TOK: ETHICS

Question: How can we be certain that having octuplets by medically created fertility is harmful to the individuals involved and society?

VIEW VIDEO INTERVIEW ON THE ISSUE

http://www.nbclosangeles.com/health/women/Octuplet_Ethics_Los_Angeles.html

Quote that highlights the issues:

“Certainly, this amazing achievement should be awe-inspiring; technology has come a long way to make multiple births possible. Forty-six hospital attendants were needed to successfully birth the children, and not one child has been lost yet. However, from an emotional, monetary, medical, and psychological standpoint, I'm not so sure this should be legal. As many others have wondered, why did the doctors agree to inseminate her under the circumstances? Is it wrong for her to have so many children? Should there be laws made to restrict reproduction? What about population growth?”

TASKS

Your task is examine this issue from many perspectives and be able to see claims and counterclaims for each perspective. Look closely at the ethical issues.

As you look at each your angle consider the ways of knowing and how they apply: sense perception, reason, emotion and language.

Each group has a set of quotes taken from articles on the case. Look at the articles then conduct your own internet research.

Discuss the points raised and come up with clear claims and counterclaims in your particular topic. Then present to the class.
GROUP 1 – The Mother’s perspective – her views and free will vs the dangers to her medically.

Identify the issues here and discuss the opposing viewpoints.

Should a doctor implant so many embryos in a woman with little means to care for them? Should a woman have to undergo some sort of psychological examination first?

Should people have babies for selfish reasons – and is there any other kind of parenthood? Could it be tantamount to child endangerment when a mother chooses not to abort or "reduce?"

Much has transpired since Nadya Suleman became "Octomom" by giving birth to eight premature but otherwise healthy children on Jan. 26, 2009. What’s her life like in 2014?

GROUP 2 – The babies’ perspective

Identify the issues here and discuss the opposing viewpoints.

Is this process dangerous for the babies?

Look at the scientific evidence.

GROUP 3 – Religious Christian perspective and abortion

Identify the issues here and discuss the opposing viewpoints.

Should the mother have had some of the babies aborted?

Is it right for a sinfgle mother to have so many babies?

Is fatherlessness any less perilous for an only child than it is for 14 kids?
What does it mean that megafamilies and litter-sized births are bankable oddities? Can Suleman be blamed if she thought she’d be able to support 14 kids on the millions she’d make from publicity? This is the age of “Jon and Kate Plus 8” and “17 Kids and Counting.”

**GROUP 4 Medical guidelines vs the legal perspective**

*Identify the issues here and discuss the opposing viewpoints.*

Are medical guidelines enough or should there be a law to cover such cases.

Finally, what constitutes medical malpractice when it comes to helping get women pregnant?

Should there be a law to prevent such multiple births?

Should doctor in charge be dismissed?

**GROUP 5 Economic costs and the drain on Society**

*Identify the issues here and discuss the opposing viewpoints.*

Compare the octuplets case with the one child policy in China.

Can the world cope with multiple births given the effect on the environment and scarce resources – population explosion.

Check out the science involved

Is the cost to society justified?

**GROUP 6 Role of the media**

*Identify the issues here and discuss the opposing viewpoints.*

Should the media profit from this case?

Should Nadya profit from the case through the media?

Should the Doctor be allowed to “feature” on TV?
What about free will?

(Source: Craig Davis’ shared resources)