



GA America 2018 Annual Newsletter

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My Body. My Right. My Decision.

Volume 2

Belgian's Bio-Ethics Committee Rules Against Infant Circumcision

The Belgian government's Committee for Bio-Ethics has ruled against circumcision of infant boys for reasons other than medical necessity, stating, "bodily integrity is more important than religious faith." The committee found circumcision to be irreversible, without medical justification in most cases, and performed on minors unable to give their own permission. A child's right to physical integrity is protected by the International Treaty on the Rights of the Child. "As circumcision is irreversible and therefore a radical operation, we find the physical integrity of the child takes precedence over the belief system of the parents," according to committee chair, Marie-Geneviève Pinsart. www.xpats.com, 9/21/17.

Denmark Doctors: Circumcision of Healthy Boys Ethically Unacceptable

"No individual too young to provide informed consent to elective surgery should be subjected to an irreversible procedure that is painful, comes with risks, alters a natural, functional body part, has no relevant health benefits during childhood, causes pathological narrowing of the urethral opening in 5 percent-20 percent of boys, and – as stated by the Danish Medical Association – is ethically unacceptable." Morten Frisch, MD, PhD, DSc(Med), Adj. Professor. Denmark Doctors Declare Circumcision of Healthy Boys Ethically Unacceptable. www.huffingtonpost.com, 4/22/17.

California Second State to Offer Third Gender Option

Governor Brown signed SB 179 into law, which acknowledges a third gender – the one that lies along the continuum between male and female, and includes variations with attributes of both genders. The law was authored by Senators Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) and Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) and sponsored by Equality California and the Transgender Law Center. A special acknowledgment with thanks to Jamie Shupe, the first non-binary US citizen in Oregon, to Sara Kelly Keenan, the first legally non-binary Californian and first to receive an intersex birth certificate, and to OII-USA associate director, Dana Zzyym, the first to sue the US State Department for a non-binary

passport (case pending), for advancing our legal recognition and rights, so vital to ending intersex oppression. <http://oii-usa.org>, 10/16/17.

Norwegian Ruling Party Votes to Ban Circumcision

The Progress Party voted to ban circumcision of boys under the age of 16. Advocates claim that circumcision results in mental and physical harm to children and is a serious human rights violation. Party leader, Siv Jensen, insisted the move was not designed to target minorities. www.independent.co.uk, 5/8/17.

Dallas Man Gets Life for Circumcising Boy with Pruning Shears

Roger Hooten, 32, pleaded guilty to felony injury to a child. He was sentenced to life in prison by State District Judge Teresa Hawthorne for using pruning shears to circumcise his girlfriend's 3-year-old son. The mother also is expected to plead guilty. The boy and his sister are in their aunt's custody. www.dallasnews.com, 12/15/17.

Doctor in FGM Case Released on \$4.5m Bond

Lead defendant in FGM investigation, Dr. Jumana Nagarwala, was released from federal prison after five months, after friends offered more than \$4.5M in property to secure her bond, the largest in the history of Detroit's federal court. The prosecution argued Nargawala has the resources and motive to flee. She lost her job, could lose her parental rights, and faces life in prison. The case involves eight defendants – two doctors, a physician's wife and four mothers. Nagarawala is charged with performing the procedure on girls at a Livonia clinic. *Detroit Free Press*, 9/19/17.

Oregon First State to Allow Nonbinary Drivers License

Oregon became the first US state to allow residents to identify as "nonbinary," neither male nor female, on their driver licenses and identification cards in a decision by the Oregon Transportation Commission. Oregonians are now able to chose "X" instead of "F" or "M" on licenses and identification cards. <http://boingboing.net/>. 6/17/17.



We've had another busy year raising consciousness about the rights of infants and children to bodily integrity and genital autonomy, and now we are preparing for the 15th International Symposium on Genital Autonomy & Children's Rights. This symposium will be held at the Hotel Kabuki in San Francisco, which was called the Miyako Hotel in 1991, when we held our second symposium there. This will be the last symposium I'll coordinate, so I am bringing the "movers and shakers" together to honor those who have been with me since the beginning of the movement, those who have joined us along the way, and those who will carry the movement forward into the future. The theme of this symposium, which is being co-sponsored by Intact America, is *Clarity begins at home*.

