

'I wouldn't put them on eBay!' Discourses on money, markets and meanings amongst IVF patients volunteering for a UK 'egg sharing for research' scheme.

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Abstract:

This paper draws on recent research with IVF patients volunteering for a UK 'egg sharing' scheme in which, when volunteers provide eggs for research, they receive reduced fees for IVF treatment. Such a scheme raises questions because 'payments in kind' appear to undermine altruistic notions of 'sharing'. Sandel argues that money 'crowds out' other values worth caring about (2012, 9). However, interviews with volunteers for the scheme suggest that money is not the one-dimensional, fungible entity that such a position presupposes; rather, money has variable contextual significances that tend to remain unheard and hence unanalysed. In listening to what interviewees say, rather than stipulating the significance of what they might be thought to think, it is possible to identify different sets of distinctions to those found in most bioethical analyses, in relation to the appropriateness of the involvement of money and its effects.

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I: INTRODUCTION

The growing global demand for human tissue for research and treatment is accompanied by debates about ethically appropriate ways of encouraging individuals to donate tissue (Nuffield Council on Bioethics (NCoB) 2011). These include debates about the ethics of offering money 'for', or in association with, the provision of tissue. Concerns include whether offers of money: constitute an undue inducement; compromise individual autonomy and the ability to give informed consent; exploit poorer populations; contribute to the commodification of the human body; compromise human dignity; crowd out other values such as altruism (Radin 1996; Svenaeus 2010; NCoB 2011; Sandel 2012; Hoeyer 2013).

Particular concerns have been raised about offering money to women to encourage them to provide eggs and other reproductive tissue for research (Braun and Schulz 2012; Roxland 2012; Haines et al. 2013). For example, should women undergoing IVF have to consider the loss of their eggs to research when they might need them for treatment (Waldby and Carroll 2012) and should non-IVF patients undergo the potential physical risks of IVF when there is no therapeutic need for them to do so (Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) 2006)?

However, these debates lack insight from the very populations under discussion: those who provide tissue. To rectify that deficit this chapter draws on a socio-ethical investigation of the views and experiences of women who have volunteered for a UK scheme providing eggs for research. This scheme, which I shall refer to as the 'Newcastle Egg Sharing for Research scheme' (the NESR) is considered controversial because it advertises for current IVF patients to 'share' 50% of the eggs they produce in a single IVF cycle (as long as they produce six or more eggs); those who provide eggs receive a £1500 discount on their private IVF fees for that cycle (currently £3,000-£3,700). The eggs provided go towards somatic cell nuclear transfer research and, more recently, to research on avoiding the transmission of mitochondrial diseases.

II: A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

One reason why the NESR is considered controversial (either progressive or transgressive) and has attracted criticism (Waldby et al. 2013) is that it appears not to conform to European legislation or practice (Braun and Schulz 2012). However, though the EU appears to place clear restrictions on the offer of incentives for the donation of body parts, the NCoB (2011) draws attention to the varying ways in which the potential entanglements of money and human tissue are actually described. While some EU documents insist that donation should be 'unpaid', and procurement be on a 'non-profit basis', the Oviedo Convention states that the human body and its parts 'shall not, as such, give rise to financial gain' (cited in NCoB 2011,70). The 'as such' remains unexplicated (Pattinson 2012). The World Health Organisation bans 'monetary payments' or 'rewards' and the Declaration of Istanbul calls for a ban on organs being 'bought or sold for material gain'. The UK Human Tissue Act distinguishes between 'commercial dealings', 'rewards' (financial or material) and 'reimbursements' in the supply of human material (NCoB 2011, 70).

The researcher-clinicians who designed the NESR were licensed to implement it by the HFEA in 2007. They claimed, amidst controversy, that the NESR mirrored the well-established 'egg sharing' for treatment scheme, in which one infertile woman pays for the treatment of another infertile woman when receiving half her eggs. Roberts and Throsby argued this claim was a way of establishing the NESR as 'business as usual', silencing ethical objections (2008, 161). Since October 2011, the HFEA allows payments, for expenses and inconvenience, of £750 per cycle for egg donors and £35 per visit for sperm donors (Hamm and Anton 2012). These amounts were designed to encourage donation for treatment and research, without 'attracting those who are merely financially motivated' (Pattinson 2012, 583).

In the USA practice is varied. Since 2009, New York State's stem cell board allow 'compensation', beyond direct expenses, to women who provide their eggs to research: up to \$5,000 is considered reasonable; \$5,000 to \$10,000 requires further justification, and amounts over \$10,000 are prohibited (Roxland 2012; Haimes et al. 2013, 285). Egli et al (2011) concluded that American women elsewhere who had volunteered, but failed to proceed, to donate eggs for research did so because they were not offered financial compensation. Noggle et al (2011) offered financial compensation to American women volunteering to provide eggs for either treatment or research and reported that some did donate to research. Neither article reported any systematic investigation or analysis of the women's reasoning.

