

Chapter 1 : Edgar Dahl | LibraryThing

Imagine No Religion Edgar Dahl November Edgar Dahl Ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall in , West Germans as well as East Germans are regularly polled on their stance toward religion.

Why do we search for self-transcendence? It clearly seems to make some people feel better. But does it improve their behavior, their actions, their communities, their lives? Guess we all have to speak for ourselves. Thanks for your research, David. Peter Adegoke is a free-thinking African who overcame the dual disadvantages of missionary-inflicted mis-education and the indigenous superstitions of his native land. Did you know that Nigeria has more Catholics than any other nation? I understand, and I disagree. Belief matters, to religion and to us all. The issue is less what than how, but it matters. He claimed it in no way impinged on his atheism. He took an interest in other people. The knowledge that you are truly mortal is life altering. Cancer survivors can have the same epiphany without the cardiac arrest. It is one of the more beneficent and happy aspects of our human nature that it includes intellect and imagination, the ideal vehicles of naturalized transcendence. That has nothing to do with believing in gods or not. But, mortals gifted with a capacity to go beyond our skins, our times and places, and in circumscribed ways our finitude. Frieder Otto Wolf says questions about God, world origins, the soul, and the ultimate divine or secular status of ethics have become irrelevant to the pressing urgencies of our time. Edgar Dahl says East Germans find it easy to imagine no religion. Ich bin ein Berliner.

Chapter 2 : ~|~ Imagine No Religion, by Edgar Dahl

Edgar Dahl This commentary was written in direct response to the moral case study on designer babies and tissue typing published in the October issue of RBMOnline (vol. 9, no. 4, p.).

His mother came over and married his father in 1911. Dahl was named after the Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen. His first language was Norwegian, which he spoke at home with his parents and his sisters Astri, Alfild and Else. Dahl and his sisters were raised in the Lutheran faith, and were baptised at the Norwegian Church, Cardiff, where their parents worshipped. Weeks later, his father died of pneumonia at the age of 40. At the age of eight, he and four of his friends one named Thwaites were caned by the headmaster after putting a dead mouse in a jar of gobstoppers at the local sweet shop, [6] which was owned by a "mean and loathsome" old woman called Mrs Pratchett. His parents had wanted him to be educated at an English public school and, because of the regular ferry link across the Bristol Channel, this proved to be the nearest. After her death in 1915, he learned that she had saved every one of his letters, in small bundles held together with green tape. Dahl disliked the hazing and described an environment of ritual cruelty and status domination, with younger boys having to act as personal servants for older boys, frequently subject to terrible beatings. Tales of Childhood, a friend named Michael was viciously caned by headmaster Geoffrey Fisher. Writing in that same book, Dahl reflected: I never have got over it. Dahl said the incident caused him to "have doubts about religion and even about God". He wrote about many happy memories from those visits in Boy: Along with the only two other Shell employees in the entire territory, he lived in luxury in the Shell House outside Dar es Salaam, with a cook and personal servants. While out on assignments supplying oil to customers across Tanganyika, he encountered black mambas and lions, among other wildlife. With seven hours and 40 minutes experience in a De Havilland Tiger Moth, he flew solo; [39] Dahl enjoyed watching the wildlife of Kenya during his flights. Dahl was surprised to find that he would not receive any specialised training in aerial combat, or in flying Gladiators. On the final leg he could not find the airstrip and, running low on fuel and with night approaching, he was forced to attempt a landing in the desert. He wrote about the crash in his first published work. He was transported by train to the Royal Navy hospital in Alexandria. There he fell in and out of love with a nurse, Mary Welland. In February, Dahl was discharged from hospital and passed fully fit for flying duties. By this time, 80 Squadron had been transferred to the Greek campaign and based at Eleusina, near Athens. The squadron was now equipped with Hawker Hurricanes. Dahl flew in his first aerial combat on 15 April, while flying alone over the city of Chalcis. He attacked six Junkers Ju 88s that were bombing ships and shot one down. On 16 April in another air battle, he shot down another Ju 88. Of 12 Hurricanes involved, five were shot down and four of their pilots killed, including Pattle. Greek observers on the ground counted 22 German aircraft downed, but because of the confusion of the aerial engagement, none of the pilots knew which aircraft they had shot down. Dahl described it as "an endless blur of enemy fighters whizzing towards me from every side". His squadron was reassembled in Haifa. From there, Dahl flew sorties every day for a period of four weeks, shooting down a Vichy French Air Force Potez 63 on 8 June and another Ju 88 on 15 June, but he began to get severe headaches that caused him to black out. He was invalided home to Britain. Though at this time Dahl was only a pilot officer on probation, in September he was simultaneously confirmed as a pilot officer and promoted to war substantive flying officer. He attempted to recover his health enough to become an instructor. Initially resistant, Dahl was finally persuaded by Balfour to accept, and took passage on the SS Batori from Glasgow a few days later. He arrived in Halifax, Canada, on 14 April, after which he took a sleeper train to Montreal. But after ten days in his new posting, Dahl strongly disliked it, feeling he had taken on "a most ungodly unimportant job. People were getting killed. I had been flying around, seeing horrible things. Now, almost instantly, I found myself in the middle of a pre-war cocktail party in America. He was also unimpressed by the ambassador, Lord Halifax, with whom he sometimes played tennis and whom he described as "a courtly English gentleman". Dahl socialized with Charles E. Forester, who was also working to aid the British war effort. Forester worked for the British Ministry of Information and was writing propaganda for the Allied cause, mainly for American consumption. After Forester read what Dahl had given