On Friday evening, May 4, inspiring and brilliant ethicist Brian Earp will give the keynote address, which will be followed by a Meet & Greet. On Saturday morning, Hida Vioria, Founding Director of the Intersex Campaign for Equality, leading intersex and non-binary activist, and author of her memoir, *Born Both: An Intersex Life*, will lead off a day filled with presentations by an impressive list of speakers. Saturday evening, Brendon Marotta will present his award-winning documentary, *American Circumcision*, which will be followed by discussion. On Sunday morning, talented James Loewen will begin the day by discussing his photographic and videotaped documentation of the history of our movement, followed by another day of impressive speakers. We'll end the day's sessions with a strategy meeting that will include attendees and presenters. And, finally, we'll celebrate with a banquet dinner, closing remarks by Dr. George Denniston, founder of Doctors Opposing Circumcision (D.O.C.), and entertainment by Ms. Blu (Audra Berger), a prolific singer and songwriter who puts 'storytelling' to music. A music and nightclub prodigy at the age of twelve, Ms. Blu rides on the Intact America New York Pride Parade float and sings to help raise consciousness about the rights of infants and children.

Monday, May 7, we will hold our 3rd Annual Worldwide Day of Genital Autonomy demonstration at the Ferry Building from 10am to 1pm. Then, we'll take a short walk down the street to the restaurant where Jonathon took us three

years ago, just two days before he took his own life. This will be our Second Annual Jonathon Conte Memorial Luncheon.

I am very hopeful about the progress being made by the intersex community. This third gender is being acknowledged in several states and Washington, DC. These folks have not only fought to keep their genitals the way they were when they came into the world, they've fought to have their nonbinary selves be seen as they are – a third gender with equal rights. They will no longer have to suffer the pain and trauma of childhood surgeries done in secrecy and shame during school vacations. Finally, we are beginning to recognize and acknowledge that it's up to us to change *our* minds, *not* the bodies of our children. It is they who have suffered from being forced to live within our *constructed* binary gender system – often as a gender that was chosen for them, not by them. Many have grown up to say no one should have surgically and irreversibly altered their bodies or attempted to annihilate their intersex gender. Throughout the ages, intersex people have been revered in various societies worldwide because they incorporate, embrace, and express both masculine and feminine attributes. Isn't it about time that our own society embrace them as well?

And, hopefully, as people recognize and accept the rights of our intersex population, with their individual genital variations, they will also come to accept the genitals of those born male and female and protect their right to genital autonomy, too.

For symposium registration and program information, see www.genitalautonomy.org. Or, you can fill in the form on page 12 and submit to GA America. I hope you can join us for this May symposium, and look forward to seeing you in San Francisco.

Warm regards,

IN MEMORIAM

Wayne Griffiths (July 28, 1993 - March 17, 2017) co-founded NORM, the National Organization of Restoring Men, in 1990, and he spent decades helping circumcised men, who were physically and psychologically harmed by circumcision, by providing them with non-surgical foreskin restoration.

Darillyn Starr (September 21, 1954 - September 30, 2017) had six adopted breastfed children and started a breastfeeding support group for adoptive mothers. She succeeded in getting the Church of Latter Day Saints Adoption Agency to protect babies from circumcision before adoption, even if a birth mother requested it.



“We held our first anti-circumcision workshop in Uganda with the donations you wired me. We are demanding a ban of the ill-advised and harmful mass male circumcision of infants and children being implemented in the war against HIV in Africa.” – Prince Hillary Maloba, Kenya, 9/18/17.



“Thank you so much, you made us able to attend this important conference on reproductive healthcare where we have defended our stand to fight HIV in family planning, using condoms not circumcision. Thank you for your donations and support.” – Prince Hillary Maloba, Kenya, 1/26/18.

Thank you, Prince, for working so diligently to protect the bodily integrity and genital autonomy rights of infants and children. You are fighting the good fight in the face of a huge opponent, not unlike David facing Goliath, but much worse! This takes courage, strength, and determination, all of which do not go unrecognized! – Marilyn Milos

“I cannot but be pleased to learn that the Belgian government has taken action against infant circumcision. However, the practice has such a hold on the Jewish mind (even non-practicing Jews will suffer great distress to get the ritual done on the 8th day), I'm afraid it will be driven underground. Nevertheless, the Belgian government's action is further recognition of the act's brutality.”