Clearly there are different views over the desirable relationship between money and body parts and over the ways in which that relationship can, and should, be characterised (Svenaeus 2010).

III: CHARACTERISING THE DEBATE ON MONEY AND BODIES

A brief overview of the debates can be gained from comparing two prominent accounts: Sandel (2012) and the NCoB 2011 report. There are many other participants in these debates as the references cited hitherto indicate; I have chosen these simply because they 'represent' different conclusions, while exploring similar terrain.

Sandel 'represents' the concerns raised over the moral implications of the progressive monetization of social life, suggesting that this increases both inequality and corruption (2012,8). He argues that when everything can be bought and sold, those with less money are excluded from full social participation, and that market values corrupt or 'crowd out' other, more important, values (2012,9). Attaching a price to the 'good things in life' makes them worth more, financially, but degrades how we value them because our attitudes to them change. He is concerned that we will devalue human beings if we treat them or their body parts as commodities to be bought and sold for profit. These are moral and political issues: 'To resolve them we have to debate, case by case, the moral meaning of these goods and the proper way of valuing them.' (2012,10).

Finding a resolution is complicated by having to decide whether to participate in 'morally questionable markets' in order to achieve desirable ends, such as having children (2012,79) or, perhaps, advancing clinical research. Will marketizing such practices by, for example,

introducing incentives, 'displace' non-market norms (2012,90)? Instead of focusing on whether particular incentives will 'work' (e.g. 'will researchers recruit more egg donors by providing incentives to donate?') a moral assessment should be made 'of the attitudes and norms that money may ... crowd out', in case this changes 'the character of the activity in ways we would (or at least should) regret? If so, should we avoid introducing financial incentives into the activity, even though they might do some good?' (2012,91). He acknowledges that some exchanges can appear to benefit both parties without anyone else suffering but is concerned that such exchanges can nonetheless diminish the value of that which is being exchanged; those goods become tainted by the very fact of exchange (2012,114). Sandel's worry is that 'the marketization of everything' diminishes shared citizenship, so those with money, and those without, lead increasingly separate lives (2012,203).

In contrast to Sandel, the NCoB noted that while they value the altruistic donation of human material they do not accept that systems based on altruism and systems involving payment are 'necessarily incompatible' (2011,viii). They reject Sandel's 'crowding out' argument since they do not regard the offer of money as necessarily unethical. They suggest, however, that the following require close scrutiny when money is offered: the welfare of the donor; the welfare of 'closely concerned' individuals; the potential threat to the common good, and the professional responsibilities of the health practitioners (2011, 7-8). This contention that money is not inherently contaminating is important, in light of the reference to 'gifts' as 'the sanctioned metaphor' for bodily contributions (Svenaeus, 2010).

As we have seen, the NCoB identify different ways in which the use of money is described, so they propose their own typology. All transactions involving money should be termed 'payments' and different types of payments then distinguished as follows: (i) 'recompense' for losses incurred (as 'reimbursement' of expenses or 'compensation' for non-financial losses); (ii) 'rewards' that constitute a material advantage for donating, which could include 'remuneration' if wage-based, and (iii) 'purchase', defined as 'payment in direct exchange for something (e.g. a certain amount for a kidney, or per egg).' (2011,70).

The report adopts an 'intervention ladder' through which the ethical acceptability of any intervention to encourage donation might be evaluated. Rung 1 interventions would just be information about donating; rung 6, the highest, would include financial incentives that leave the donor better off as a result of donating (2011,viii-ix). Rung 6 interventions are no less ethical than rung 1 but their ethical implications require closer scrutiny because of their potential threat 'to wider communal values' (2011,5). The authors also distinguish between 'altruist-focused' and 'non-altruist focused interventions': the former are intended to remove barriers to people who are 'already inclined to donate'; the latter are intended to encourage donation by offering a reward 'sufficient to prompt action' (2011,5). They 'reject the concept of the purchase of bodily material, where money exchanges hands in direct return for body parts' and distinguish 'purchase' from uses of money that 'reward or recompense donors' (2011,5). The amount of 'work' that this report needs to do, to build an argument for allowing money to be involved, is noteworthy, underscoring the assumption in most debates that the entanglement of money and body parts is damaging.