him, he decided to publish the story exactly as Dahl had written it. Dahl was promoted to flight lieutenant war-substantive in August. As Dahl later said: Stephenson promptly sent him back to Washington with a promotion to wing commander rank. Owing to the severity of his injuries from the accident, he was pronounced unfit for further service and was invalided out of the RAF in August. He left the service with the substantive rank of squadron leader. It is most likely that he scored more than those victories during 20 April, when 22 German aircraft were shot down. Their marriage lasted for 30 years and they had five children: For a time, he suffered from hydrocephalus. As a result, his father became involved in the development of what became known as the "Wade-Dahl-Till" or WDT valve, a device to alleviate the condition. Her death left Dahl "limp with despair", and feeling guilty about not having been able to do anything for her. He was dismayed by Fisher telling him that, although Olivia was in Paradise, her beloved dog Rowley would never join her there. Dahl took control of her rehabilitation over the next months; Neal had to re-learn to talk and walk, but she managed to return to her acting career. Dahl and Crosland had previously been in a relationship. It was very much hushed up in the newspapers because they are primarily Jewish-owned. Could have been pro-Arab or pro-Jew. There was no consistent line. He was a man who followed whims, which meant he would blow up in one direction, so to speak. He was very angry at the Israelis. He had a childish reaction to what was going on in Israel. Dahl wanted to provoke, as he always provoked at dinner. His publisher was a Jew, his agent was a Jew. He reportedly wanted a knighthood so that his wife would be Lady Dahl. A panel of seven academics, journalists and historians named Dahl among the group of people in the UK "whose actions during the reign of Elizabeth II have had a significant impact on lives in these islands and given the age its character". Forester, was "A Piece of Cake", on 1 August. Dahl wrote more than 60 short stories; they have appeared in numerous collections, some only being published in book form after his death see List of Roald Dahl short stories. His three Edgar Awards were given for: He later used the vardo as a writing room, where he wrote *Danny, the Champion of the World* in. A grown-up being mischievous. He addresses you, a child, as somebody who knows about the world. He was a grown-up and he was bigger than most who is on your side. That must have something to do with it. They typically involve adult villains who hate and mistreat children, and feature at least one "good" adult to counteract the villain's. The BFG follows it in a more analogous way with the good giant the BFG or "Big Friendly Giant" representing the "good adult" archetype and the other giants being the "bad adults". Class-conscious themes also surface in works such as *Fantastic Mr Fox* and *Danny, the Champion of the World* where the unpleasant wealthy neighbours are outwitted. All of these characters with the possible exception of Bruce Bogtrotter are either villains or simply unpleasant gluttons. They are usually punished for this: In *Matilda*, Bruce Bogtrotter steals cake from the evil headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, and is forced to eat a gigantic chocolate cake in front of the school. Featured in *The Witches*, Bruno Jenkins is lured by the witches into their convention with the promise of chocolate, before they turn him into a mouse. His daughter Lucy stated "his spirit was so large and so big he taught us to believe in magic. He would invent new words by scribbling down his words before swapping letters around and adopting spoonerisms and malapropisms. For example, you know that something lickswishy and delumptious is good to eat, whereas something uckyslush or rotsome is not definitely not! He also used sounds that children love to say, like squishous and squizzle, or fizzlecrump and fizzwiggler. Dahl later disowned the film, saying he was "disappointed" because "he thought it placed too much emphasis on Willy Wonka and not enough on Charlie". This resulted in his refusal for any more versions of the book to be made in his lifetime, as well as an adaptation for the sequel *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator*. In his younger days, he was an avid reader, especially awed by fantastic tales of heroism and triumph. Amongst his favourite authors were Rudyard Kipling, Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray and Frederick Marryat, and their works went on to make a lasting mark on his life and writing. While he was still a youngster, his mother, Sofie Dahl, would relate traditional Norwegian myths and legends from her native homeland to Dahl and his sisters. Dahl always maintained that his mother and her stories had a strong influence on his writing. In one interview, he mentioned: Her memory was prodigious and nothing that ever happened to her in her life was forgotten. According to his granddaughter, the family gave him a "sort of Viking funeral". He was buried with his snooker cues, some very good burgundy, chocolates, HB pencils and a power saw.