– James Robertson, EdD, Rocklin, California.
[See Belgian Court ruling, page 1.]

“A 25-year-old college-educated male starting his career is sleeping. Strangers break into his home, kidnap him from his bed, take him as he struggles to a hospital, and amputate the most sensitive part of his penis. He protests loudly but he is ignored. Over his screams, he is told it's for his own good, so that he will ‘fit in and look like others,’ and be cleaner. Is this sexual harassment? Sexual abuse? Would it be against the law? Does this young man have a right to sue his captors?”

“The same thing happens to a ten-year-old boy. He screams, he protests, he says, ‘No! No! No!’ but his captors ignore his pleas and amputate his foreskin. Is this sexual harassment? Sexual abuse? Could this boy take legal action?”

“The same thing happens to a newborn baby boy. What is the difference between an infant, a boy, or a man? Could any of the three, the infant, the boy, or the young man feel sexually harassed? Sexually abuse? Could any of the three males have emotional repercussions from being cut without their consent? Do men have a ‘Me, Too’ claim to make?”

– Jere DeBacker, Denver, Colorado.

Jere, it is the mother's responsibility to ensure the successful completion of her baby's first developmental task of establishing trust. When she hands her baby over to a circumciser, the baby perceives the experience as betrayal by his mother. His first developmental task has been undermined. How will he ever trust a woman again? Perhaps, when women protect their sons from pain, trauma, and violence at the beginning of life, their sons will grow up to trust women, respect them, and protect them. This is not to say that all circumcised men are abusive, but don't women, too, need to take responsibility in this “Me, too” scenario? In a patriarchal system, the male is the first victim. We need to protect our baby boys from violent cultural practices, for as Menninger said, ‘What is done to children, they will do to society,’ and Gandhi said, ‘If we are ever to have peace, we shall have to begin with the children.’ – Marilyn Milos

**Worldwide Day of Genital Autonomy Demonstration
Monday, 7 May**

1000 – 1300 Meet at Ferry Building for the 3rd Annual Worldwide Day of Genital Autonomy Demonstration

1300 – 1430 Walk to restaurant for Jonathon Conte Memorial Luncheon (no-host)

Infant and Parents Sue Children's Healthcare of Atlanta for Alleged Forced Retraction of Foreskin

An infant male, whose foreskin allegedly was forcibly retracted during the insertion of a urinary catheter, and his parents have sued a nurse, a nursing supervisor, and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Inc. for alleged battery, nursing malpractice, the intentional infliction of emotional distress, and other torts, attorney David J. Llewellyn of Johnson & Ward reports. Atlanta (PRWEB), 1/12/18.

Intersex Baby's Genital Surgery Landmark Lawsuit Settled for \$440,000

After four years in court, a first-of-its-kind legal battle over operating on intersex babies who are born with ambiguous genitalia has settled with the hospital according to court records. The boy's parents adopted him when he was two. They alleged he was surgically altered to make him look like a girl, but he identified as a boy when he was seven years old. This is the first case to openly challenge the standard of care for intersex infants and children. https://www.buzzfeed.com/azeenghorayshi/intersex-surgery-lawsuit-settles?utm_term=.wt6XWEQL2#.vmp6VJ4rz.

ARTICLES

"All children—female, male, and intersex—have a compelling interest in intact genitalia. All else being equal, they should get to decide whether they want their 'private parts' nicked, pricked, labiaplastied, 'normalized,' circumcised, or sewn, at any age when they can appreciate what is really at stake....My own preference is for debate and dialogue, not bans and vilification. But whatever approach one takes, it is time to move beyond the tired (and false) dichotomies of male versus female, religion versus culture, and health benefits versus no health benefits. The focus for critics of genital cutting going forward, I contend, should be on children versus adults—that is, on bodily autonomy and informed consent." Brian D. Earp. Does Female Genital Mutilation Have Health Benefits? The Problem with Medicalizing Morality. <http://blog.practicaethics.ox.ac.uk/>, 8/15/17.