Despite their differences, the NCoB and Sandel agree on the need to attend to the detail of particular cases and contexts. Sandel calls for a ‘case by case’ debate (2012,10) and the Chair of NCoB report says, ‘this enquiry has enabled us to *compare* how particular ethical ideas and concepts are used in different circumstances, and has thus helped us understand the importance of the *context* in which decisions and actions take place.’ (2011,viii; emphasis in original). Nonetheless, each relies on claims about the motives and preferences of the people directly involved in these areas. I want to ask instead how those directly involved characterise their own motivations, preferences and actions. In order to do this we need to listen more to what they actually say, rather than speculate about, and then stipulate the significance of, what they might be thought to think.

IV: INTERVIEWEES’ CHARACTERISATIONS OF MONEY AND MARKETS

Elsewhere I have discussed various aspects of the entanglement of money and eggs in the NESR: whether it is necessarily exploitative; whether it leads to undue inducement, a loss of autonomy and weakened informed consent, and, briefly, whether the entanglement necessarily constitutes the commodification of the human body (Haimes, Taylor and Turkmendag 2012; Haimes 2013; Haimes and Taylor 2013). Those papers show that volunteers welcomed the scheme and had no regrets volunteering for it, but were not volunteering under circumstances of their choosing; they would prefer to provide eggs once their own IVF treatment was completed. They volunteered to provide fresh eggs (whose usefulness for their own treatment is therefore unknown at the point of provision) during treatment because of their experiences of the UK IVF bio-economy in which state funded treatment is difficult to access and private fees are high. The discount was important to their decision to volunteer but not determinative: some withdrew even though that meant they had to pay full fees and almost all declined to donate eggs to the treatment of other couples even though that meant even cheaper fees. The discount was one of a number of complex variables which they juggled in trying to achieve their primary goal of having a baby (Haimes 2013).

In this chapter I focus on how interviewees spoke about the ‘money and markets’ aspects of the scheme. Did they accord the same significance to the issues raised by writers such as Sandel and the NCoB and, if so, how did they navigate their way through them? I first consider how volunteers reasoned through the question of whether they were *selling* their eggs. An American colleague, on hearing about the NESR, commented that ‘in other words’, women were selling their eggs. However, how are such translations into ‘other words’ to be regarded? How are they used, by whom, to make what claims, with what social, legal and moral significance? Did interviewees hear this translation: as a provocation; as a reasonable representation of their actions; as a puzzling characterisation, or in some other way? How did they frame and explain their views; what connections did they make or reject; which aspects were they consistent and clear about; what comparisons and contrasts did they draw; which elements did they find challenging, confusing or contradictory? I explore these questions further through an analysis of how interviewees discussed the maximum and minimum amounts of discount they should receive and alternative ways to organise the discounts. To what extent do their views suggest that they regarded themselves as engaging in market-like behaviour?

1) Are women who participate in the NESR selling their eggs?

I have collected interviewees' views under three broad headings categorising ways of discussing this question.

(i) No:

Most interviewees were clear, some emphatically, that they were not selling their eggs: *'Oh no, definitely not!...[it was] just part of the process... and you just got a little bit of money towards it... I wouldn't just do it to get money'* (M09:663-710). The strength of expression might indicate moral abhorrence but what informs that abhorrence?

One couple introduced the language of 'payment' themselves. The woman said, *'I didn't actually think of it as "oh well, I'm getting paid for my eggs", I didn't ever feel like that...'*

Her partner added: *'...I don't think you can put a price on, "here's an egg, there's a £100"...'* The woman continued, *'I don't know {pause}...I never really thought of it as getting money and selling...it's like selling a bit of yourself and I've never felt that way. And...going on the open market, I'd feel a bit like going to the cattle market...'*

Her partner: *'Then it's the highest bidder, isn't it? You may as well put yourself on eBay {laughter}'* (M01: 1149-1190; 1192-1229)

The direct link between money and eggs invokes associations with 'payment' and 'selling', yet, importantly, it did not 'feel like that' to the couple because they were focused on succeeding with IVF. This exchange displays many of the features apparent in other interviewees' discussions, in distinguishing between what they were doing and what outsiders might regard as selling. For interviewees the idea of selling links to ideas about cash, profit and the initial motivation of 'doing it for the money' as opposed to doing it for an entirely different reason.

(ii) 'I suppose you are selling them, really...':

Occasionally interviewees edged towards the possibility that the NESR could be defined as selling eggs but embedded that within other factors, including the reasons why they are being sold (if indeed they are), the conditions under which this occurs, and an ongoing interest in what happens to the eggs:

'I don't think egg sharing is selling your eggs, I think it's a way of complementing your fees...you know where [they're] going to and what's happening with them... I'm more reassured that whatever's happening in research, you've got some guidelines... I suppose you are selling them, really, but you're selling them for a better cause.' (M28:1322-73). The implication here is that the NESR simply complements normal IVF. The interviewee sounds defensive and does not explain why she 'supposes' it could be selling but if it is to be so defined, it can be justified by the research context.