Chapter 3 : Roald Dahl - Wikipedia

more Dr. Edgar Dahl is a German philosopher and biologist specialised in bioethics, especially in moral, legal and social issues in preconception sex selection and physician-assisted suicide. He has also published on evolutionary ethics, evolutionary epistemology, evolutionary psychology, the philosophy of religion and the diplomatic history of.

The main concerns include the threat of a sex ratio distortion due to a common preference for boys over girls, the charge of sexism, the danger of reinforcing gender stereotypical behaviour in sex selected children, and the fear of a slippery slope towards creating designer babies. This paper endeavours to show that none of the objections to preconception sex selection is conclusive and that there is no justification for denying parents the right to choose the sex of their prospective children. In principle, women may use the information to decide whether or not to terminate. Since ancient times, couples have been trying to influence the a pregnancy if the fetus is not of the desired sex. Using sex of their children. Following a suggestion by Aristotle, they prenatal diagnosis for the sole purpose of sex-selective made love in the north wind to ensure the birth of a son and in abortions is, however, very rare in Western societies. For the south wind to ensure the birth of a daughter. According to example, a follow-up study of patients having prenatal a proposal made by Hippocrates, men tied a string around their diagnosis at one Melbourne centre found that none of the left testicle to make a boy and around the right one to make a women had a termination because of the sex of the fetus girl. In medieval times the proposed formula became even Robinson et al. Going through the traumatizing more bizarre, when alchemists recommended drinking the experience of an abortion is usually seen as too high a price for blood of a lion and then having intercourse under a full moon a child of a particular sex. Sex-selective embryo transfer has been facilitated by the Choosing the gender of children is no longer a fantasy. PGD is an alternative to prenatal has not only raised old hopes, but also new fears. Many people diagnosis PND. It offers couples who are at risk of are concerned that it may lead to an imbalance of the sexes, transmitting a genetic defect and who are undergoing IVF the most likely a preponderance of males. Such an overabundance opportunity to have their embryos screened before they are of men and a shortage of women, some sociologists have transferred into the uterus. Since only those embryos that are predicted, will invariably cause an enormous rise in enforced free of the abnormality concerned will qualify for transfer to celibacy, polyandry, homosexuality, prostitution, rape and the uterus, PGD reduces the risk of bearing a child with a other sexual crimes Vines, Many feminists are genetic disease and helps to avoid the difficult decision similarly alarmed. Some have called the deliberate choice of a whether or not to terminate a pregnancy. Thus, women may request transfer only of those Raymond, Are these fears justified? How well are they embryos that are of the desired sex. The current state of the art is Sex-selective insemination has become possible with the reviewed below. MicroSort relies on an identifiable difference between spermatozoa bearing X and Y Currently, there are three different types of sex selection: X- and Y-bearing sperm cells differ in their selective abortion, sex-selective embryo transfer and sex- total DNA content by 2. The separated sperm populations can then be diagnosis. Amniocentesis, chorionic villous sampling and used for intrauterine insemination IUD. As just described, there is as yet no convenient method for sex selection. Sex-selective abortion requires the termination of a pregnancy, sex-selective embryo transfer necessitates IVF Will sex selection distort the natural treatment, and sex-selective insemination is still too sex ratio? However, since it is very likely that MicroSort is soon to be refined, sex-selective insemination is certainly the As already indicated, the main objection to sex selection is that technology of the future. As soon as this sperm separation it will distort the natural sex ratio and lead to a gender technique develops into a safe and reliable procedure, sex imbalance in Western society, as has occurred in countries selection may become more attractive to many couples. The such as India, China, and Korea. However, whether or not a only thing that would be needed to have a child of the sex ratio imbalance poses a real threat to Western societies is, preferred sex would be a visit to a clinic for IUD Stern et al. For a gender imbalance to happen, at least two conditions have to be met. Scientific interest in the development of a sperm separation First, there must be a strong preference for children of a technique has mainly arisen from the desire to prevent X- particular sex, and second there must be a considerable linked disorders. There are

