

Review of Karen L. Fund, *SURROGATE: HOW A WOMAN NAMED SANDRA MADE ME A MOTHER*
(International Psychoanalytic Books, 2020)

By Ofra Eshel, Psy.D.

First published in *SIHOT--DIALOGUE*, Israel Journal of Psychotherapy, August, 2021
Translated by Dahlia Nissan Russ, Psy.D.

This is a unique personal book describing in an emotional, exposing, and sweeping way the struggle to be a mother. The book details a mother's inability to give birth, who then faces the emotional and medical predicament of infertility; it narrates the process of giving up, the indecision, and the decision to turn to surrogacy, and even then the turbulent failure of the first surrogate pregnancy before the success of the second one. And although the book grows from an autobiographical experience, it successfully gives expression to this difficult struggle in a way that connects and allows the readers to emote and think at the same time.

This is the story of Karen L. Fund, described in eight chapters and published twenty years after the surrogacy, before Karen's death from hepatitis C. After her death, her husband, the psychoanalyst David James Fisher from Los Angeles, wrote a chapter contextualizing her life; the book also includes an interview he did with the surrogate Sandra. It concludes with a chapter written by her daughter Chloe after her mother's death about the ambivalence of being the daughter of a surrogate mother.

I highly recommend this book to readers. It is a page turner. I read it twice, each time highly moved by the powerful experience.