One woman, acknowledging that she could be seen as selling her eggs because she was engaging in a financial deal, still felt there was a difference: *'I suppose it can be seen as selling, you're giving something and you're getting payment for it.'* She then compared that to selling a DVD on the internet: *'The money I get back for that is not anything specific, it's just cash [but] if I'm giving my eggs for research, the money that's coming back is being used'*

specifically on treatment...You are receiving a payment for doing it, but I can't take that money, put it in my pocket and have a shopping spree...I'm not even getting money back, I'm getting money taken off a bill for treatment and in the same arena. It's the only way I can explain it...' (M27:1619-1711).

Interviewees felt an implicit criticism in the suggestion that they were selling eggs: *'...am I selling my eggs? Yeah I probably am and I don't care! {laughter}...But who are these people saying to me "you're selling your eggs"? Are these people that have never been through this...?'* (M05:1048-59). Her defensiveness leads her to question the credentials of those raising such issues.

For interviewees, terms such as 'selling' do not have simple, uncontested meanings; they reasoned out why the involvement of money might appear to be synonymous with 'selling' but, at the same time, why its involvement was experienced differently in these particular circumstances. I shall return to these features in the Commentary, in light of further data. I turn now to consider interviewees' discussions about whether, if the NESR is not defined as selling, they would actually sell their eggs?

(iii) Would interviewees sell their eggs?

The extensive distance that most interviewees placed between the NESR and the idea of selling is shown in this discussion. The utterances ranged from brief rejections of the idea - *'No, not at all!'* (M04:754-7); *'No, never!'* (M05:820-70) - to more detailed considerations. In the latter they deployed a series of distinctions that indicated the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable transactions around eggs. One said, in reference to selling eggs on the open market, *'No, I don't really agree with that...it's a bit like going abroad and buying a liver isn't it? ...I know it's a little bit different but I don't agree... eggs are precious but there [are] ethical things, aren't there...I don't think that's right...'* When asked why, she replied, *'I don't know...I feel like it's selling something from my body ...I haven't got a big opinion on it because it's just something that I wouldn't do... It's different with research...I feel like I'm doing some good...but as for going on the internet and selling your eggs...I don't agree with that...I[would] just feel like I was selling my body...'*(M02:704-48).

Interviewees used the internet as short-hand for the open market. One illustrated the stylistic tropes that others used when she joked: *'I wouldn't put them on eBay! No. But a proper clinic...'* (M26:818-39). She later emphasized, *'No, not the internet, no. Maybe if times get hard! {laughing}'* (M26:1175-82). The use of joking suggests unease with both the idea of selling and with the involvement of the internet. Another compared selling eggs on the internet to selling to *'back street butchers'*, conflating the two charges normally levelled at illegal abortionists, of operating in dubious unhygienic settings and using poor quality, physically damaging, techniques, suggesting her strength of feeling about this possibility (M27:1523-85).

Concerns were raised about what would happen to the eggs if they were sold over the internet: *'My fear would be "what are they going to be used for?", whereas I felt confident that my eggs were going to be used with the [clinic] as they said they were going to be used...it goes back to trusting what's going to happen to them...{sigh, pause} ... it doesn't seem {pause} as comfortable as sharing your eggs through a process that you're already*

doing' (M11:921-41). 'A process that you're already doing', similar to the earlier phrase, 'in the same arena', implies associating with places, people and purposes already known and accepted, whereas the internet is associated with the unknown.

One woman expressed the views raised by others when asked what she thought of a system where women were given £1500 cash for eggs and could decide for themselves how they wanted to use it: *'...to me that puts it in the same category of stories you hear about people in America or in third world countries where they sell their...organs...where do you draw the line? What if you have a drug addict who's desperate for money and so they'll donate you 50% of their eggs...[what] if it was an alcoholic...'* It is right to target IVF patients, *'because it's women who are in this who understand why you need [eggs] and I think anybody else would only do it for the money and I think that's when it becomes unethical'* (M25:972-1025). IVF patients provide eggs, *'for all the right reasons'* (M27: 1619-1741). That the use of cash might produce certain consequences, including attracting the wrong sort of donors, encapsulates interviewees' views on why the NESR is not seen as selling and what could happen if it were to be 'more like' selling.

2) Should egg providers receive a 'fee per egg' instead?

