

pregnant with another woman's egg donation is the birth mother, although not the genetic mother, of the baby she bears. In the case of artificial insemination, the man who is physically, socially, and emotionally present for the pregnancy and birth (in the case in question that would be Richard Whitehead) is the social or, I would think, birth father, but not genetic father of the baby.

The technology of egg donation or embryo transfer, like the technology of artificial insemination, can be used in this newer "surrogacy" model, to hire a pregnancy, rent a womb. In this instance, some of the privileges of patriarchy are extended to upper-class women: rich women too can hire women to grow their seed for them. Women with money and power can exercise their rights of "paternity," declaring ownership of a baby grown of their seed in another woman's body, in a "rented uterus."

Here is where we go beyond sex and class and have to deal with issues of race as well: such a "rented uterus" need not be of the same race as the fetus she bears. And so we have the specter of women of color—the same women who push white babies in their strollers, white elderly in their wheelchairs—growing white people's babies for

them, for a fee. Picture what the Baby M case would have looked like had Mary Beth Whitehead been a black woman. The end could not have been much worse, but I bet we would have gotten there faster.

Race, class and sex—these are not three separate systems. They are deeply entwined, in their functioning and in their ideology. Our American focus on genetics, on seeds, is equally there in our attitudes toward race and sex, in our patriarchal ideology that genetics are our essence, nurturance merely the "dirt," or "soil," things grow in. In that sense, surrogacy is not a new idea: it is the *reductio ad absurdum* of Western patriarchal capitalism. □

---

*Barbara Katz Rothman is associate professor of sociology at Baruch College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Her publications include an analysis of obstetrical and midwifery ideology, In Labor: Women and Power in the Birthplace, published in paperback as Giving Birth; and a book on women's experiences with new reproductive technology, The Tentative Pregnancy: Prenatal Diagnosis and the Future of Motherhood.*

## From Baby Farms to Baby M

Viviana A. Zelizer

**T**he Baby M deal would astonish any nineteenth-century baby trader. Not because of inflation in baby prices and not even because of Baby M's unusual mode of conception. The amazing fact, from a nineteenth-century perspective, is that Baby M has such eager and paying customers. For in the 1870s, there was no such market for babies. The only profitable undertaking was, as the *New York Times* described it in 1873, the "business of getting rid of other people's [unwelcome] babies." For about ten dollars, baby farmers took in these generally illegitimate children. With babies' high rates of mortality, the turnover was quick, and business brisk. Indeed, one report estimated that a "tradeswoman in tiny lives" could make as much as \$10,000 a year.

Selling babies, on the other hand, was a rare and largely unprofitable transaction: often no more than a twenty-five-cents deal. In an 1890 case, an agent of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children pretended interest in obtaining a two-week-old baby. The baby farmer demanded two dollars but quickly settled for half. "She . . . urged [the agent] to take the infant at once

and at his own price." It was, unquestionably, a buyer's market.

Yet, by the 1920s and 1930s, "baby-hungry" couples were eagerly paying \$1,000 or more to purchase an infant. As a 1939 article in *Collier's* put it: "It's [a] bonanza . . . there's gold in selling babies." The trade slogan of one baby seller in Chicago was "It's cheaper and easier to buy a baby . . . than to have one of your own." Today, the going rate for a healthy white infant in the black market is up to \$50,000. "Special-order" Baby M cost the Sterns \$25,000 plus the now surely steep legal fees. And this is just a down payment. It will take at least an additional \$150,000 to provide Baby M with the first eighteen years of a proper upper-middle-class upbringing.

Lost in the emotional immediacy of the Baby M dispute are two more general and fundamental issues that underlie the surrogacy controversy. First, what explains our bullish baby market? Why were late-nineteenth-century mothers forced to pay baby farmers to get rid of a baby they did not want or could not afford, while today a Mrs. Whitehead is paid to produce a baby for others? Is it

just a matter of the scarcity of babies? Second, what, precisely, defines the legitimacy or illegitimacy of baby markets? Are surrogacy fees necessarily a degrading payment or "dirty money"? Then, are adoption fees, foster care payments, and "gray" baby markets, also "dirty money"?

I argue that the socially and morally problematic nature of the surrogacy baby market is not primarily, as Neuhaus suggests, that sacred items are "placed in a contract and sealed by money," nor even that surrogacy is

---

## Sentimental adoption created an unprecedented demand for infants.

---

rigged against poor women. More significantly, surrogacy unequivocally reveals our discriminatory valuation of children. Babies are made on "special-order" because children already available on the adoption market are not "good" enough—too old, too sick, or of the wrong skin color. In this respect, surrogacy is only a technical innovation. In fact, it is just the latest stage of a very special adoption market which began in the 1920s.