more than sex-linked diseases demand for a service for sex selection. In most cases, the X-linked disorders are Dahl et al. Thus, women who are carriers of a severe sex-linked disease often Using a randomized, computer-assisted telephone interview choose to have no children at all or to terminate their tool provided by FORSA one of the leading German Institutes pregnancy if prenatal testing reveals the fetus to be a boy. A for Social Research and Statistical Analysis , men and reliable sperm separation technique would allow for the women between the age of 18 to 45 years were asked five exclusive conception of unaffected girls. First, participants were asked if, given a choice, they would want their first-born child to be male or female. Sex selection for the prevention of X-linked disorders is Fourteen per cent of respondents wanted their first child to be generally regarded as morally acceptable. Provided they wanted more than just one child, participants The presumption in favour of liberty were asked, if, given a choice, they would want only boys, Western societies are pluralistic societies. They consist of only girls, more boys than girls, more girls than boys, as many individuals with different concepts of the meaning of life, of girls as boys, or whether the sex of their children would not the existence of God, and of the ways to pursue happiness. If a government tries to impose a particular morality the sex of their children was of no importance. To avoid social tension and to deal with the moral pluralism of its citizens, the Participants were then asked if they could imagine selecting political system of modern societies ought to be based upon a the sex of their children by using MicroSort. Each citizen should have an informed decision, they were told what this technology the right to live his life as he chooses, so long as he does not entails. Thus participants were informed that they would have infringe upon the rights of others. The state may interfere with to visit a Centre for Reproductive Medicine, to provide a the free choices of its citizens only to prevent harm to others. Secondly, the evidence for the harm to occur has were in fact not interested in selecting the sex of their children to be clear and persuasive. It must not be based upon highly or simply found the procedure to be too demanding, they were speculative sociological or psychological assumptions. Given these less a legal prohibition. According to The London Gender Clinic, within its first 18 months it had been consulted by only According to the survey, there was no evidence of a strong couples. Of the couples, were of Indian origin, preference for children of a particular sex and only a modest European, 29 Chinese and the remaining 55 of other interest in preconception sex selection for non-medical reasons ethnic origins. The majority of European couples were seeking in Germany. They are similar surveys. Similarly, the asked about their gender preferences. At least in Western societies there Demoscopy, What couples interested in gender selection are longing for is simply Another way to determine gender preferences is based on a balanced family. Participants had to choose among five response the same disturbing state of affairs as in India Holmes, As there widespread in India. All over the country, clinics for sex were no differences between options 1 and 2 and options 4 and determination mushroomed which offer pregnant women 5, responses were grouped together into three categories. For example, between and , the number of Commentaries - Preconception sex selection - E Dahl these clinics increased from fewer than 10 to in Bombay their intelligence. According to a study, of elective abortions, arguments need not cause too much concern, as it is perfectly were abortions of female fetuses. The common practice possible to draw a legal line permitting some forms of of sex-selective abortions has led to a serious imbalance of the selection and prohibiting others. Thus, if selection for sex is sexes. The proportion of females to males has dropped from morally acceptable but selection for, say, intelligence is not, In certain communities the former can be allowed and the latter not. To Indian parliament finally took legal action. However, this argument is imposes penalties on doctors who reveal the sex of the fetus. It is simply false that all people who would like Doctors who violate the law are fined up to 50, rupees and to choose the gender of their children are motivated by the face jail terms of up to 5 years. Practitioners convicted of this sexist belief that one sex is more valuable than the other. As charge twice may permanently lose their professional license has been seen, almost all couples seeking sex selection are Kumar, If this desire is based on any beliefs at all, it is based Despite these legislative measures, however, sex-selective on the quite defensible assumption that raising a girl is abortions continue. This religious , For example, using chloroform to relieve the pain of childbirth There are religious as well as economic reasons for why so was considered contrary to the will of God as it avoided the many Indians prefer boys over girls. Similarly, the use of inoculations man who has failed to sire a son cannot