I asked interviewees whether the reduced fees discount could be packaged in any other way, to see what priorities, limits, and boundaries were expressed. For example, would they prefer a system in which they were given a fee for each egg, rather than a fixed discount, regardless of the number of eggs provided? As can be seen above, the idea of deciding a specified sum of money for a single egg was taken as partly definitive of 'selling' but was also something that was often raised as presenting a conceptual, moral and practical obstacle to actually selling. Perhaps not surprisingly then, most interviewees rejected the suggestion of a fee per egg. However, the grounds they gave for doing so proved very interesting given that their reasons for participating in the NESR in the first place was to access cheaper IVF cycles.

Interviewees forcibly rejected the 'fee per egg' suggestion because it was unfair, as the number of eggs a woman produced was not under her control and no one could do anything extra to produce more and 'earn' a bigger discount. As one said, deploying a phrase that shows how difficult IVF treatment is, *'[they are all] going through the same trauma however many eggs they are producing'* (M18:748-80). Similarly, others said, *'you can't do anything more than what your body will let you do'* (M26:1107-73) and *'it's not up to you, you can't do anything about it. No, it should be the same. Price per egg is wrong {laughing}'* (M22:939-54).

Interviewees also argued that a 'fee per egg' system would put IVF patients under additional pressure, especially if it meant that they could only afford another IVF cycle by producing a certain number of eggs: *'...you're under so much pressure to produce as many eggs as you can [in IVF]...I wouldn't like the pressure then of saying each egg was worth £250 or something [compared with] the guarantee that you were going to get £1500 to be able to afford the cycle... 'Cos if you didn't get that many eggs, how are you going to pay for the rest of the cycle?'* (M11:954-985).

Interestingly, one woman, when asked about 'fee per egg', immediately clarified, 'You buy each egg?' , then reasoned, 'Erm, {long pause}, no I don't think that's fair...if someone who isn't lucky enough to produce so many eggs, gets less money or less of a chance [of pregnancy] than someone who does produce a lot of eggs, just cos they're unfortunate enough to not have so many eggs, it doesn't make their sacrifice any less, well it's harder for them really to make that decision than someone who produces a lot of eggs' (M07:712-47). This use of 'sacrifice' echoes comments elsewhere in the interviews that women would prefer to give eggs after they had achieved a pregnancy rather than during their IVF treatment.

For interviewees, as IVF patients, the value of eggs is calculated in relation to the eggs' contributions to increasing the chances of pregnancy. In general, interviewees thought that more eggs could mean more chances of pregnancy but they also know that an exceptionally high number of eggs does not have a proportionately increased effect on those chances, so if one has 40 eggs, giving away 20 is unlikely to reduce those chances significantly whereas giving away two out of four eggs is much more likely to do so. Eggs, in and of themselves, are not regarded as having any innate value or price; rather, eggs have a dual worth, representing both the chances of pregnancy and the chances of more treatment; both are important to interviewees. From this perspective, the involvement of money neither erodes nor increases the 'preciousness' of eggs; similarly, exchanging eggs for more treatment does not devalue those eggs (Haines 2013). The 'fee per egg' suggestion was not objected to on the moral grounds that this would be more like selling, or 'purchase', as defined by the NCoB (2011) but on two different and associated grounds: that of the practical goals of reducing stress during IVF and that of fairness, within the arduous IVF process of producing those eggs.

Interviewees' responses to the 'fee per egg' suggestion display several features: first, the fact that none of them had suggested such a scheme themselves indicates that they were not motivated by the wish to maximise their income from their eggs; second, it elicited references to their not being in control of the processes of producing eggs; third, that lack of control meant that it was not in their power to produce more eggs, and, fourth, that then elicited highly moral discourses around 'fairness', 'earning', 'deserving'. The language of fairness could be partly defensive as interviewees do not know how many eggs they will produce in any particular cycle and they would not want to be someone who gets less of a discount. Nonetheless, this is such a recurrent, and strongly emphatic, feature of their talk that there is clearly a pervasive concern for others like themselves who are going through IVF.

3) Maximum and minimum amounts for the discount

I asked interviewees about their sense of acceptable and unacceptable maximum and minimum levels of discount on IVF treatment for providing eggs to research. This helps to tease out whether they had strong views about the actual figures offered or about what their eggs are 'worth' and whether they volunteered for the NESR wanting to negotiate good terms for themselves. Interviewees generally liked the rough, though inaccurate (because total IVF fees have increased whereas the discount has remained at £1500) symmetry of 50% eggs for 50% discount. One interviewee, asked: 'So they took half your eggs?' replied, 'Yeah and I paid half the money and I think that's quite fair' (M22:925-41).