### Creation of a Baby Market

The creation of a market for babies in the 1920s was not the result of clever promotion and only partly a consequence of an increasing shortage of infants. The startling appreciation in babies' monetary worth was intimately tied to the profound cultural transformation in children's economic and sentimental value between the 1870s and 1930s; specifically, the emergence of the economically worthless but emotionally priceless child.

In eighteenth-century rural America the birth of a child was welcomed as the arrival of a future laborer and as security for parents later in life. By the mid-nineteenth century, the construction of the economically worthless child was completed among the urban middle class. It took longer among working-class families which, even in the late nineteenth century, depended on the wages of older children and the household assistance of younger ones. Child labor laws and compulsory education gradually destroyed the class lag. By the 1930s, lower-class children joined their middle-class counterparts in a new nonproductive world of childhood, a world in which the sanctity and emotional value of a child made child labor taboo.

The "exchange" value of children changed accordingly. Nineteenth-century foster families took in useful children expecting them to help out with farm chores and household tasks. It was considered a fair bargain. After all, if children worked for their own parents, why not work for surrogate caretakers? Not surprisingly, the premium was for children older than ten, old enough to be useful. In this context, babies were "unmarketable," and hard to

place except in foundling asylums or on commercial baby farms.

The redefinition of children's value at the turn of the century challenged established instrumental assumptions. If child labor was no longer legitimate, a working home was an anachronism. If children were priceless, it was obnoxious to profit from their misfortune. Thus, baby farming was singled out as a uniquely mercenary "traffic in children." Child-welfare workers actively sought to replace instrumental parenting of any kind with a new approach to adoption more suitable for the economically "useless" sacred child. Parents were urged by *Children's Home Finder* in 1897 not to take a child "for what you can get out of him, but, rather, for what you can put into him." By the 1920s and 1930s, a new consensus was reached. The only legitimate rewards of adoption were emotional, as the *New York Times* put it in 1926: "an enlargement of happiness to be got in no other way." As one grateful adoptive father told a *Good Housekeeping* reporter in 1927, "Talk about children owing their parents anything! We'll never be able to pay what we owe that baby."

Sentimental adoption created an unprecedented demand for children under three, especially for infants. In 1910, the press already discussed the new appeal of babies, with *Cosmopolitan* warning, "there are not enough babies to go around." The Home-Finding Committee of the Spence Nursery, an agency organized for the placement of infants, was surprised to discover that, "instead of our having to seek these homes, they have sought us, and so great is the demand for babies that we cannot begin to meet it." By 1937, infant adoption was being touted as the latest American fad. *Pictorial Review* noted: "The baby market is booming. . . . The clamor is for babies, more babies. . . . We behold an amazing phenomenon: a country-wide scramble on the part of childless couples to adopt a child." Ironically, while the economically useless nineteenth-century baby had to be protected because it was unwanted, the priceless twentieth-century baby, "needs protection as ever before . . . [because] too many hands are snatching it."

The priceless child was judged by new criteria; its physical appeal and personality charms replaced earlier economic yardsticks. After talking to several directors of orphan asylums, the *New York Times* concluded in 1909 that "every baby who expects to be adopted . . . ought to make it a point to be born with blue eyes. . . . The brown-eyed, black-eyed, or grey-eyed girl or boy may be just as pretty . . . but it is hard to make benevolent auxiliaries of the stork believe so." The greatest demand was for little girls. Soon after launching its popular Child-Rescue Campaign in 1907, promoting foster home care, the *Delin-eator* commented that requests for boys were half that for girls: "a two-year old, blue-eyed, golden haired little girl with curls, that is the order that everybody leaves. It cannot be filled fast enough."

The gender and age preferences of twentieth-century adoptive parents were clearly linked to the cultural revolution in fostering. While the earlier need for a useful child put a premium on strong, older children, preferably

male; the later search for a child to love led to babies and, particularly, pretty little girls. It was not the innate smiling expertise of females, but established cultural assumptions of women's superior emotional talents which made girls so uniquely attractive for sentimental adoption.

