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Europe's "Abortion Drone" Starts Making Flights

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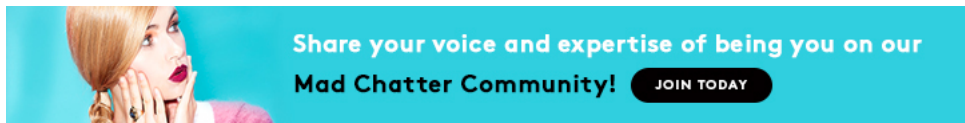
JUN 22, 2015 11:50 AM
MEREDITH CLARK

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PHOTO: BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES.



Drones have been hailed as the future of shipping, surveillance, and even war. But to feminist groups in Europe, they could be an essential tool for providing women with access to abortion. On Saturday, a **drone will deliver abortion pills** from Germany to a border town in Poland, where abortion is illegal in all but a handful of circumstances.

The "abortion drone" is a collaboration between **Women on Waves** (a group that sails to countries where the procedure is outlawed and provides medication abortions while anchored in international waters) and European groups dedicated to improving women's rights in Poland.

While the concept of flying abortion pills might seem strange, it's medically safe to take these pills and then check in with a doctor over the phone; according to some U.S. studies, this is **just as effective** as taking the pills in a doctor's office. Two U.S. states, Iowa and Minnesota, allow abortion pills via so-called telemedicine (women in remote areas can call or video-conference their doctors to avoid multiple long trips to a clinic), although the practice is banned in many others.

Rebecca Gomperts, the founder of Women on Waves, told the *New York Times* in March that Saturday's drone flight is only the first step for pill delivery. "Initially it will be a very small drone, not a large one like the ones DHL, Amazon, and Google are using," she said.

Of all the countries in Europe, abortion only remains illegal in Poland, Ireland, and Malta. Women on Waves has been operating since 1999, and *Vessel*, a documentary about its efforts, was released earlier this year.



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**SamMcCall** · a day ago

I had an abortion in college because I didn't want to be a mother. I was only 21. I was on the verge of graduating college. I thought LONG AND HARD about my choices. I spent weeks, literally, going over my three options: carry the pregnancy to term and become a single mom; carry to term and give the kid up for adoption or have an abortion. I've always been pro-choice. I've also known since I was 16 that I don't want children. But I thought that if I ever had the misfortune of facing a very unwanted pregnancy, I would just suck it up and have a kid I never wanted in the first place.

When I found out I was pregnant, I was stunned. I had to drop out of school for a semester. The boy involved had been a friend of mine since our freshman year. Some friend he turned out to be. As soon as I told him I was pregnant, he put me on radio silence until I let him know I'd decided to have an abortion. At this point he started to waffle and try and change my mind. But I was firm in my decision. I KNEW I was making the right choice. I had gone over EVERY option a million times in my mind.

The week I started praying for a miscarriage every day, I knew my mind was made up. I called the clinic and made an appointment that was a week away in case I changed my mind. I still had time to think about it or back out. But I didn't once even consider changing my

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7 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**disqus_07tSt10o1l** → SamMcCall · 13 hours ago

Why didn't you give your son or daughter up for adoption and bless a family that WANTED a child? You preferred to end his/her life...why?

^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**SamMcCall** → disqus_07tSt10o1l · 11 hours ago

The foster care system is OVERFLOWING with so many children of all ages that want a loving, forever family and home. So those who can't conceive should look into adopting an older child. Oh wait. That's right. They just want a brand spankin' newborn.

I didn't want to be pregnant. GET IT? And a fetus is not a baby. I work in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology. I know all about fetal development. From conception to birth. I knew, because of a human sexuality course I took in college, all about how developed the fetus I was carrying was. It didn't change my mind. No choice would have been an easy choice to make. What you're saying is that I should have made my body an incubator for some strangers so they could have their perfect little newborn. Sorry, not sorry. No sale.

No woman should be forced to gestate and birth a pregnancy she doesn't want. I made the right choice for me. And if I had to do it again, I'd make the same choice. Women do think long and hard about their choices when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. We don't need complete strangers like you telling us what to do with our bodies. See, that's the thing you anti-choicers don't get. This is my body. It's my choice. Why don't you work on helping to save the children that are already here? Oh, that's right. The motto of the anti-choice movement is SAVE THE FETUS. STARVE THE CHILD. Sounds legit. (EYE ROLL)

3 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**Marcia** → disqus_07tSt10o1l · 7 hours ago

You totally missed the point of everything she wrote. Every word went right over your head. So leave her alone. She was smart enough to make the correct decision for her.