Although interviewees were uncomfortable discussing specific sums of money - '*...it sounds awful... it's not all about the money*' (M02:779-806) - a clear sense of what would be too low emerged, judged in relation to the full IVF price and their chances of more treatment. When asked if £500 would have been enough, one replied, '*probably not, no {laughing}... But half price for us was great, we can get another round of treatment in*' (M05:909-940). Another picked out her own figure for what would be too low: '*it's not very nice having your eggs retrieved. I think £1500 is quite a reasonable amount...I wouldn't do it for £50! Oh my God, no! {laughs}*' (M26:870-91). Commonly £500 was a figure mentioned as not being enough, either because that was a sum they could imagine raising from elsewhere without having to contemplate giving up some of their eggs or because that would buy an insufficient portion of an additional cycle of treatment. Interviewees also identified dangers in offering too high a discount. '*I think any more than [£1500] and you might end up with any Tom, Dick or Harry coming through the door ...you end up with the wrong type of people coming in for treatment...people who are only in it for the money and are only in it for the reduced cost*' (M04:762-806).

In brief, interviewees valued the discount for its ability to increase their chances of private IVF treatment, not as a sum of money in its own right; as with the discussion on selling, they are keen to establish that they are not volunteering for the NESR 'for the money' but within a context in which they can gain something for themselves and can give something back. Embarrassment when discussing money in detail might be partly because in the UK we are not used to discussing money in relation to health care; these comments might be 'heard' differently elsewhere. Nonetheless this is evidence that money is troubling and that interviewees are keen to establish certain views about the different types of money being made available and discussed.

V: COMMENTARY:

There is a range of claims in the interviews about what the NESR is, and what it is not, in the ways in which money features in its transactions. In supposing, sometimes reluctantly, that the NESR 'must' amount to the selling of eggs simply because it is (amongst other things) a financial transaction, interviewees are reflecting Strathern's (2012) observation that in many debates, when money enters the room, all other considerations fly out of the window. However, in also resisting that easy and singular association between money and selling, and by focusing on those 'other things that it is amongst', interviewees are also demonstrating that everyday life, and the role of money within it, is somewhat more nuanced and complex than usually supposed (Zelizer 1997; Almeling 2011).

It is not easy to resist that singular association, as can be seen by the style in which interviewees seek to articulate their views. They pause, hesitate and joke as they stress how their experiences *feel* different to other apparently more authoritative claims and they seek ways of mitigating what they hear as criticism, or even accusation, of selling. Jokes expressed the outer limits of what might be deemed acceptable: one cannot possibly auction eggs on eBay. The interviewees, while actively seeking a discount on their IVF fees, are nonetheless troubled by money.

Zelizer (1997,2) observes that money is commonly thought to create cold personal relationships and not surprisingly (since interviewees encounter those views in all sorts of aspects of their lives) some of those fears are heard in the quotations above. It is partly because of this standard view that Sandel (2012), as one of its proponents, can blur his use of terms such as 'money', 'markets', 'buying' and 'selling' as if these have commonly accepted and almost interchangeable meanings. However, Zelizer's riposte is that people introduce all sorts of distinctions about how money operates in their everyday lives: '*distinction and multiplication appear on every hand.*' (1997,4). This reflects more closely interviewees' reasoning on these issues: we can identify a range of distinctions that they draw and can show how those link to, and bump up against, other ideas, to see which distinctions matter, and in what ways. At least five lines of distinction emerge in interviewees' discourses on ideas around eggs, money and selling.

(i) the IVF context:

We have argued elsewhere (Haimes et al. 2012) that the IVF context is highly influential on the interviewees' framing of their experiences: they are only involved in the NESR because they are IVF patients and because their over-riding goal is to have a baby. This framing encompasses their orientations towards the role of money in those experiences, including their views that there should be more state funding of IVF and that private fees are too high (Haimes 2013). It is not surprising then that the IVF context shapes some of their views on whether the NESR constitutes egg selling. A key distinction that they draw in asserting a difference between the NESR and selling is that, in participating in the NESR, they are not doing anything much different from 'normal IVF'; it is 'part of the process', 'in the same arena' as their treatment. The meaning and value of eggs are calculated with reference to the chances of success in their own IVF treatment, in which the open market is deemed irrelevant. Participation in the NESR it is not 'about' the money but 'about' getting treatment and having a baby and they would not be providing their eggs other than to get cheaper treatment. It does not feel like selling because their subjective motivation lies in a completely different direction and social domain.

The importance of the IVF context in framing their views of the relationship between money and eggs is most clearly seen in interviewees' comments on the 'fee per egg' suggestion. Their concerns switch from distancing themselves from the idea of selling to aligning themselves with other women also undergoing IVF, where every egg counts. The potential unfairness of 'fee per egg', plus its likely impact in increasing stress, anxiety and poor responses to treatment, completely negates other considerations and it was firmly rejected. Although Weber describes money as 'impersonal' and Simmel asserts its 'heartlessness' (Zelizer 1997,6) neither resonates with interviewees' discussions about a 'fee per egg'; rather, they display a concern for others and for fairness rather than for maximising their own gains over others. Such a unanimous, other-concerned, response counters Sandel's pessimism about money driving out altruistic concerns; the data considered here suggests that whether or not this happens depends on how the money is embedded, and acted upon, within specific socio-cultural contexts. The interviews support the NCoB's (2011) assertion of the importance of context, and fill in the details lacking in that report, by providing indications of the discursive practices through which relevant contexts are constituted and deployed as both a topic and a resource for reasoning.