Circumcision, sexual experience, and harm. Earp BD, Darby R. *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*, Vol. 37, No 2, online symposium. 2017.

Reason and paradox in medical and family law: Shaping children's bodies. Earp B D, Hendry J, and Thomson M., *Medical Law Review*, in press.

Medical News

BXO AND OBESITY

"The rate of obesity was significantly higher in boys with BXO (42%) compared with 12.4% in boys with NCB [no concern for BXO]. Given the increasing rates of childhood obesity and the long-term health consequences of both BXO and obesity, special attention should be paid to this population. Further research is needed to determine if BXO in obese children may represent an early indicator of a systemic disease process where intervention may be warranted." The Association Between BXO and Obesity in Boys Undergoing Circumcision. Fuchs ME, Beecroft N, Dajusta DG, McLeod DJ. *Glob Pediatr Health*, 2017 Nov 24. doi:10.1177/2333379417742749.

CATHERIZATION WITHOUT FORESKIN RETRACTION

"Over the past century, numerous boys born in Canada and the United States have been circumcised. However, this trend is changing, with neonatal circumcision being performed less commonly than in years past. Because of these historical practices, many physicians and nurses have limited experience

treating patients with intact foreskins and engage in ill-advised procedures such as premature foreskin retraction for purposes of "hygiene" or catheterization. Premature retraction of the foreskin can lead to tearing of healthy tissue, which is painful and increases the risk of preputial scarring and infection. We describe a method for catheterization in which premature retraction of the foreskin is not necessary." Adrienne Carmack, MD, and Marilyn Fayre Milos, RN. Catheterization without foreskin retraction. *Canadian Family Physician*, 2017 Mar; 63(3): 218–220.

CIRCUMCISION, AUTONOMY, AND PUBLIC HEALTH

"Male circumcision—partial or total removal of the penile prepuce—has been proposed as a public health measure in Sub-Saharan Africa, based on the results of three randomized control trials (RCTs) showing a relative risk reduction of approximately 60 percent for voluntary, adult male circumcision against female-to-male human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission in that context. More recently, long-time

advocates of infant male circumcision have argued that these findings justify involuntary circumcision of babies and children to dissimilar public health environments, such as the USA, Australasia and Europe. In this article, we take a close look at the necessary ethical and empirical steps that would be needed to bridge the gap between the African RCTs and responsible public health policy in developed countries....We conclude that circumcision of minors in developed countries on public health grounds is much harder to justify than proponents of the surgery suggest." Brian D. Earp and Robert Darby. *Public Health Ethics*, 19 December 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/phe/phe/phx024>.

CIRCUMCISION HARM DOCUMENTATION SURVEY

"As with non-therapeutic genital modifications of non-consenting female and intersex minors, responses are highly individualistic and cannot be predicted at the time they are imposed on children. Findings highlight important health and human rights implications resulting from infringements on the bodily integrity and future autonomy rights of boys, which may aid health care and human rights professionals in understanding this emerging vanguard of men who report suffering from circumcision. We recommend further research avenues, offer solutions to assist affected men, and suggest responses to reduce the future incidence of this problem." Long-term adverse outcomes from neonatal circumcision reported in a survey of 1,008 men: an overview of health and human rights implications. Tim Hammond & Adrienne Carmack. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, February 2017, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2016.1260007>.

FALSE BELIEFS PREDICT CIRCUMCISION SATISFACTION

"Critics of non-therapeutic male and female childhood genital cutting claim that such cutting is harmful. It is therefore puzzling that 'circumcised' women and men do not typically regard themselves as having been harmed by the cutting, notwithstanding the loss of sensitive, prima facie valuable tissue. For female genital cutting (FGC), a commonly proposed solution to this puzzle is that women who had part(s) of their vulvae removed before sexual debut 'do not know what they are missing' and may 'justify' their genitally-altered state by adopting false beliefs about the benefits of FGC, while simultaneously stigmatising unmodified genitalia as unattractive or unclean. Might a similar phenomenon apply to neonatally circumcised men? In this survey of 999 US American men, greater endorsement of false beliefs concerning circumcision and penile anatomy predicted greater satisfaction with being circumcised, while among genitally intact men, the

opposite trend occurred: greater endorsement of false beliefs predicted less satisfaction with being genitally intact. These findings provide tentative support for the hypothesis that the lack-of-harm reported by many circumcised men, like the lack-of-harm reported by their female counterparts in societies that practice FGC, may be related to holding inaccurate beliefs concerning unaltered genitalia and the consequences of childhood genital modification." False beliefs predict increased circumcision satisfaction in a sample of US American men. Earp BD, Sardi L M, Jellison WA. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*. 6 December 2017. Published online ahead of print at <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2017.1400104>.