^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**Suzanne** → Marcia · 6 hours ago

Oh Marcia you are wasting your time with Diskuss that person is not open for any flexibility in opinion or situation

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



SS · a day ago

Women are so quick to judge other women. I have never known personally what I would do if I were to conceive. I am currently in a relationship with an emotionally abusive man who has threatened physical violence and I'm am trying to find a safe way out. He will not use protection and will not allow me to be on the pill. It is not always as simple as "if you don't want a baby, keep your legs closed". I am fearful of the life a child would have with him as a father, I have seen the way he treats his children from a previous marriage and the way he treats his ex-wife when she tries to protect them from him. I'm fearful of the life I would have if I am forever connected to him and the violence he would commit if I tried to put his child up for adoption or leave with them. I understand that it is easy for an outsider to say "then get out" or "just say no" or "don't punish the child for that" or "there is support out there for you" but I believe he is dangerous and I am afraid. Right now the best I can do is make plans to get out and pray and pray that I don't become pregnant. I'm not saying I WOULD abort, but I am saying I can understand how a woman could consider it. (I also know that not every woman who seeks to abort is in the situation, but take a step back before you judge).

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



alanna zaritz · a day ago

as long as men try to bind womens' bodies with their laws, there will be women that are desperate for aid of one sort or another. hopefully, there will always be women with greater freedoms who have the bravery to help others.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne · a day ago

With you girl why is it always men that holler the loudest against right to choose for us ? They feel so threatened, I have 3 sons they're so different absolutely supporting I guess it's up to us to raise real men that feel equal without having to be in control of "their " semen.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Tara · 2 days ago

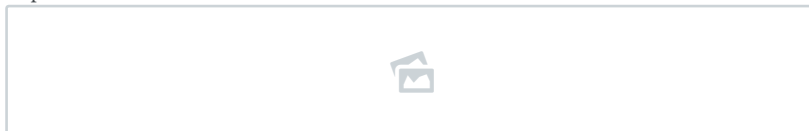
Thank you(them) for trying to keep abortions safe for all women!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Giselle · a day ago

Oops



^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Anna → Giselle · a day ago

Also, I forgot something--the term "pro-abortion" is fucking propoganda bullshit you no doubt picked up from some conservative news source. The term is "pro-CHOICE" because we advocate for women having the OPTION to do what they feel is necessary for their own bodies and minds. If you get pregnant and don't want an abortion, fine. No one is forcing you to get one. I don't believe that you should be forced to support clinics with your tax money if abortion goes against your beliefs or whatever, but I do believe that abortion should be an available option.

This is what you don't seem to understand: being pro-choice does not need to affect you. You would still be free to do whatever you wish. What you advocate is the government restricting individual liberties--isn't that supposed to be against the conservative ideology? I have to assume you're at least slightly conservative if you're posting something like this, which is fine. I am too. But don't be a hypocrite.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Marcia → Giselle · 7 hours ago

That is the stupidest most convoluted pile of words. What the hell does it even mean? Is that actually a sentence??

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → Marcia · 6 hours ago

The fact that they chose a face of a reptile tells you how repulsive they think women are so don't let those awful excuses for "human compassion " let us waste time on them

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Anna → Giselle · a day ago

You probably think this is pretty clever, but there is honestly so much wrong with this argument I am not even sure where to start.

-There are definitely other reasons that a woman might want an abortion--concern that the child will suffer is not the only one. Her own health may be at risk (mental or physical), or she may have gotten pregnant through trauma or an accident. The list goes on.

-Killing a living child that is going through hardship is definitely completely different from terminating a pregnancy, especially in the first few weeks when the fetus has no brain and definitely no feelings. Equating the two is complete idiocy. Try again :)

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l · 2 days ago

Way to go, Germany. Outsourcing death once again...this time getting the Poles to kill THEMSELVES...nice. Shaking my head...

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Francesca → disqus_07tSt10o1l · a day ago

So, the fact that my body never had children, that's murder too? I mean, since I didn't do my 'womanly duty' and marry and have 2.3 kids.

