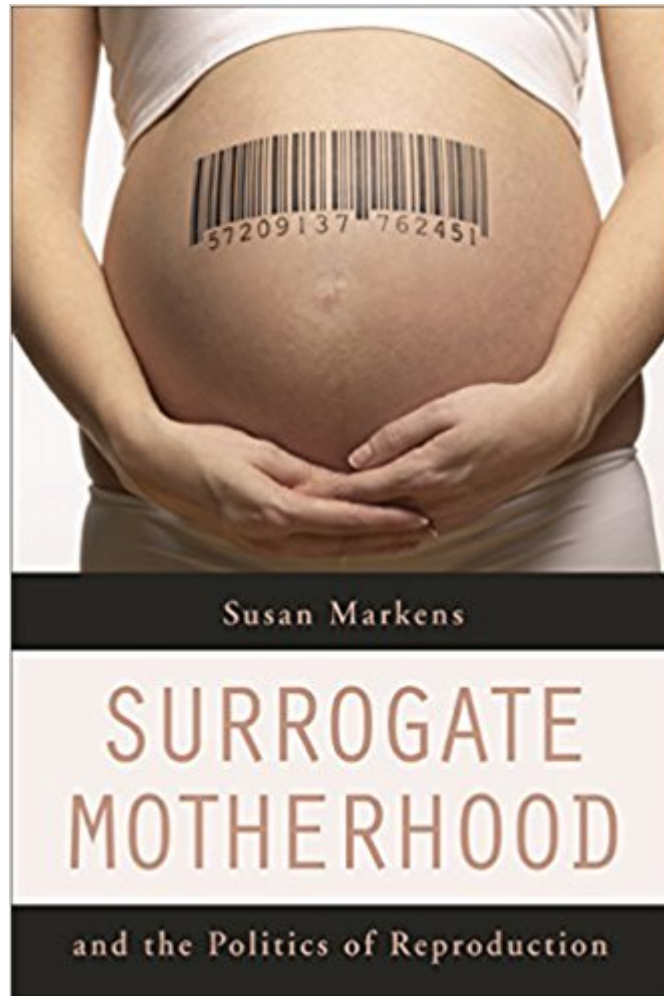




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Surrogate Motherhood And The Politics Of Reproduction



Synopsis

Susan Markens takes on one of the hottest issues on the fertility front—surrogate motherhood—in a book that illuminates the culture wars that have erupted over new reproductive technologies in the United States. In an innovative analysis of legislative responses to surrogacy in the bellwether states of New York and California, Markens explores how discourses about gender, family, race, genetics, rights, and choice have shaped policies aimed at this issue. She examines the views of key players, including legislators, women's organizations, religious groups, the media, and others. In a study that finds surprising ideological agreement among those with opposing views of surrogate motherhood, Markens challenges common assumptions about our responses to reproductive technologies and at the same time offers a fascinating picture of how reproductive politics shape social policy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Susan Markens has written an original, insightful book about reproductive politics in the United States, sure to be of wide intellectual and public interest. Focusing on the history of statewide surrogacy regulation and the corresponding 'culture wars' spawned by fertility issues, she offers a fresh look at a vexing and timely social issue. Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction is feminist political sociology at its finest."—Monica J. Casper, author of *The Making of the Unborn Patient* "Policy and law on surrogacy and related issues remain in flux, as do society's views as to the directions in which we should move. Markens' analysis is rich, original, and

sound, and she writes with clarity and conviction. Her comparative approach offers a more penetrating analysis than would a study of a single setting. Surrogate Motherhood is certain to make an impact: the work is timely, convincing, and intellectually sound."#151;Carole Browner, UCLA School of Medicine, Center for Culture and Health

Susan Markens has written a thorough and fascinating account of the dilemmas and policy debates brought forward by surrogate parenting. This book is a splendid addition to the growing field of the sociology of reproduction."#151;Carole Joffe, author of *Doctors of Conscience: The Struggle to Provide Abortion Before and After Roe v. Wade*

Surrogate motherhood burst into the public eye in 1986 with the spectacular custody trial over 'Baby M.' Susan Markens deftly and judiciously moves beyond the feminist polemics, to brilliantly clarify the ostensibly opposed legal responses to this Brave New World of reproductive 'choice.' Whether surrogacy is banned as baby-selling or regulated as a service to the infertile, neither policy questions the myth that in the U.S. we have a private right to procreate. *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction* stands with the path-breaking work of Kristin Luker, Dorothy Roberts, and Rickie Solinger, illuminating the public character of reproductive politics, privilege, and motherhood itself."#151;Linda M. Blum, author of *At the Breast: Ideologies of Motherhood and Breastfeeding in the Contemporary United States*

Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction is the definitive account of how and why surrogacy emerged as a political issue in the late 20th century and the alarming lag in US social policy in the face of rapidly advancing technologies that challenge our basic understandings of motherhood and kinship. Markens' provocative new book provides an intriguing solution to a puzzle: Why did a political consensus emerge in New York to ban surrogacy as 'baby selling' while California's response was to permit surrogacy, framed as a hardship of childlessness? More intriguingly, Markens shows how the public debates in both contexts relied on similar feminist arguments of 'choice' and 'the best interests of the child.' With her evenhanded and nuanced account, Markens delivers an exemplary and nuanced application of the comparative case method, primary textual analysis, print media and strategic interviews that gives voice, intrigue, and verve to her story. The book will appeal widely to students of reproductive politics and new genetic and reproductive technologies as they influence our conceptions of health, motherhood and paternity rights, as well as ideologies of gender and kinship."#151;Sherri Grasmuck, author of *Protecting Home: Class, Race and Masculinity*

Susan Markens is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at City University of New York, Lehman College.

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