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Personal Memo # 100

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

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RISKS at BIRTH.

Those numbers seem very high; but it's a tricky question: or should I say, what is the question?

Probably every one of us is walking around with genetic factors that give us predisposition to some, resistance to other diseases. Half the population has an I.Q. below $\sigma = 100$. I don't see what that has to do with surrogacy!

In terms of what is commonly understood as "birth defect" I would have put the risk in the range of 2-5%; but this does not include, e.g., the 10% of babies with low birth weight mostly preventable with better health care.

You ought to ask the March of Dimes for their "official" figures. * see P.S.

All the above is for live births ("children born"). If you include still births and earlier gestational losses, the figures are of course much higher! See enclosed.

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James, John

Personal Memo from
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P.S.

* Some of their publications cited
"malformations detectable at birth"
up to 20% but I am sure this
includes many conditions that are
not disabling (and excludes the
predispositions that give problems only
in later life.)



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