Here's the thing, I'm anti-abortion after 5 months (except in compelling cases) because of science! I know, that's a weird concept, but science says that a baby is viable out of the womb (just barely) after 5 months. So, at that point, I get the 'potential life' concept. But before that, it's a mass of cells that may or may not go to full term.

Abortion pills are about the best thing that can be done, and yet, people freak out about them. They stop the cells from forming a child, just like my body did when it said, "No baby for you!"

Get over yourself and your idealized (probably religion based) ideas about abortion.

And yes, I believe in God. It doesn't mean I can't believe science.

5 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Edith Thurman → Francesca · 17 hours ago

So true! Also like my body did when I had a miscarriage! Should I go to jail for that? People are willfully ignorant!

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



SamMcCall → Francesca · a day ago

AMEN!!!!

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → Francesca · 15 hours ago

? Not having children is not murder, do I really need to say that? Human life begins at conception, this is science. Human life is worthy of protection; this is common sense. Viability outside the womb is irrelevant. Google ultrasound of embryo; this is no lump of tissue. at 10 weeks everything is fully formed; even fingerprints! At 8 weeks they respond to touch/pain, suck their thumb, grab, swim, etc. Do some research; you'll be amazed at what the 'lump of tissue' does!

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Carolyn H → disqus_07tSt10o1l · 10 hours ago

Actually, if you knew anything about Germany, you would know that they are very pro-family. You know what kills children and families in the US? No paid maternity leave and a mere six weeks that the employer is obliged to give the mother off where she can still keep her job. Maybe if you complained to your government (assuming that you're from the US) about taking care of parents, then maybe you'd actually be doing something productive to help against abortion in those cases where a woman has an abortion in order not to lose her job and be on welfare. I thought we had it good in Canada with one year of maternity leave paid, but Germany has even longer

and the father can take time off too, along with being able to take up to three years off with job security within the child's first few years. Also, a woman choosing to abort a clump of cells that she doesn't want in her body is not suicide.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Ellie · 2 days ago

Appalled that that Women on Waves thing exists. Respect a country's laws. It's not hard. A country has a right to ban abortion, sorry.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Isla → Ellie · 2 days ago

Respect women's rights to do what they want with their bodies. That's not hard either.

14 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Giselle → Isla · a day ago

Smh. Abortion is not just about the woman only. Try again.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → Isla · 2 days ago

Women that have abortions don't kill their body, they kill their son or daughter, NOT their body, NOT their right. Sorry.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Quinn → disqus_07tSt10o1l · 2 days ago

You should feel sorry - heaven forbid you're ever put into a situation like this, making the choice isn't easy but it sure as hell is easier than getting yourself into a bigger situation on your own.

Abortion is and should always be the woman's choice; government should have absolutely no say in this. It is a woman's right to take care of herself, it is her RIGHT to do whatever she wants with HER BODY. Eggs don't have heartbeats - no son or daughter is being killed. Perhaps you should read up on your life science.

6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → Quinn · a day ago

I was born Czech and the joke was always the Poles were our poor peasant cousins, so it figures that they still follow their catholic priests mantra like the farm animals they so love ,ok they have some hard working steel workers in the cities too - pretty similar scenario in Ireland but watch out friends they voted in favor of gay marriage so abortion is next! Hallelujah right?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Ellie → Suzanne · 13 hours ago

Wow, your stance on Polish people tells me everything I need to know about you as a person. You really don't value other human life, do you?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → Quinn · 2 days ago

Fertilized eggs are human, they have their own distinct DNA at conception; begin growing immediately. Heartbeat at three weeks, even before most women know they are pregnant. YOU were that embryo you know, even before you had a heart...before you lost your heart for humanity.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → disqus_07tSt10o1l · a day ago

Diskus you are so over and last century buddy trust me

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → Suzanne · 15 hours ago

Actually the 'feminazi' era is over, dear. The world is regaining its humanity again; abortions are down, thankfully, and steadily declining.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → [disqus_07tSt10o1l](#) · 6 hours ago

This is from one of the many surviving feminazis the reason why abortions are down Einstein, is because women can freely use birth control pills and men wrap the condoms on (which helps protect from disease too) so don't you worry about humanity and concentrate on the children that were born and are living in poverty in such huge numbers in this world, hunger abuse no education discrimination and many other issues should be on the agenda, not wasted sperms however dear those are to you

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



Brindar Sandhu → [disqus_07tSt10o1l](#) · 2 days ago

An embryo cannot develop outside of a uterus. That's like saying you can't remove gut bacteria because they're not your body (actually an embryo is more your tissue than a bacterium is).