(ii) the nature of the money that is or is not involved:

One of the characteristics of debates about money is the assumption that 'money' is a single, uncontested, entity, but we have already seen Zelizer's (1997,2) suggestion that in everyday life all sorts of distinctions are drawn between types of money. This is clearly the case for these interviewees. While some move towards saying that the NESR is egg selling because it is a financial transaction, they and others also suggest that the money involved in the NESR has distinctive features that differentiate it from the money involved in selling. For example, the NESR money is not 'cash' or a 'profit' or a 'cheque' or 'disposable income' or 'earnings' or 'money back'; it is 'money off' and it is 'half price'. Also it is money directed towards a specific use, as a 'means to an end', for accessing further, cheaper, treatment; the money, as Zelizer (1997) would say, is 'earmarked' and not transferable to other activities, such as a shopping spree. These distinctions establish that whilst some transactions involving money might be problematic, the particular transaction around the NESR is morally acceptable.

The references by some interviewees to how money in the form of cash might attract the wrong people for the wrong reasons reflects Almeling's (2011) argument that we should look at how, and what type of, money actually changes hands in the gamete market, to understand how the transaction is experienced and understood by those involved (clinicians as well as gamete providers). As our analysis shows, attention to contextual detail is important; it might be partly because actual money does not change hands in the NESR that interviewees are able to make some of these distinctions.

Interviewees' discursive practices reflect the NCoB's contention that 'money may be conceptualised in many ways' (2011,4) though they do not echo the neatness of the report's monetary typology. The report is written broadly from the perspectives of state agencies and research bodies concerned to find ethical means of promoting the safe contribution of human materials to treatment and research; one can only speculate how its register, and categorical distinctions, might differ if written from the perspective of actual and potential providers of those bodily materials.

(iii) not participating in market-like behaviour:

Interviewees do not see themselves as engaging in market-like behaviours. Beyond the practical difficulty of not knowing how to participate in the market, even if they had wanted to, they argued, implicitly and explicitly, that their actions and motivations distinguished them from those operating in the market place. For example, going into the market presumes a profit motivation, 'doing it for the money', which all denied; rather, they were participating in the NESR mostly to help themselves and partly to help research. Orienting their actions towards an unseen, third party-beneficiary ('research') rather than towards personal profit was how many interviewees expressed their lack of interest in the open market.

Market behaviour also requires detailed calculations of a price for the goods in terms of what the market will bear, but no interviewee could see how to put a price on an egg, let alone proposed a rationale for one price over another. The 'fee per egg' suggestion would have been an opportunity to do this but instead interviewees directed the discussion towards the unfairness of such proposals. Similarly, the discussion around maximum and

minimum levels of discounts produced very few examples of specific sums of money, particularly at the higher end. Interviewees' assertions that they were not seeking a profit or a surplus are supported by the nature of their discussion in these areas. Also, as several said, laughing about going on eBay, they were not interested in selling their eggs to the highest bidder, a practice that would be definitive of market-like behaviour. Similarly, the fact that eggs cannot be appropriately compared with DVDs underscores the absence of any market-like behaviour amongst interviewees since the market depends on a notion of the lack of difference between goods and their essential sameness as commodities. Also none bargained for an actual 50% fees discount even though they struggled to pay private IVF fees and with the 'monied' world of IVF in general.

This appears to be how interviewees address Sandel's challenge of how to decide whether to participate in 'morally questionable markets' (2012,79); interviewees clearly do link market reasoning with moral reasoning. However, their distancing of themselves from market like behaviour is in many ways curious because it is in marked contrast to the ways in which the market place for IVF treatment, in which they find themselves, operates (Winston 2011). Nonetheless, as reflexive actors, interviewees are constituting both the contexts of relevance for their actions while at the same time constituting themselves as certain types of persons; in this case, persons who do not see themselves as traders in the market place for human eggs.

(iv) the 'location' of the transaction:

Interviewees' perceptions of the degrading nature of the market are seen in the comparisons they draw with places like cattle markets: cold, dirty, noisy, lacking human dignity and focused on auctioneering for the highest price. Similarly, the reference made to places like 'backstreet butchers' conveys the strength of concern about just where, and how, any market in eggs would function. References to the internet elicited further concerns about a lack of regulation and whether using the internet would be an explicit venture into the open market. The internet's market goals, practices and consequences, were contrasted with the NESR's goals, practices and consequences.

