

THE LEGAL AND ETHICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF ECTOGENESIS

*Amel Alghrani**

ABSTRACT

Advances in artificial reproductive technologies continue to emerge forcing us to rethink how we view human reproduction. The next major advance predicted to emerge on the scene is ectogenesis; the creation of an artificial womb, or ectogenetic incubator or device which can replace the functions of the female womb and gestate a child safely and entirely in vitro. It provides an alternative, or for some a substitute to human gestation, and means pregnancy is no longer necessary in order to have a child. Human reproduction will no longer be dependent on female gestation and childbirth.

This paper looks at the science behind ectogenesis and seeks to highlight some of the legal and ethical ramifications of ectogenesis. The challenge of how ectogenesis may be regulated and the necessary questions this advance raises will be addressed.

KEYWORDS: *ectogenesis; artificial womb; artificial gestation; reprogenetics; assisted conception; artificial reproductive technologies; artificial gestation; mechanical gestation; mother machine.*

* Associate Lecturer, School of Law, The University of Manchester, UK; PhD candidate, The University of Manchester.