FGM POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Female Genital Mutilation: A New Crisis for American Practitioners. Deborah Ottenheimer, MD, FACOG. April 20, 2017. <http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.naspag.org/resource/collection/2289316F-D060-40F3-9247-C9B94E44C7F3/L9%20%e2%80%93%20Female%20Genital%20MutilationCutting%20!%20New%20Cb.pdf>.

IATROGENIC SURGERY

"Nontherapeutic circumcision (NTC) of male infants and boys is a common but misunderstood form of iatrogenic injury that causes harm by removing functional tissue that has known erogenous, protective, and immunological properties, regardless of whether the surgery generates complications. I argue that the loss of the foreskin itself should be counted, clinically and morally, as a harm in evaluating NTC; that a comparison of benefits and risks is not ethically sufficient in an analysis of a nontherapeutic procedure performed on patients unable to provide informed consent; and that circumcision violates clinicians' imperatives to respect patients' autonomy, to do good, to do no harm, and to be just. When due consideration is given to these values, the balance of factors suggests that NTC should be deferred until the affected person can perform his own cost-benefit analysis, applying his mature, informed preferences and values." Nontherapeutic Circumcision of Minors as an Ethically Problematic Form of Iatrogenic Injury, J. Steven Svoboda, Esq., MS, JD. *AMA Journal of Ethics*, August 2017, (19)8: 815-824. doi: 10.1001/journalofethics. 2017.19.08. msoc2-1708.

INTERSEX SURGERY

"Amidst growing concerns within the international medical community about surgical interventions on intersex children, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) today called for an end to all



medically unnecessary surgical procedures that seek to alter gonads, genitals, or internal sex organs of children born with atypical sex characteristics, until the child is old enough to participate meaningfully in decisions about their body and health." <http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/press/press-releases/intersex-surgery-must-stop.html>, 10/29/17.

MEATAL STENOSIS

"In this cross-sectional study, we enrolled 87 circumcised boys between 4 to 8 years old with severe meatal stenosis. Clinical findings of our subjects were gathered by a checklist that included: thin stream of urine, upward urine stream deviation, infrequent voiding, urinary tract infections, voiding dysfunction, and urge incontinency....The author of this study recommends performing long-term follow up after circumcision and ultrasonography to detect meatal stenosis before permanent renal damage occurs." Saeedi P, Ahmadnia H, Akhavan Rezayat A. Evaluation of the Effect of Meatal Stenosis on the Urinary Tract by using Ultrasonography. *Urol.J.* 2017 May 23;14(3):3071-3074. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28537045>.

"Upward deflation of urinary stream can develop after neonatal circumcision because of a meatal web without stenosis, and can be cured easily with meatoplasty. Instead of 'meatal stenosis', 'meatal web' may be a more appropriate term to explain the pathology in these patients." A-zen MA, et al. Complication of newborn circumcision: Meatal stenosis or meatal web? *J Pediatr Urol.* 2017 Jun 2. pii: S1477-5131(17)30236-X. doi: 10.1016/j.jpuro.2017.05.007. [Epub ahead of print]. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28623142>.

[Editor's note: Surgical correction may be "easy" for the physician, but it is *never* "easy" for the baby! The way to prevent meatal stenosis or meatal web is by protecting babies from foreskin amputation.]

PENILE LICHEN SCLEROSUS

"We treated two patients with recalcitrant lichen scleroses (LS) of the penis [also known as balanitis xerotica obliterations or BXO] with...improvement of lesions after the first treatment and complete cleaning after 3 months of therapy....Results were maintained in the follow-up after 2 years." Mercuri SR, Brianti P, Foti A, et al. Penile Lichen Sclerosus Treated with 1927 nm Thulium Fiber Laser and Photodynamic Therapy: A New Possible Therapeutic Approach. *Photomed Laser Surg.* 2018 Jan 3. doi: 10.1089/pho.1017.4386. [Epub ahead of print].