2 ^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → [Brindar Sandhu](#) · 2 days ago

I meant my 2 year old can't survive WITHOUT her parents...

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → [Brindar Sandhu](#) · 2 days ago

? So what if it can't 'develop' outside the uterus. Its still a human being, genius. My 2 year old can survive without her parents, but that doesn't make her less human or less worthy of life.

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



Brindar Sandhu → [disqus_07tSt10o1l](#) · 2 days ago

Physically, she can breathe and grow outside of you, so yes she can. An embryo cannot. That's why 10-20% of known pregnancies end in spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), because that's how hard it is to grow an embryo. I don't want to get into the details of embryonic development - the bottom line is that it IS the woman's right because it IS her body. I never said anything about an embryo being "less worthy of life."

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → [Brindar Sandhu](#) · 2 days ago

Genius: bacteria is not human, but a fertilized egg, an embryo IS.

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



Edith Thurman → [disqus_07tSt10o1l](#) · 17 hours ago

So when I had a miscarriage did I kill my child??? There is NO difference!!! Try looking at the truth. Medically and scientifically "A fetus' brain only starts to emit electrical signals at 12 weeks, and the EGGs recorded are comparable to that of a sea slug according to the eminent neuroscience researcher Micheal Gazzaniga" There I even for proof for you!!!

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → [Edith Thurman](#) · 15 hours ago

Did you INTEND to have a miscarriage? Then no, you did not commit murder. If you appeal to science, its long been established that human life begins at conception. This is indisputable; viability outside the womb is irrelevant. Human life is sacred and to be protected.

^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ›



Marcia → [disqus_07tSt10o1l](#) · 6 hours ago

When I was 5 months pregnant and bleeding, no one forced me into bed. No one forced me to stop nursing. No one told me not to take care of my kids and house. And when my miscarriage happened, as I knew it would, I was sad yet delighted because I knew that something was seriously wrong with that baby. If it had not missed spontaneously, I would have had an abortion. Am I a criminal? If you think so, then so is the doctor and every other woman who is pregnant and staining but has to go to work or be a caretaker. Not everyone can get in bed for months at a time. Are they criminals? The point is that my reproductive choices are mine, not anyone else's. But I am sure there are women who would have taken extreme measures to hold on

to a pregnancy no matter what, who would deliver that sick baby, and martyr themselves with a gork that needs full time care and is oblivious to the world around them. And THAT is just wrong. And yes, I too believe in G-d and believe that he gave us knowledge, science and technology for a good reason: to use it, not ignore it.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Brindar Sandhu → disqus_07tSt10o1l · 14 hours ago

This is simply not true. The scientific definition of life is still debated. A virus cannot survive (replicate) outside of a host. Neither can a human embryo mature outside of a uterus. Yet some people argue viruses are alive, while others that they are not. Science, like life, is always more nuanced than what you see at first glance.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



disqus_07tSt10o1l → Brindar Sandhu · 13 hours ago

Are you saying that when a man and a woman become pregnant they conceive a virus? A PERSON is conceived, science and logic support this. You can do mental backflips to justify killing a human being for convenience, but you're not fooling anyone other than yourself.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Ellie → Isla · 13 hours ago

I do, completely, until there's another life involved. Human life that we no longer seem to value. That's a scary trend, and that's when I speak up and say something.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → Isla · a day ago

Sorry Isla I meant to direct my answer to Ellie, she is the one with a problem, you are awesome

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → Isla · a day ago

You my dear is what the problem is with this world, I am sure you take your life direction from the bible the "laws" that you are talking about should have nothing to do with religion it should be a choice! That's all most women are asking for personal choice

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Ellie → Suzanne · 13 hours ago

I'm an atheist, so no, I take zero direction from the bible. The argument that anyone who dares to be pro-life must be a religious nut is so tired and cliché, I don't even feel like I should be responding to it.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Suzanne → Ellie · a day ago

Yes Ellie one more time : the world will one day be a better place without confused and male-manipulated women like you

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Ellie → Suzanne · 13 hours ago

Valuing the lives of the unborn doesn't make me "confused and male-manipulated," but thanks for playing.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

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