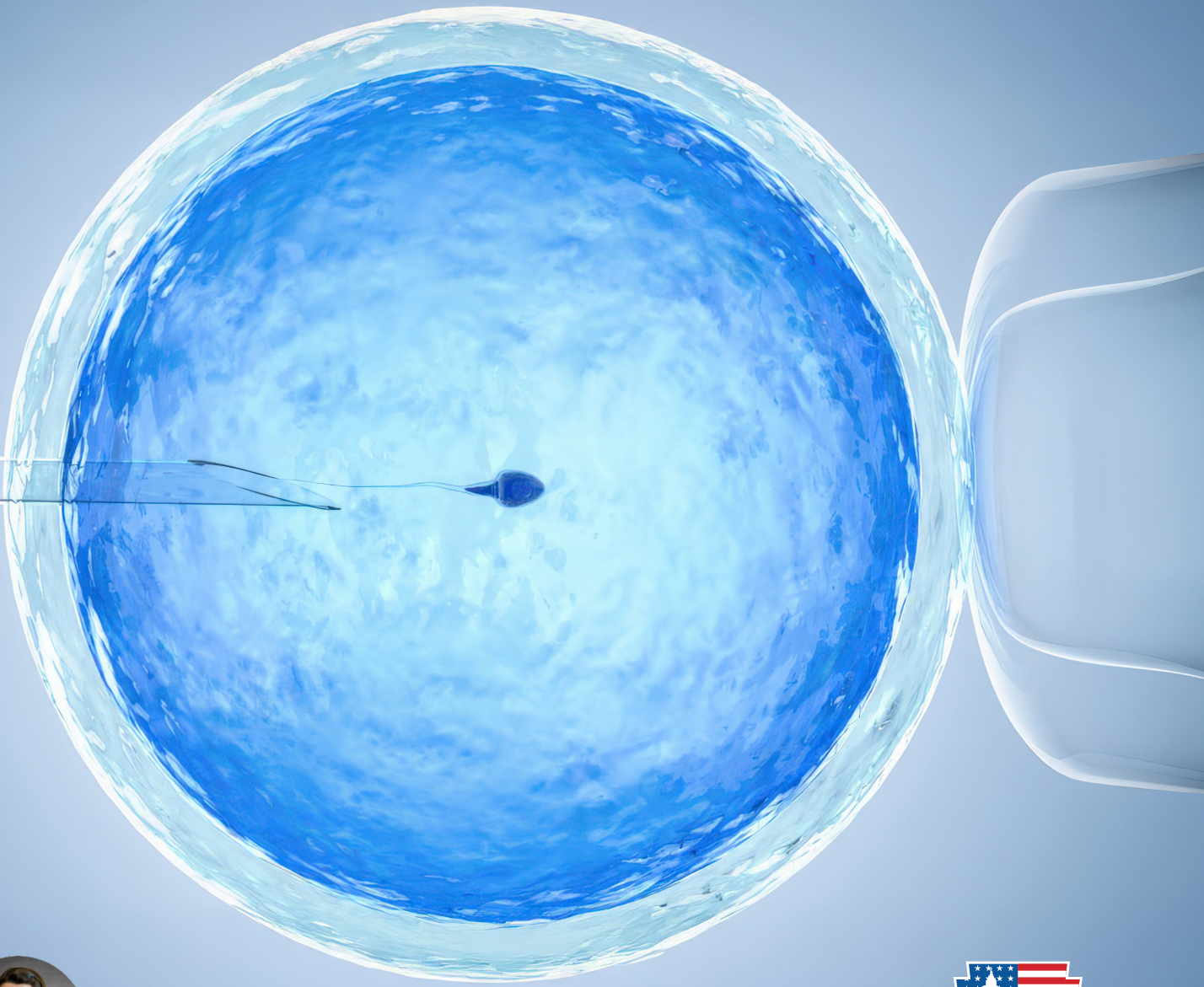


Thoughts on IVF from an IVF baby

SPEAKING FROM
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



By Alexis Sneller, Policy Analyst, PA Family Institute



You may have seen news stories in the last few days in reaction to an Alabama Supreme Court ruling in a case involving in vitro fertilization (IVF). It's an issue that impacts a lot of sensitivities and brings up significant ethical questions. And, it is something that I, as an IVF baby, am deeply invested in. But my opinions may surprise you.

First, before we can talk about IVF, a quick word on what it actually is. Simply put, IVF harvests a mature egg and artificially fertilizes it in a lab with sperm. That fertilized egg, now an embryo, is transferred to the uterus of the mother or a surrogate.

Now, back to my story. **I am incredibly thankful to be alive.** I grew up with wonderful, loving parents and never doubted for a second that I was wanted and loved.