PENILE TRANSPLANTATION

"[W]e argue that given limited healthcare resources in South Africa and competing healthcare needs, prevention is a more appropriate response to botched traditional circumcisions than penile transplants. Moodley K, Rennie S. Penile transplantation as an appropriate response to botched traditional circumcision in South Africa: an argument against. *J Med Ethics*, 2017 July 29. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28756397>.

PREMATURE EJACULATION

"We attempted to evaluate whether circumcision has an effect on premature ejaculation....There were no significant differences in PE...and orgasm...between circumcised and uncircumcised group. However...ED...and pain during intercourse...favoured circumcised group." Yang Y, Wang X, Bai Y, Han P. Circumcision does not have effect on premature ejaculation: A systematic review and meta-analysis. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28653427>. *Andrologia.* 2017 Jun 27. doi: 10.1111/and.12851. [Epub ahead of print.]

UNDERSTANDING THE DEBATE

"Newborn circumcision remains a controversial topic with really no resolution in site [sic]. The problem is that while all can agree there are some medical benefits that can be achieved in a population, there is no promise that these medical benefits will apply to that individual. At the same time there are also risks to the individual and that individual has no role in accessing or consenting to those risks. The challenge we are left with is how to balance these values....No medical organization advocates that the benefits are so great that universal circumcision is mandatory....At the same time it is an overstatement to say the risks are so great that the procedure should be outlawed..." Newborn Circumcision: Understanding the Debate. Andrew Freedman, MD, FAAC. *AUA Update Series 2017*, Lesson 23, Volume 36.

[Editor's note: Freedman ends with, "Hopefully with time, education and a respectful dialogue we can reach a state in which we can accept that when it comes to the penis there can be a more broader definition of normal." I submit that, with foreskin amputation, the penis never again will be *normal*. A circumcised penis lacks its normal protective covering, immunological functions, tens of thousands of specialized erogenous nerves that encircle the opening of the foreskin and allow a male to know what his penis is feeling, where he is in relation to the orgasmic threshold, and to ride the wave to orgasm. These aspects of a normal penis are lost with foreskin amputation.]

ARTICLES

Cultural Bias in American Medicine: The Case of Infant Male Circumcision. Brian D. Earp and David M. Shaw. *Journal of Pediatric Ethics*, Fall 2018, Volume 1, Number 1:8-26.

Infant Male Genital Cutting Incidence Worldwide. Dan Bollinger. https://www.academia.edu/23494197/Infant_Male_Genital_Cutting_Incidence_Worldwide.

Targeting mothers and selling men what they do not want. Sidler D, Earp BD, van Niekerk A, Moodley K, and Kling S. (2017). *South African Medical Journal*, 107(4):281.

International News

AUSTRALIA

The Rationalist Society of Australia rejects all medically unnecessary, non-consensual genital cutting or modification of children in their communities. The Rationalist Society is calling for an end to harmful practices that have been internationally recognised as violations of the rights of the child and issued a white paper, *Genital Autonomy, February 2017*, by Jonathan I. Meddings and Travis L.C. Wisdom.

www.rationalist.com.au.

DENMARK

A group called Intact Denmark is garnering support to ban male circumcision for anyone under 18. As in a number of other countries, citizens can start a petition to the Danish Parliament on issues they feel strongly about via the borgerforslag.dk website. If a suggestion receives 50,000 supporters within 180 days, Folketinget is obliged to debate it. Intact Denmark has submitted its suggestion and is waiting for it to be approved and posted on the website for signing. "If people want to let themselves be circumcised then they should have the opportunity to make that choice as an adult. Otherwise, they ought to be allowed to grow up with their body intact," said chairperson of Intact Denmark, Lena Nyhus. <http://cphpost.dk/news/ban-circumcision-for-boys-under-18s-says-intact-denmark.html>.

Denmark was reprimanded by the UN Committee against Torture in 2015, which condemned genital surgery on intersex children as a "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment" falling under the prohibition of torture." The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) examined intersex genital mutilation in Danish University Children's Hospitals and published "Concluding observations" on 26 October 2017 (Intersex Awareness Day) unmistakably condemn "ongoing surgical interventions on intersex children," the lack of "redress to the child victims of such treatment," and the lack of "adequate counselling and support for families with intersex children." *StopIGM.org*, 11/12/17.