achieve salvation. Since even Furthermore, Indian custom has it that the parents of a girl are fundamentalist Christians ceased to regard the alleviation of expected to pay a dowry for her marriage. The dowry pain and the curing of diseases as morally impermissible, it is payments are considerable. They extend from 25, up to hard to take this objection seriously. What was once seen as , rupees. To marry off one or more daughters is therefore a huge More importantly, the objection that sex selection interferes financial burden. As may mean poverty, Indian couples have a strong incentive for modern pluralistic societies are based on a separation of state sex-selective abortions. Clinics for sex determination have and church, no government is entitled to pass a law to enforce taken advantage of this dilemma when they advertised their compliance with a specific religion. India cannot be compared with that of Western nations. Like the objection that state of affairs as in India is therefore wildly inappropriate. To choosing the gender of children is playing God, the claim that go so far as Benagiano and Bianchi recently did, and to sex selection is not natural most often expresses an intuitive call for a global ban on sex selection because it may be reaction rather than a clearly reasoned moral position. That a misused in other parts of the world, is similarly inadequate. To transplant a heart to save a human life is committed by another. Thus, if one has to decide whether an action is morally Other objections right or wrong, the issue cannot be decided by asking whether it is natural or unnatural. Once parents are allowed to choose the gender of their children, they will soon be allowed to choose their eye colour, their height or Commentaries - Preconception sex selection - E Dahl Conclusion Robinson HP, de Crespigny LC, Ngu AC et al Transabdominal chorionic villus sampling: For example, to limit sex " Preliminary postnatal follow-up results. Fertility and selection services to licensed centres subject to monitoring by Sterility 78, Abstract book Journal only guarantee high scientific standards and high quality of Applied Social Science , " Human Reproduction 13, " Vines, G The hidden cost of sex selection. New Scientist May develop. References Received 14 August ; refereed 3 September ; accepted 10 September Fertility and Sterility 59, " Benagiano G, Bianchi P Sex preselection: Human Reproduction 14, "

Imagine No Religion. Edgar Dahl - - In Russell Blackford & Udo SchÄ¼klenk (eds.), Arguments from Naturalism against Theism in Philosophy of Religion.