A key factor for interviewees in distinguishing participation in the NESR from participation in the open market is that the NESR transaction takes place in 'the clinic', either the clinic they know from previous treatments or the clinic they 'know' as an abstract but nonetheless 'proper' place. This is contrasted with the internet, and occasionally 'abroad', 'America', the 'third world', which are all seen as odd, 'out of place', alien locations, unregulated and managed by unknown people, as far as any dealings around eggs are concerned and which thereby transform any transaction accordingly. The synecdochal reference to the 'clinic' indicates all that is right about the experience: cleanliness, familiarity, regulated, staffed with 'proper' doctors and nurses who know what they are doing and who can be trusted, and attended by women who have a better understanding than others of just what eggs mean. The clinic also has 'proper' reasons for encouraging this transaction, assisting the 'good cause' of research. Interviewees' utterances convey the idea of the clinic as a socially, physically and, most important, *morally* comfortable place in which transactions around eggs should occur.

The concern with the 'location' of the transaction suggests that the introduction of money via the NESR is made possible and acceptable through *existing* social relationships: partly through pre-existing associations between IVF and money but mostly through pre-existing interpersonal relationships between the patient and clinic staff, plus the location of the clinic within the familiar institution of the National Health Service. As far as the NESR is concerned, social relationships are not being eroded by money, as is often assumed, but are the very element that makes the involvement of money possible in the first place. As Zelizer observes, it is not the case that money necessarily flattens or corrodes social relationships (1997,18-21), as is assumed in classic Marxist analyses, but this can only be understood if we explore how markets are actually organised and experienced (Almeling 2011).

(v) retaining an interest in their eggs:

Zelizer (1997,7-8) also challenges Marxist assumptions that money alienates subjective connections between individuals and the objects they produce and reduces all personal relations to the '*cash nexus*'. Interviewees' discursive practices support Zelizer's challenge: part of their concern about selling eggs on the open market is that they would not know what happened to them and they fear that they could be misused. It is not the case that once they receive the discount they no longer care about their eggs. As we have seen, it also matters that the scheme is provided by an organisation that they know. This illustrates further that, far from being obliterated by the offer of a discount, subjective connections are *central* to the process of volunteering for the NESR.

Interviewees perceive their eggs as not easily separable from them and their bodies. While eggs might be physically separable (IVF relies on that) they are not morally separable; interviewees retain a sense of responsibility towards their eggs, even after donation. They emphasized the similarity between their eggs and other body parts and talked of eggs as being part of their bodies and indeed part of their selves. They did not distinguish between the characteristics of eggs and other body parts along the commonly accepted lines of: multiple eggs/single organs; reproductive tissue / non-reproductive tissue; use for treatment / research. Rather, in discussions around money, they emphasized how the eggs relate to, and are understood with reference to, the whole body. This is an apparent contradiction to the suggestion elsewhere (Haines 2013) that the IVF process emphasizes the entification of eggs and their exchangeability. However, what appears to be the case for interviewees is that eggs can be detached and exchanged to achieve the goal of having a baby but not for lesser goals like making money. In other words, there is entification of eggs in IVF, but this is not necessarily true of all eggs in all situations; only in certain contexts do eggs become entities, at other times they are not only part of the body but also part of the self. Thus, whilst Sandel (2012) is concerned that the very fact of exchange taints that which is being exchanged, the interviewees demonstrate that, in the case of eggs at least, 'that which is being exchanged' does not have one single, stable definition, let alone one single, stable status, financial or moral.

To return to the original concerns that provoke these discussions: does the entanglement of money and eggs constitute the commodification of bodily parts, and therefore the marketisation of such transactions, and is this a 'bad thing'? One can understand the genuine socio-moral concerns that lead writers such as Sandel (2012) to answer 'yes' to all 3 questions (Strathern 2012). However, interviewees' accounts suggest that more complex

understandings of the many varied relationships between money and body parts are possible and necessary; the meanings and actions attached to, and around, 'money' are not straightforward. The relationship is neither linear nor causal and the debates therefore cannot easily settle into either 'pro' or 'anti' the involvement of money in such transactions. Instead we need to follow Hoeyer's suggestion to think '...about value in a way that combines moral and epistemological dimensions with the notion of monetary worth, but we must do so reflectively and without presuming too much about what money does and what bodies are' (2013,3). The interviews reported on in this chapter reinforce the need to examine *particular* cases of entanglement closely as well as the need to interrogate key terms, such as markets, commodification and most of all, 'money', even more closely.

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