### Pricing the Priceless Child

The sentimentalization of adoption had an unanticipated and paradoxical effect. By creating a demand for babies, it also stimulated a new kind of baby market. While nineteenth-century mothers had paid baby farmers to accept their unwanted baby, twentieth-century adoptive parents were willing to pay to obtain an infant. "Baby traffickers" thus found an additional line of business; making money not only from the surrender of babies, but doubling their profits by then selling them to their new customers. As a result, the value of a priceless child became increasingly monetized and commercialized. Ironically, the new market price for babies was set exclusively by their noneconomic, sentimental appeal.

By 1922, the dramatic findings of "A Baby a Day Given Away," a study conducted by the New York State Charities Aid Association, put commercialized adoption directly in the national public spotlight. The six-months investigation of newspaper advertisements offering and requesting children for adoption, revealed an "indiscriminate exchange of children." An average of a baby a day was being disposed of in New York, "as casually as one would give away a kitten"; many sold at "bargain-counter" prices. It was not a peculiar New York arrangement. In the classified advertisement column of almost any Boston newspaper, noted Ida Parker in *Fit and Proper?* in 1927, "together with items relating to automobiles, animals, amusements . . . may often be found the child offered for adoption."

Three years later, the notorious prosecution of a New York baby farmer shocked the nation, further raising the visibility of commercial child placement. Helen Augusta Geisen-Volk was charged and indicted for child substitution and for starving infants to death. The young wife of a well-to-do manufacturer added fuel to the scandal by publicly confessing that, unknown to her husband, Mrs. Geisen-Volk had sold her an infant for seventy-five dollars. None of the crimes committed by Geisen-Volk were new to the baby-farming business; similar accusations were made as early as the 1870s. More unusual were the severity of the reaction and the degree of public interest in the case.

Commercial child placement emerged as a significant social problem in the 1920s in large part because it violated new professional standards in adoption. Without proper supervision by a licensed child-placing agency, adoption could be dangerous both for children and their adoptive parents. Selling children undermined not only professional adoption; it also betrayed the new standards of sentimental adoption. It was a sacrilege to price a priceless child. Worse than a criminal, Mrs. Geisen-Volk was indicted by the judge as a "fiend incarnate." As a probation officer told *New York Times* reporters, "the woman

articles of merchandise to be bartered or exchanged. The defendant represents a revolting anomaly in human-kind."

Harshly denounced as an "iniquitous traffic in human life," and a "countrywide shame," the black market in babies flourished in the 1930s and 1940s. As demand for adoptable children grew, the booming traffic in infants reached a new stage. It was now a seller's market. Therefore, the mother of an unwanted child no longer needed to pay to dispose of her baby. Instead, entrepreneurial brokers approached her, offering to pay medical and hospital expenses and often a bonus in exchange for her baby. Even in independent placements arranged without profit, it became common practice to pay the hospital and medical expenses of the natural mother.

In 1955 a congressional investigation conducted by Senator Estes Kefauver officially pronounced baby-selling a national social problem. The price tag of a black-market baby climbed, from an estimated \$1,000 in the 1930s to \$5,000 in the late 1940s. By 1951 some babies sold for as much as \$10,000. The rising money value of infants was partly determined by a reduced supply. As the dramatic decline in the national birthrate, which began early in the nineteenth century, continued into the 1930s,

---

### Pricing the priceless child is a unique commercial venture.

---

fewer babies were available for adoption. Contemporary observers also suggested that the increased demand for babies was partly the result of higher rates of infertility among American couples. Growing concern with the preservation of the family unit further contributed to the baby shortage. After 1911, the mothers' pension movement allowed widows, and in some cases deserted wives or mothers, to keep their children. Reformers also encouraged unmarried mothers to keep their babies. As a result, the supply of adoptable infants shrunk, and the waiting lists of adoption agencies grew longer. Unwilling to wait two or more years for a child, parents turned to the black market.

Scarcity alone does not determine value. A reduced supply raised the price of babies only because there was a growing number of enthusiastic buyers for white, healthy babies. The market capitalized on, but did not create, the infatuation with priceless babies. In sharp contrast, older children found few customers. Deprived of their former labor value, they were excluded from the new emotional market. Therefore, while the agencies' waiting list for babies had the names of hundreds of impatient parents, it was virtually impossible to find homes for children older

mentally useless. Handicapped and minority children were also excluded from the adoption market.

