the structure of the market, but also profoundly affects the individuals whose genetic material is being purchased.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"[Almeling] pulls back the curtain on the egg and sperm market. . . . *Sex Cells*™ explains how this unique industry shapes the way we think about gender and parenthood." • (Salon 2011-09-25) *Almeling learned that when it comes to donating genetic material, men and women are groomed very differently.* • (Huffington Post 2011-09-20) *One of the fascinating aspects of Almeling's research is that she explored how donors, both egg and sperm, perceive their own roles in a family.* • (On Parenting/Washington Post 2011-09-28) *Interviews with sperm and egg donors reveal an interesting dichotomy [that] may say a lot about how we view motherhood and fatherhood.* • (Jezebel 2011-09-28) *An inside look at how egg agencies and sperm banks do*

business. • (Law & Social Inquiry 2012-01-01)

•What happens when sex cells sell? Do human bodies become degraded objects of commerce? Challenging simplistic accounts of commodification, Almeling offers a compelling analysis of contemporary markets for eggs and sperm. A superb contribution to 21st century economic sociology. • -Viviana A. Zelizer, author of *Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes the Economy*•This is a highly informative book. Almeling provides a balanced approach to this highly controversial subject. Although you might be conflicted by the ethical issues, you will definitely be extremely well-informed when you finish this book. • -Alan H. DeCherney, MD, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development•Almeling offers a wonderfully thoughtful analysis and an innovative cultural lens for viewing the gendered lives of sex cells and their commodification in the contemporary USA. • -Rayna Rapp, author of *Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Impact of Amniocentesis in America*

I admit I had ideas about Rene Almeling's new book, *Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm*. I was prepared not to like it because as a mom via egg donation I think I didn't want to even remotely think about what egg donors or sperm donors thought about their donations if that makes sense. However, I read it, in fact, I read it twice and devoured it because it was just so incredibly interesting. This book took an in-depth look at the inner workings of egg donation and sperm donation. Rene is a sociologist at Yale, and an expert in her field. This isn't a feel good book, it's a book compiled of data from six different kinds of donation programs. She's done the hard work and interviewed staff along with egg donors and sperm donors. Her research concluded that egg donation was often presented as something like a gift and that egg donors viewed this altruistically. In some instances sperm donors did as well but for sperm donors donating sperm was more of a job. Interestingly enough I learned from this book and through Rene's research that egg donors rarely think of themselves as "mom's" to the children they help bring into the world via egg donation, but the sperm donors almost always think of themselves as the fathers to any kids they have helped bring into the world. The book was a very interesting read -- I learned a lot about egg donors and sperm donors that I hadn't known before.

I used this book for my senior presentation in college- I was preparing for a rather dry, academic read but I ended up not being able to put it down. I found myself going back and forth between opinions on the matter- a sign of a great, stimulating read! Very interesting- and I liked the

sociological approach almeling took. Definitely recommend to someone interested in gender studies, sociology, marketing, or gamete 'donation'.

Super interesting findings, written well!

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That Was Me (Volume 4): A Single Momâ€™s/Sperm Donation Childrenâ€™s Story

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