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My heart breaks for my parents as my mom, who I consider my “better-than-best-friend,” has shared about the deep pain of infertility. I understand that it is crushing and that the desire for children and a family is a good, godly thing. I also understand that my parents are only one couple of many who experience the hurt of infertility. We ought to do all we can to walk alongside these couples and provide comfort and support.

“...the desire for children and a family is a good, godly thing.”

While all of this is true, I am deeply concerned

about IVF. 96% of biologists (the vast majority of those who were polled are nonreligious and Democrat) agree that life begins from the moment of conception. At this point, it is settled science. After conception (when the sperm and egg meet), there is no new information or DNA added. Everything is there, all that is needed is time for a baby to grow and develop.

The term “embryo” does not imply a lesser life or lesser value – it is only a stage of development, same as “fetus, infant, toddler, teenager, adult.”

IVF is destructive to this precious life.

The majority of the lives created don't make it through the IVF process. Many are left in freezers, won't survive thawing, will be discarded for being non-viable or the “wrong sex,” will be aborted in the Orwellian name of “selective reduction,” or donated for research.

Currently in America there are over a million embryos sitting in freezers, in a dystopian state of limbo. The numbers are staggering when we remember that each one is a priceless human life. This should make us uncomfortable.

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In America, there are no federal restrictions at all on how many embryos are created at once (which is often many, sometimes a dozen or more) and we are an outlier. Many other countries have oversight and restrictions on the fertility industry. **It is also important to clarify that the Alabama case does not ban IVF.** It simply bans destroying or discarding unwanted embryos.

I also have concerns with the clear eugenics rampant in the fertility industry. Embryos are routinely tested for their sex and any kind of genetic condition like Down Syndrome. Many are destroyed for being “lower quality” (a notoriously difficult standard to categorize or prove) or for having special needs. Some are discarded or chosen for more flippant reasons like the child's sex or even eye color.

Paris Hilton, who has been public about her IVF journey, **infamously shared** that she has 20 sons frozen as embryos, but was going through another round of IVF because she wanted a daughter, not a son.

And then there's the practice to selectively abort when pregnant with multiples. When my own mom was pregnant with me, three embryos were transferred. To this day my mom vividly remembers a doctor pressuring her to abort two of her babies if all three developed, since she was older and it would mean she would have a higher risk pregnancy. She tells me that he made her feel like a terrible mother for not doing it. She left the appointment resolved to not abort, but crying because of how awful that doctor made her feel. It felt especially twisted after she wanted so badly to be pregnant to feel pressured into an abortion was unthinkable. Sadly, only I survived through the entire pregnancy, but I am so thankful for my mom's brave resolve.

Who knows – maybe I would have been one of the babies selectively aborted?

The Alabama Court ruled that unimplanted embryos qualify as children under Alabama law, which, when we consider the statistic I shared earlier, that 96% of biologists agree that life begins at conception, is not radical. They ruled that these children must be protected and not discarded or destroyed.

The pro-life community should celebrate this acknowledgement of the sanctity of life from the moment of conception.

After all, the argument “they are just cells in a petri dish” sounds eerily similar to babies in the womb only being “a clump of cells.” Whether in the womb or in a lab, an embryo is the same. He or she has been conceived and is a person – if they weren't, labs couldn't test and see if they are a boy or a girl or what other characteristics they have.

I will touch on one final point. **I am not here to emphatically say that anyone who uses IVF has participated in a moral evil. There are better ways to do IVF,** like only creating as many embryos as you are willing to use or better yet, only creating one embryo at a time. This doesn't take away every concern (like what happens in the case of a divorce or the tragic loss of a spouse? Or, even if you intend to use every embryo, is it respecting their dignity to leave them in a freezer for years?) but it does show a protection and care for the sanctity of life that sees the value in each life. **There are also couples who can adopt unwanted frozen embryos and have “snowflake” babies, which can be a beautiful way to address the crisis of over a million unwanted and frozen lives.**

There's more I could get into – like how the fertility industry makes a commodity of women and babies (through surrogacy and IVF) or how it separates the creation of life from the created context of physical unity. But this eBook is already too long.

Thank you for engaging on this important topic.

I understand that it is personal and emotional to many. **We celebrate that every new life is a wonderful gift, regardless of the manner of conception.** We must be informed and engaged on this moral crisis and mass destruction of life happening in the unregulated fertility industry in

America.

For Life,

Alexis Sneller

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P.S.

What I have written here only scratches the surface.

I encourage you to do your own research as you prayerfully consider this issue.

To get you started (this is not a comprehensive list) **Katy Faust** and her organization, **Them Before Us** is a fantastic resource.

I also found this segment from **Al Mohler** helpful, along with **Allie Beth Stuckey**'s analysis.

Family Policy Alliance also recently did a great podcast with our colleague from Alabama, Stephanie Smith.



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