### **Paying for Babies: A Special Currency**

The sentimentalization of adoption in the twentieth century, thus, led paradoxically to a greater commercialization and monetization of child life. As the market for child labor disappeared; a market price developed for children's new sentimental value. Childless couples were now willing to pay thousands of dollars to obtain a child's love, smiles, and emotional satisfactions. In 1975, a second congressional hearing on black-market practices estimated that more than 5,000 babies were sold each year in the United States, some for as much as \$25,000. Sellers retained bargaining leverage. As one black-market lawyer told a prospective customer, "Take it or leave it. I have five other couples." The capitalization of children's value extended into legitimate child placement. Reversing a long-standing policy, many agencies in the 1940s introduced adoption fees.

Today, surrogacy arrangements introduce a new "custom-made" market for children. Fees are paid not just to obtain someone else's baby but to produce a brand new one. For some economists, this further monetization of child life makes sense. Indeed, Landes and Posner advocate the outright legalization of baby-selling as the best solution to the baby shortage. An undiluted price system, they argue, would match adoptive parents with adoptable children more efficiently than agencies. Landes and Posner, in the 1978 *Journal of Legal Studies*, dismiss "moral outrage" or "symbolic" objections against baby sales, as antiquated and impractical.

Yet moral objections to baby payments cannot be easily appeased. For many, the exchange of children should be regulated only by altruism, never for profit. Indeed, money is what makes surrogacy particularly unsavory. Without payment, surrogacy can be an innovative act of altruism: making babies as a gift for childless couples. But \$10,000 turns the giver into a salaried agent, and the baby into commercial chattel. From this perspective, surrogate parenthood can be legitimized simply by making it unprofitable. For instance, last May in Michigan, a sixteen-member national panel of doctors, lawyers, and clergymen convened by State Senator Connie Binsfield to discuss legislation covering reproductive technologies, recommended that surrogate parenthood not be outlawed, but that the "production of babies for money, or a fee beyond reasonable expenses" be banned. Similarly, in Nebraska, a bill proposed by State Senator Ernest Chambers of Omaha, would accept the legality of surrogate relationships, but would declare that any commercial surrogate contract could not be enforced through the state's judicial system. Surrogate babies, declared Chambers in the *New York Times* "become commodities like corn or wheat, things which can be purchased in the futures market."

Are surrogacy fees necessarily degrading? Does it only take a payment to transform a baby into a commodity? Ironically, both supporters and opponents of baby-selling

ble power of money. They only differ in their evaluation of the process: economists welcome the rationalization of baby exchanges while antimarket ideologists bemoan the monetization of child life. All agree that once money is exchanged, the sale of children is qualitatively indistinct from the sale of cars. After all, in both cases, the payoff is identical: cold cash.

This is a narrow view of money. Money does serve as the key instrument of the modern economic market, transforming objects or even emotions and the value of life into quantifiable, objective sums. But money also exists outside of the sphere of the market, profoundly shaped by culture and social structure. Despite the physical anonymity of dollar bills, not all dollars are equal. We routinely assign different meanings and uses to particular monies. A paycheck, for instance, is "marked" as a different kind of money than a lottery winning. The money we obtain as compensation for an accident is not quite the same as the royalties from a book. A gift of money from a friend is distinct from our employer's Christmas bonus or a grandparents' Christmas check. Different monies are used differently: for instance, a wife's pin money was traditionally reserved for special purchases such as clothing or vacations and kept apart from the "real" money earned by her husband. Different uses can transform the meaning of money. What if Mrs. Whitehead, for instance, had intended to use her \$10,000 as a donation to an infertility clinic? That would certainly mark the money differently than if she planned to use it for a Florida weekend, or simply for groceries. Such distinctions are not imposed by rational economic guidelines, but emerge from our cultural and social context.

Baby payments are a special category of money; shaped by the cultural definition of children as priceless. We also distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate baby purchases. Black-market sales, for example, are unacceptable because they treat children in the same impersonal, economizing manner used for less sacred commercial products. Yet a different kind of market exists which is, in most cases, legal and compatible with sentimental adoption. In this gray market, placements are arranged without profit by parents, friends, relatives, doctors, and lawyers. Within this context, professional fees for legal or medical services are acceptable. Justifying such payments during the 1975 congressional hearings on black-market practices, the executive director of the Child Welfare League of America explained, "Money exchanges hands, but it is only to pay for actual costs. There is no thought of profit." Thus, while the black market is defined as a degrading economic arrangement; a modified, legitimate market exists for the exchange of children.