When asked whether they believe in God, most East Germans simply respond by saying: Being born in East Germany myself, I can easily relate to this attitude. In contrast to what a lot of Americans seem to think, we have never been raised to be hostile toward religion. Actually, it was much worse: On Sunday mornings, when American kids went to church, we went to the cinema. I still remember enjoying Joseph L. Given that I had some extra time on my hands, I decided to sneak into the church. There were about 15 or 20 people in there, mostly in their 60s or 70s. The musty smell, the morbid paintings, and the bleeding savior nailed to a cross made me anxious. Still, in order to see what these people were doing, I moved a bit closer. Apparently, they were celebrating the Holy Communion. How can anyone eat the flesh and drink the blood of another person? What kind of people are these? Running home, I asked my mom about the people in the church. They believe in God and Satan, and Heaven and Hell. My own parents were religious, too. My father was Jewish and my mother was Catholic. Later I learned that the movie was not depicting Christians, but Satanists. Yet at that time, I could not see any difference. For me, both were weird people, believing in weird beings, and doing weird things. One may say I was simply too young to be able to tell the difference between two entirely different cults. But this is exactly my point. It only proves how unprejudiced I was! I must have looked at Christianity the same way a Hindu must look at it or, for that matter, how Christians look at Hindusâ€™ as lost and doomed souls praying to a heaven filled with hundreds of Gods. As strange as it may sound, I was already 12 years old when I first met a Christian in person. In grade six, the daughter of a pastor joined our class. Although she turned out to be a wonderful human being, I still recall that I was reluctant to talk to her. After all, I considered religious people as mystifying people who claim to be in contact with gods, demons, and other beings no one has ever seen. Given my atheist upbringing it must come as a surprise that, as a student, I enrolled not only in philosophy but also in theology. Besides, studying theology seemed to provide me with an excellent education in the humanities. I had to learn Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, was taught about philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy, and enjoyed the history of arts, ideas, and politics. I am still an atheist questioning the existence of God. While I admit that there are quite understandable reasons for believing in a creator, none of these reasons seems to me to be persuasive, leave alone compelling. He is perfect in knowledge, perfect in power, and perfect in virtue. However, if a being is perfect, the argument goes, then that being must exist. For if it did not exist, it would not be perfect. As Immanuel Kant noted, this argument is fallacious. Sure, in order for a being to be perfect it has to have certain properties, such as omniscience or omnipotence. But it does not mean that it therefore has to exist. After all, existence is not a property. The definition of God can tell us only what kind of being he must be. Whether he really exists, however, is an entirely different matter that cannot be settled by a mere definition. But if everything has a cause, the universe too must have a cause. That cause is God. Is this a compelling argument? If literally everything has a cause, then God too must have a cause. And if God has a cause, his cause must also have a cause, and so on ad infinitum. When religious apologists noted that the cosmological argument is not sound, they rephrased it by claiming that everything has a causeâ€™ except for God. God himself does not have a cause. For if the premise is true, the conclusion cannot be true, and if the conclusion is true, the premise cannot be true. If everything must have a cause the premise , then God too must have a cause. If God does not have a cause the conclusion , then it is obviously wrong that everything must have a cause. Let us suppose for a moment, if only for the sake of argument, that we could actually make sense of the strange notion of a *causa sui*. If there can be a thing that does not need a cause, then this might as well be the universe as God. Thus, no matter how hard we try, the cosmological argument is simply not compelling. Moreover, even if it were compelling, it would not prove what it was supposed to prove. They all behave in an orderly manner. Where does this order come from? It must come from an intelligent designer. And this designer is God! As appealing as this argument may seem, it is certainly not conclusive. As David Hume has pointed out, that something appears to be designed in no way implies that it

has been designed. It may very well be an adaptation by natural selection. Besides, apart from the order in the world, there is quite some disorder. Anyone who has ever visited a hospital and has seen the patients in a neonatal, oncological, or psychiatric ward will probably have some serious doubts about the benevolence of the purported heavenly designer. This brings us straight to the most powerful objection to the God of Christianity: Perhaps no one has put the problem of evil better than Epicurus: Then He is not omnipotent. Is He able, but not willing? Then He is not benevolent. Is He both able and willing? That there is much suffering in the world no one disputes. Some have attempted to explain this in reference to man by imagining that it serves for his moral improvement. But the number of men in the world is as nothing compared with that of all other sentient beings, and these often suffer greatly without any moral improvement. A being so powerful and so full of knowledge as God who could create the universe, is to our finite minds omnipotent and omniscient, and it revolts our understanding to suppose that his benevolence is not unbounded, for what advantage can there be in the sufferings of millions of animals throughout almost endless times? One of the most dreadful documentaries I have ever seen was a natural history program by David Attenborough. The film shows the circular migration of more than one million animals within the Serengeti. In order to reach the southern plains, these animals have to pass the Mara River that is full of crocodiles. Thus, while crossing the river, literally hundreds of gnus are killed mercilessly. A few of them escape wounded, but only to be eaten alive by lions lurking on the other side of the river. After graduating, I decided to specialize in ethical issues arising from new biological and medical technologies. At that time, I thought I would never ever have to deal with religious issues again. Obviously, I was deeply wrong. Contraception, abortion, artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, preimplantation genetic diagnosis, preconception sex selection, or reproductive cloning—there is literally not a single bioethical issue that the Christian Church does not comment about. In itself, there is surely nothing wrong with this. Members of the clergy are clearly entitled to take a stance on urgent moral matters. Religious statements claim to be based on a higher authority than secular statements. Remarkably, not only proponents of the Christian faith, but even opponents of the Christian faith grant religious leaders a kind of moral supremacy. They tend to believe that theologians are somehow experts on ethical issues. The answer is obvious. Most people still consider religion and ethics to be inseparable. Even more than that, they believe that religion is the foundation of ethics—that without theology there can be no morality. Well, it is remarkable because it is not true. In fact, it is so blatantly untrue that one must wonder how this belief could possibly survive the age of reason. I am not sure, but I suppose the belief that ethics is based on religion is a result of two millennia of Christian indoctrination. Almost every child is brought up thinking that moral rules derive from the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament. The clergy certainly welcomes the assumption that religion is the foundation of ethics. Right is what God approves of; wrong is what God disapproves of. Since God approved of fidelity and disapproved of infidelity, fidelity is good and infidelity is evil.

