

Surrogate: How a Woman Named Sandra Made me a Mother.

By Karen L. Fund (edited by D.J. Fisher) IPBooks

You have never read a book like this.

You, reader, will never read a book like this.

Why the certitude?

This book mostly written by now-deceased Karen L. Fund is about her struggles and final success to have two children via surrogacy.

Written “mostly,” because there are contributions from Karen’s psychoanalyst husband, Jimmy Fisher, his interview with the surrogate mother who both donated eggs and carried the pregnancy, poignantly, with a chapter by the now-adult daughter who speaks with candor of her mixed feelings, dedication and gratitude to her Karen-mother and sense of distance from her Sandra-biological-mother. Extraordinary.

Mother-surrogacy, now almost accepted, medically more feasible, was then controversial. Law suits then were filed, often by birthing surrogate mothers who had second thoughts after the child was born; societal disapprobation, arguing, for instance, that unfortunate, impoverished surrogate mothers were being taken “used.”

The heart wrenching tale begins with a woman, a modern woman benefiting from modern-day techniques of pregnancy prevention (in this case, the indwelling Dalkon shield). Medical techniques that brought sexual freedom without fear of pregnancy, also

brought—for Ms. Fund and too many others— complications of infection and ultimately infertility. How revolutionary were these medical pregnancy prevention techniques? The University of Chicago received monies to build a chemistry building from Searle, an early producer of birth control pills (BCPs). One student at Chicago celebrated her BCP's with an enlarged photo on her dorm room of an ovum swarmed by sperm and thwarted by Searle; above the photo she kept a calendar of her menses, as if to advertise her availability.

You read of Karen Fund's love for the man she finds, Dr. Fisher, her desire for children and thwarting of that desire after multiple pregnancy attempts. Her finding a surrogate who twice, *twice*, loses pregnancy *and both Fallopian tubes*, rendering her infertile. And finally, Sandra who carries two pregnancies to completion.

The interview by Dr. Fisher of Sandra is sensitive and revealing, as one would expect from a compassionate analyst, yet one seeking the woman's psychological truth, such as her devout Evangelical beliefs in profound contrast to Karen's, Dr Fisher's and ultimately, we hear, the daughter.

Ironically, today, pregnancy advancement techniques might have, perhaps, alleviated much of Karen's heart-break. Might have found a way for her pregnancy to proceed with less tragedy.

So, read this moving memoir. (Memoir is too soft a term. *Cris de couer* might capture the feeling tone.

You will admire Karen's persistence, hope, her love for her husband, his words, Sandra's and the thoughtful, reflective comments from the marvelous daughter who Karen and Jimmy have raised. Their daughter.