Adoption fees are another category of "special money." Until the 1940s, agencies only accepted "gratitude donations" from adoptive parents. The Children's Home Society of Virginia, for instance, according to the 1941 *Child Welfare League of America Bulletin*, told parents, "that a gift from them in such an amount as they choose will be gratefully received, but that it must be made as a gift and not as payment for services." The society's directors re-

ilies. The boundary between adoption and purchase was preserved by defining the money as an elective gift and a symbol of gratitude, not a price.

The shift from donations to fees was, therefore, a sensitive matter. Yet the system was accepted. How was the adoption fee distinguished from a purchase price? In large measure, the differentiation hinged on defining the payment as compensation for professional services, not in exchange for a child. A fee was also legitimized as a symbolic payment; a material expression of gratitude. Adoption fees were usually portrayed as a psychological crutch for parents, rather than a commercial device for agencies; for example, from the *Child Welfare League of America Bulletin*: "For any human being to be in the position of asking another . . . for a child . . . is to admit inadequacy. . . . Payment of the fee may ease some of the discomfort arising from this deeply humiliating experience." Parents' voluntary contributions of additional monies to the agency, beyond the stipulated fee, further reinforced the boundary between the adoption fees and a purchasing price. Their elective gift of money served as a symbolic reminder that adopting a child is not an ordinary business deal.

The uniqueness of payments involving children is also apparent in their "rental." For example, at the beginning of the century, wet nurses employed by the foundling asylums were often accused of regarding their infant boarders simply as a source of income. Yet, while these "pay babies" were indeed a source of much needed income, it was defined as a very special payment. A Russell Sage report in 1914 remarked that "renting" out a baby to these poor New York women was often more a sentimental event than a business deal.

Similarly, when boarding homes for older children were first introduced at the turn of the century, boarding fees were defined as "dirty money," tempting foster parents into taking children for profit. This ambivalence over paid parenting was persistent. For instance, periodic efforts to raise board payments by defining the foster mother as an employee of the agency met with resistance and ultimately failure. In the 1940s, a special committee from the Washington Council of Social Agencies, urged payment of a service fee to foster parents in return for their contributions over and above the physical care and maintenance of the child. But the service fee was opposed because it transformed mothering into a marketable job.

#### "Special-Order" Babies

Adequate monetary incentive seems to have an effect on the number of foster homes available and even on the success of fostering. Yet foster parents—most of whom are recruited from lower-middle-class or working-class families—remain uneasy about asking for payment. They often find ways to transcend the instrumental parenting contract. In many cases, for instance, foster parents use their own funds for a foster child's incidental expenses; extra clothing, transportation, allowance, toys, or parties.

The gray market, adoption fees, and board payments illustrate some of the cultural contours of baby payments. Pricing the priceless child is a unique commercial ven-

ture; child "rental" and child sales are profoundly constrained by twentieth-century conceptions of children. The money involved is partly payment, but it can also also be a symbolic expression of sentimental concern.

Surrogacy fees are the latest addition to this inventory of special monies. They remain in a definitional limbo. For opponents of surrogacy, surrogacy fees are no different than black-market price tags, unsuitable to measure the value of a child's life. Some see it as a perverse form of pin money for housewives; paying extra expenses by making a baby. But there is a moral arrogance as well as sociological blindness in the absolutist indictment of surrogacy payments. This money can indeed be "dirty" cash, used to entice poor women into renting their wombs for the rich. It can even be used by the surrogate to blackmail childless couples.

Is that how surrogate mothers define their payment? Most do acknowledge that they would not have entered the arrangement without compensation. Some seem to perceive it as an ordinary wage: "We wanted money to pay some bills and take a vacation," explained one housewife. But surrogates clearly mark the special quality of this money, sometimes refusing even to define it as a payment in exchange for a baby. A mother who was paid \$10,000 and delivered twins was quoted by the *New York Times* as saying, "Believe me, . . . there are easier ways to make ten thousand dollars that involve a lot less time and a lot less pain."

The fee is defined by many surrogates as the childless couple's expression of gratitude for their special gift of a baby. Indeed, a study of 125 surrogate mothers found that while 89 percent of the women said they would require a fee for their service, in no case was money the only reason for "baby-making." One woman who had had an abortion now wanted, according to *Psychology Today*, "to give the gift of a live baby to a loving couple." Others simply liked being pregnant. Surrogates are well aware of the vulnerable boundary between a noble payment and a mercenary fee. Some mark the special quality of the surrogacy fee by allocating the money to particularly unselfish expenses. Mrs. Whitehead, for instance, intended to use the \$10,000 toward a college education for her two other children. As another surrogate mother explained in the *New York Times*: "If the money was just for me I'd feel as if I'd sold her [the baby], and it would be dirty money."