Chapter 5 : Does religion make people better? | Up@dawn

"I discovered that religion does not make people better." Edgar Dahl says East Germans find it easy to imagine no religion. Ich bin ein Berliner.

Because of its ethical and social implications, preimplantation sex selection is frequently the subject of debates. In , we surveyed specialists in reproductive medicine in Germany using an anonymous questionnaire, including sociodemographic data and questions regarding ethical problems occurring in the practice of reproductive medicine. Most questions focused on preimplantation sex selection, including 10 case vignettes, since these enabled us to describe the most difficult and ethically controversial situations. This is the first survey among specialists in reproductive medicine regarding this topic in Germany. The majority of German specialists in reproductive medicine opposes preimplantation sex selection for non- medical reasons while recommending preimplantation sex selection for medical reasons, e. X-linked diseases like haemophilia. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. The funders had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript. The authors have declared that no competing interests exist. However, MicroSort economic, cultural and personal reasons for selecting sex of is less selective for children of the favoured sex than the children [2]. History teaches us The PGD is a procedure that should not impair the de- that in large parts of the world pre-birth sex selection results in velopment of the embryos. From its inception, PGD has been great discrimination against the birth of female offspring [4]. The touted as an important alternative for couples who were carriers of fast changing landscape of reproductive technologies has experi- autosomal recessive, dominant or sex-linked diseases [9]. As of today, X-linked diseases or syndromes are known Sex can be selected via preconception and preimplantation sex [10,11]. Most of the X-linked diseases affecting males female infanticide [7]. We examined measures of association Duchenne muscular dystrophy [12]. There are arguments that non-medical sex selection is the initial Data were analyzed with descriptive as well as inferential step down a road [13], eventually ushering in a world of designer statistical procedures. A two-sided p value of 0. SPSS software, version The new and PGD. Furthermore, questions and case vignettes [27], used in Genetic Diagnostic Law GenDG became applicable February 1, the worldwide survey in and among human geneticists [14]. In Germany, preimplantation sex selection for non-medical Results reasons was forbidden by law [15]. At this time, PGD was not The subjects of this study were specialists in reproductive performed in Germany [16â€”18] because this would be an medicine in Germany; there were 72 males The average age was 48 years age range 29â€”67 Furthermore, the selection of sperm cells by using MicroSort is years. More information about the sample is summarized in forbidden according to 13 ESchG, unless it helps avoid sex-linked Table 1. A gynaecologist had examined eight extracorporeal fertilized Case Vignettes oocytes at the stage of blastocyst and turned himself in to the court The usage of case vignettes Table 2; Figure 1 allowed us to because of having performed a PGD. After the debate of the German Bundestag, a new legal should be allowed in Germany and if they would perform a sex regulation was approved on July 7, , which allowed PGD on selection in this case, if it would be allowed in Germany. For non- its authorised centres after a positive vote of an ethics commission medical cases, the majority is against allowing preimplantation sex [21], indications are couples with serious genetic defects or in case selection in Germany, and they are also not willing to perform of high risk of stillbirth or miscarriage. Non-medical sex selection preimplantation sex selection Figure 1. Previously PGD The case vignette 7: Haemophilia - as a medical indication gets was not officially practiced in Germany, and the future application agreement from the majority of respondents. After the new law regulation the first child case to be allowed in Germany, and In the case vignette 9: A legal decree from the Federal Ministry Single - only 3. The legal decree In seven of ten case vignettes, there is a significant difference must now be approved by the Federal Council of Germany [23]. Men are more willing to perform Studies about the attitudes of the general population towards a preimplantation sex selection than women. On average, women PGD are rare, even on the international level

