

Viewpoint: Artificial wombs remain ‘nothing more than a developmentally naïve pipe dream’

The idea of artificial womb technology inevitably draws ethical debate regarding the benefits and harms to the fetus, parents, and society. Additional legal implications over the status of the fetus and associated discussion about the appropriate terminology to be used also come into question. One proposal for describing the product inside an artificial womb (i.e., to distinguish this from the natural fetus or neonate) is ‘gestateling.’

The prospect of utilizing artificial womb technology for a fetus aged 22–25 weeks is very real. Indeed, artificial wombs are already in development. One benefit of this is the hope that the artificial womb may reduce the risks of morbidity and mortality.

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We see sensational news headlines and article titles on websites such as: “Artificial wombs: the coming era of motherless births” (Genetic Literacy Project), “World’s first artificial womb facility is a creepy glimpse of pregnancy in future, see what it is” (Economic Times) and “That Artificial Womb Video Isn’t Real, But Scientists Say It Could Be” (HuffingtonPost).

However, at present, the idea of complete ectogenesis is “nothing more than a technically and developmentally naïve, yet sensationally speculative, pipe dream” (De Bie et al., 2022).

[**This is an excerpt. Read the full article here**](#)