



THE BABY CHASE

LESLIE MORGAN STEINER

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ABOUT THE BOOK:

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Crazy Love* comes a riveting new narrative about surrogate pregnancy from both sides of the equation—the parents and the gestational carrier.

Once considered a desperate, even morally suspect option, surrogacy is now sweeping headlines, transforming the lives of celebrities like Sarah Jessica Parker, Nicole Kidman and Elton John, and changing the face of the American family. But how much do we really know about it? And is it really as easy and accessible – emotionally, financially, legally and physically – as magazines make it out to be? We often hear about successful outcomes, but little about the journey – about the precious hope that starts it all, the ups and downs of finding a surrogate, the heartache and obstacles, the risks and expenses at every step, or the unbelievable joy when years of determination pay off. In *The Baby Chase*, acclaimed writer Leslie Morgan Steiner weaves three stories together — of a nurse, a firefighter, and the Indian gestational carriers and doctors who helped them — to provide one intensely personal look at what makes surrogacy so controversial, fascinating, and in some cases, the only ray of hope for today's infertile parents-to-be.

Rhonda Wile and her husband Gerry struggled for years with infertility. With perseverance that shocked everyone around them, they tried every procedure and option available – unsuccessfully – until they finally decided to hire a surrogate. While surrogacy was being touted as a miracle for hopeful parents, for Rhonda and Gerry, it seemed an impossible and unaffordable dream. Until they came across the beaming smile of a beautiful Indian woman on the internet... and, within a few short months, embarked on a journey that would take them deep into the emerging world of Indian carriers, international medical tourism, and the global surrogacy community.

Moving, page-turning, and meticulously researched, this complex human story is paired with an examination of the issues—religious, legal, medical and emotional—that shapes surrogacy as a solution both imperfect and life-changing.

LESLIE MORGAN STEINER is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Crazy Love* and the editor of the highly acclaimed anthology *Mommy Wars*. She is a frequent speaker on surviving domestic abuse, and her TED Talk on relationship violence has been viewed by over one million people worldwide. From 2006 to 2008, she wrote the popular “On Balance” blog for washingtonpost.com. Steiner received a BA from Harvard College and an MBA from the Wharton School of Business. She now lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband and three children.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. While reading *The Baby Chase*, what was the one thing about surrogacy that shocked you most? Why?
2. Would you consider being a surrogate? Why or why not?
3. Do you have any secrets from your kids about their conception? Would you tell your kids if they were conceived and carried via surrogate?
4. How would you feel if someone you loved – your best friend, your sister, your daughter – turned to surrogacy to have a child?
5. Is surrogacy ethical or unethical in your view? Why? And are all the players – surrogates, egg and sperm donors, the intended parents, the agency doctors and lawyers who make surrogacy possible – equally ethical or unethical? Or do certain roles carry more “moral responsibility” during the surrogacy process?
6. Do you agree or disagree with the premise that everyone who wants a baby should have a baby?
7. Do you believe that surrogacy has the power, over time, to dissolve men and women's historic need to come together to raise children? What other factors tie couples together for the long run?
8. Many people do not know they are infertile until they try – and fail – to get pregnant. How would our society change if there were a simple test that could determine at a young age whether you were infertile? Would more people be sympathetic to surrogacy as a solution? Would widespread testing for infertility solve any of the legal, medical, and financial issues facing people who are trying to conceive?

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Leslie Morgan Steiner and her books?

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