[24]. In Germany, are five years younger than men and worked shorter than male there is considerable opposition to sex selection for non-medical specialists in reproductive medicine in general women median reasons and to the selection of mental and physical characteristics was Data was collected in a survey using a printed, sent by post, self-administered and anonymous Prenatal Diagnostics PND questionnaire. A list of German specialists in reproductive A case vignette deals with a couple aged 27 requesting prenatal medicine was compiled by the list of the German Society of diagnostic PND. The reason given for this request is that they Reproductive Medicine and the list of the German In Vitro have had a child with trisomy 21 who died, but they have no Fertilisation IVF Registry. Out of physicians asked to documents to prove this. After being tested, they show an unusual participate, The pretested questionnaire used to interest in learning the childs sex. This is in including Germany Respondents were asked for what solution our society should Counselling Guideline choose regarding the regulation of new reproductive technologies Respondents were asked about their counselling guideline, if for sex selection Table 4. The majority of respondents Agreement to preimplantation sex selection for special cases in Germany left beam und agreement to self-performance of preimplantation sex selection right beam in these cases, if it were allowed in Germany. The majority of dissuade from preimplantation sex selection and recommend the population and the majority of specialists in reproductive a normal pregnancy A shift towards girls is UK research involving human embryos stated, that centres should not expected. The European Discussion Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology ESHRE as the European body for professionals in reproductive medicine and After the debates and the new law regulation, PGD for sex biology did not strictly ban non-medical sex selection - which is not selection caused heated debates among the German population allowed in EU, but after an ethical debate they report these data and specialists. This is the first study focused on this topic and the [33]. As a representative sample of the German population in Even if this study was done , there are no new studies [25], men and women 18 years and older were asked published till now. The tendency to law regulation [14]. In the United States obstetrician-gynaecolo- agree to a restrictive legalisation for PGD in Germany can be gists are more in favour of sex selection. In a survey in the year observed in the majority of respondents. One couple, which already has three sons, wishes to have a daughter. Already during her second and third pregnancy, the wife explains, she hoped that it might be a girl this time. But still, I simply want to know what it is like to have a daughter. As I know it in the relationship to my own mother, a mother-daughter relationship is somehow deeper and emotionally more satisfying than a mother-son relationship. A Couple that already has two adult daughters wants a son. As the husband explains, the older daughter became a nurse and the younger daughter became a kindergartner. He wishes to have a son who could take over the garage that he himself inherited from his own father and which he is deeply committed to. A single woman is desperate to have a daughter. As she entrusts to the doctor, she says she was the victim of rape at the age of Since then, she says she has lost all confidence towards men. As she believes that she would be a far better mother to a daughter than to a son, she would like to have a daughter. A woman who was born in China and who already has two daughters insists on a son. She is so distressed that she pronounces: In the case of another daughter, I will undergo an abortion. The parents of four boys and one girl have lost their only daughter in a car accident. They wish to have a new girl. But we are convinced that the birth of a girl could heal the scars that the sudden death of our only daughter has left. Since we have heard of the possibilities of the prebirth sex selection, we look into the future more than into the past. A couple from India that already has two daughters wants a son. The husband is deeply religious. He explains that according to Hindu beliefs, a man will only go to heaven if he leaves a son who performs the sacrifice of the death and who continues the cult of the ancestor spirits. Those, however, who neglect to father a son, will cross with the ancestors and must go to hell. A couple is desperate for a daughter. The father of the woman is suffering from hemophilia A, which is transferred to offspring through an X-linked recessive hereditary disease. The woman is free of complaints, but a genetic test showed that she is a heterozygous carrier. The man is healthy concerning this. A son would have a 50 percent probability of suffering from haemophilia. A daughter would have a 50 percent possibility of being an asymptomatic carrier of the disease. Being informed of the severity of the disease, they wish to have a healthy child and therefore a daughter. A couple of doctors at the age of 40 have two teenage sons. They could imagine raising another child, assuming it would be a girl.

They want to use a PID for sex selection and for exclusion of chromosomal disorders like trisomy 21 because of their age. A woman wants a girl. She believes that girls are easier to rear. As she would be a single mother, this is very important for her. A couple that possesses only a low income asks you for help: We can only afford to have one child, and we want to provide it a more or less normal life. If we would leave that to chance and simply give birth to several children in order to get a son, we would get into financial troubles and would have little to offer to our children. They say that they had a child with Down syndrome who died, but they have no documents to prove this. After you have performed the test, they show an unusual interest in learning the child's sex. Possibilities of sex selection regulation in Germany. Reproduction techniques for preimplantation sex selection should be: In the present company and limited to one treatment cycle.

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