Distinguishing between monies by differential uses occurs with other kinds of special payments. For instance, in cases of compensation for the accidental death of a young child, plaintiffs often ritualize the monetary award by donating it to charity, safety organizations, or scholarships for needy children. Baby payments, much as "death" money, are different than ordinary cash. We need to understand better the meaning of surrogacy fees. How does the father define this money? What about the baby brokers? How do their fees differ from the payment to the mother? How is a "just" surrogacy fee determined? Dr. Richard Levin, the head of Kentucky's Surrogate Parenting Associates (quoted in *The Surrogate Mother* by Noel P. Keane with Dennis L. Breo), explains that he has a "moral problem with paying a surrogate mother too

much—as with one woman who . . . wanted \$100,000—or not enough.” But what makes \$10,000 acceptable? Would a small token fee be defined as more appropriate? Or would an extraordinarily large sum—comparable to some wrongful-death settlements in child death cases—be a more dignified quantity?

The moralistic indictment of surrogacy fees obscures the complex reality of such payments. The involvement of money does not necessarily convert all exchanges into ordinary sales. The surrogate payment may be a venal and dehumanizing payoff, but it can also symbolize an acceptable retribution. Thus, with proper regulation, money does not necessarily pollute the surrogacy baby market. The class bias in surrogacy arrangements, which is the focus of Neuhaus’s argument, is a potentially more damaging feature of the surrogacy market. Poor women, traditionally the wet nurses and baby minders of the rich, would now also become their baby makers. Subsidized surrogacies, much like subsidized adoptions, however, could make the benefits of surrogacy available to poor infertile women. That would only equalize the buyers. It is improbable, although not impossible, that affluent women would serve as surrogates.

In the cases of surrogacy, the inequities between parents are less fundamental than the explicit discrimination between children. Surrogacy is not just a sentimental search for any child to love, but the deliberate manufacture of a particular, suitable child. As one observer has pointed out, the advertisements to hire a surrogate do not follow any affirmative action plan. This “help-wanted” ad specifies: “English background,” “Northern European,” “white,” “Caucasian.” The desired product is a white infant, with no physical or mental handicaps. In the 1920s rush to adopt babies, some wealthy Americans had their English-rose, golden-haired baby girls imported from London. Today, they can be made in America. They even

carry the genetic insurance provided by the adoptive father’s sperm.

Surrogacy further marks the distinction between priceless, desirable children and “unsuitable” children that was established earlier in the century. While babies are made to order, the National Committee for Adoption estimates that a minimum of 36,000 hard-to-place children, some because they are sick, some disturbed, others because they are black, and still others because they are too old, cannot find an adoptive home. Surrogacy contracts often make the concern with quality-control quite explicit. Some contracts include provisions for amniocentesis and obligatory abortion if the results are not agreeable to the genetic father. But what if, despite all precautions, a child is born defective? Would Baby M be disputed with equal passion if she were not a cute, healthy baby—the ultimate priceless child?

Private adoption of unwanted children cannot be mandated by the state. Neither should the search for a child—even through surrogate arrangements—be outlawed by the state, although it must be closely regulated and officially supervised. But we need to collectively recognize the curious and even cruel limits to our sentimentalization of childhood. We must invest emotionally and financially in finding ways to nurture—either in family groups or collective arrangements—those children who need care but are not infants, not white, or not healthy enough. The shortage of such care is as severe as the shortage of cute and healthy white babies. □

---

*Viviana A. Zelizer is professor of sociology at Barnard College and the Graduate Faculty of Columbia University and a visiting scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation. The analysis of baby markets and the social meaning of money is elaborated in her book, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children*, published by Basic Books. She is also author of *Morals and Markets: The Development of Life Insurance in the United States*.*

## Power, Money and High-Minded Intentions

Richard John Neuhaus

**T**he articles responding to my position advance the discussion in several important respects. Barbara Sherman Heyl helpfully reminds us that class has always been a factor in adoption procedures. The new thing in the Baby M case, she writes, is the exercise of class power by the family wanting the baby. It might be more accurate to focus on the explicitness of the exercise of class power

ments engaged in the Baby M case directly assault what might be viewed as the tacit and humane protocols by which class distinctions have been diffused in a society of significant inequalities, the justice of which is eminently disputable. Heyl is also helpful in alerting us to the questions that the several parties—most importantly the child—will be asking some years from now. She is too