

Target Article

Gender Eugenics? The Ethics of PGD for Intersex Conditions

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This article discusses the ethics of the use of preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) to prevent the birth of children with intersex conditions/disorders of sex development (DSDs), such as congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) and androgen insensitivity syndrome (AIS). While pediatric surgeries performed on children with ambiguous genitalia have been the topic of intense bioethical controversy, there has been almost no discussion to date of the ethics of the use of PGD to reduce the prevalence of these conditions. I suggest that PGD for those conditions that involve serious medical risks for those born with them is morally permissible and that PGD for other “cosmetic” variations in sexual anatomy is more defensible than might first appear. However, importantly, the arguments that establish the latter claim have radical and disturbing implications for our attitude toward diversity more generally.

