Could celebrities be the reason that women are delaying childbearing?

It is well known that there are risks for older pregnancy, such as death to the mother, low birth weight, and higher possibility of disease or deformity. Yet more and more women are choosing to delay parenthood until they are 35 or older. There are many reasons for this delay, including effective birth control, later marriages, career focus, and financial stability. One new theory for this societal trend is celebrity influence.

Our society glorifies celebrities, making them out as American royalty. Their influence is unmistakable, so it is easy to recognize the connection between the hyper focus on 40 and 50 year old celebrities having babies and more women deciding to have children at an older age.

Celebrities and the media have heightened public awareness about pregnancies later in life. Celebrity women such as Uma Thurman, Sarah Jessica Parker, Celine Dion, and Halle Berry proudly show off their baby bumps, causing the media to comment on their age. Celebrities having late pregnancies are usually in their 40s.

The media reports on this higher rate of older celebrity pregnancy, focusing on how easy they make it look and how healthy their babies are when born. Celebrity news will report very positively and cast these women as inspiring figures. They broadcast how fit and healthy these celebrities are and, if everyday women can be as healthy as them, it should be easy to have a baby late in life.

While these women are undoubtedly inspiring, the media tends to gloss over the hardships and trials these 35+ celebrities had to go through. Many experienced multiple IVF failed cycles and some had to use eggs of very young women. Jane Seymour, another celebrity that had twins in her mid-40s, almost died with her babies during birth due to high blood pressure.

Women over 35 who decide to get pregnant will have more emotional, psychological, physiological, and social difficulties than younger women. Celebrities went through the same thing, but it happened behind closed doors. The media can only portray them smiling on red carpets showing off their bump and showing interviews where they talk about how excited they are to be pregnant.

Only 1% of women over 44 have a chance of achieving viable pregnancy using their own eggs, according to the US Centers for Disease Control. But the media portrayal of celebrities makes it seem as if everyone over 35 should have no trouble conceiving. While the traditional way is a difficult option for older women, there are still other options to get pregnant if choosing to delay parenthood.

"Celebrities may be setting a trend for delaying parenthood."*My Fertility Choices*. 25 Apr 2013. Web. 10 May. 2013. <http://myfertilitychoices.com/2013/04/celebrities-may-be-setting-a-trend-for-delaying-parenthood/>.

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