

## **Are Mother and Baby Distinct Individuals?**

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By Dr. Derek Conte

When I studied human anatomy in classes and in the cadaver lab, I was surprised to learn something I never had cause to think about before. I learned that the entire alimentary canal (the continuous tube from the mouth to the esophagus to the stomach to the small intestine to the large intestine to the rectum and finally the anus) is considered to be part of the external world; literally “outside” the body. Think of it. You can pass a string entirely through the alimentary canal which is a tunnel inside a larger structure with two passages to the outside world. The morsel of food you place in your mouth is not a part of you. It must be chewed and broken down chemically into pieces so small that they then can be absorbed INTO your body through the walls of the intestines.

There is an area unique to the female anatomy which, like the alimentary canal, is also considered “outside” the body and yet is housed within the woman’s outline: the vaginal canal and the uterus or “womb”. This seems just as counterintuitive without a bit of thought applied. If you are struggling with the abortion question then it might be useful to study some anatomy and physiology. As with last month’s article I will list some anatomical and physiological facts for your evaluation.

A developing baby/fetus has a separate circulatory system and a separate blood system from its mother’s, therefore no blood is ever exchanged between mother and baby/fetus. This is why the baby/fetus can have a different blood type from the mother and be safe from immunological attack by the mother’s antibodies. The baby/fetus occupies the space of the uterus (womb) which, anatomically, is considered external to the mother’s body. The mother eats and breathes for the baby/fetus via a large capillary bed that interfaces with the placenta leading to the umbilicus.

Mother and baby/fetus have different genetic codes. Every cell of the mother’s body contains her own distinct gene code/DNA, unique to her only. The father’s DNA is obviously equally unique.

The DNA of the baby/fetus is taken 50% from mother and 50% from father to form an equally unique and different baby/fetus. Only the baby’s identical twin can be an identical genetic match.

A male child with a penis cannot be construed as “part of his mother” because she has no genetic capacity to “donate” that organ to her son. Nor can a surrogate carry a child for another couple and convey her traits to the baby/fetus she is carrying.

Below are some quotes from professionals who have studied this subject: All quotes (1,2,3,4) taken from <https://www.epm.org/resources/2010/Mar/29/unborn-part-mothers-body/>

[“A Chinese zygote implanted in a Swedish woman will always be Chinese, not Swedish, because his identity is based on his genetic code, not that of the body in which he resides.”] (1)

[“The child may die and the mother live, or the mother may die and the child live, proving they are two separate individuals. The child-guest is a temporary resident of the mother-host. He will leave on his own as long as he is not prematurely evicted.”] (2)

[New Zealand professor A. W. Liley is known as the “father of fetology.” Among his many pioneer achievements was the first intrauterine blood transfusion. Dr. Liley has stated: “Physiologically, we must accept that the conceptus (baby/fetus) is, in a very large measure, in charge of the pregnancy.... Biologically, at no stage can we subscribe to the view that the fetus is a mere appendage of the mother....”](3)

[Dr. Peter Nathanielsz of Cornell University concurs. He says that the unborn’s brain sends a message to his own pituitary gland which in turn stimulates the adrenal cortex to secrete a hormone which stimulates the mother’s uterus to contract. A woman goes into labor not because her body is ready to surrender the unborn child, but because the unborn child is ready to leave her body. ](4)

As with everything important in life, information is crucial to understanding and vital to our decision-making and spiritual growth.

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