GHANA - "The risk of morbidity after infant male circumcision in rural Ghana is high, chiefly due to poor hygiene practices." Gyan T, McAuley K, Shannon C, et al. Determinants of morbidity associated with infant circumcision: Community-level population-based study in rural Ghana. *Trop Med Int Health*, 2017 Mar 22(3):312-322. doi: 10.1111/tmi.12829.

ICELAND - MPs from five political parties want to ban circumcision in Iceland. Spokesperson for the bill, Silja Dögg Gunnarsdóttir, is a member of the Progressive Party. Others presenting the bill include members of the Pirate party, the Left Greens, and the People's Party. FGM has been illegal in Iceland since 2005, but no laws protect boys. The bill states that Nordic Ombudsmen for Children consider banning parents from circumcising boys is first and foremost to protect their health. In the bill, the only exception would be circumcision to protect a child's health. In all other circumstances, the practice is a clear violation of human rights against children who are too small to consent. All circumcision, including when done for religious reasons, would be strictly banned and punished with up to six years of prison for personal assault. <https://grapevine.is/>, 1/31/18.

ISRAEL - The Be'er Sheva District Court sentenced a female asylum seeker from Eritrea to four months in prison for circumcising her four-year-old son. The woman, identified publicly as A.A., had been in detention for ten months and was released after being given credit for time served. Arrested in March 2016 following the circumcision, she was released and then re-arrested a year later after trying to escape to Jordan. Her son has been in the care of a foster family. District Court Judge Aharon Mishnayot acquitted the woman of charges of abusing a minor and of causing serious bodily harm under aggravated circumstances. She was convicted on the charge of neglecting her parental duties and of interfering with a policeman in the line of duty. www.haaretz.com, 2/10/18.

KENYA – "As countries scale up adult voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) for HIV prevention, they are looking ahead to long term sustainable strategies, including introduction of early infant male circumcision (EIMC)...Our results can assist countries considering scale-up of EIMC services for HIV prevention as their adult VMMC programs mature." Bailey RC, Adera F, Mackesy-Amiti ME, et al. Prospective comparison of two models of integrating early infant male circumcision with maternal child health services in Kenya: The Mtoto Msafi Mbili Study. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28880904>. 2017 Sep 7;12(9):e0184170. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0184170.

[**Editor's note:** With the publication of this study, the underlying agenda of the African Voluntary Male Medical Circumcision project is revealed. Infant circumcision of African males lacks the "voluntary" component that made circumcision of males in Africa tolerable, except for the lack of evidence driving the promotional excuse of preventing HIV/AIDS and the coercion aspect of the agenda. Now, with infant male circumcision as the agenda, the program of cutting off a normal part of a baby's penis becomes an ethically unsupportable human rights violation.]

Four girls under the age of 12 underwent forced circumcision and recuperated at the Embu Level Five Hospital. Police rescued three others who were about to undergo the cut and arrested a 65-year-old retired nurse suspected of performing the cut, one parent, and a woman who was nursing the girls. The traumatized girls were to receive counselling and taken to a safe house until their safety at home is established. Surveillance will be increased in the area to avoid FGM, according to County Commissioner Esther Maina, and they will work with relevant institutions to accelerate alternative rites of passage. www.nation.co.ke/, 1/3/17.

MPONDOLAND

Three initiates have died in the Eastern Cape since the summer initiation season began in November. All are in the OR Tambo district municipality jurisdiction, an area notorious for initiation deaths and penile amputations. One of the initiates is said to have committed suicide. Two initiates were under the legal age of 18. Another, in the bush illegally, died of sepsis. An investigation is underway. www.dispatchlive.co.za. 12/12/17.

PAKISTAN

The family of a 6-week-old baby boy protested at a private hospital where the baby's father, Ghulam Farid, said he took his son for a circumcision but the inexperienced and ignorant

staff made a mess of the procedure. "They did not tell us the doctor was not on duty. The medics took the child and literally performed an experiment," he said angrily. "My son was only one month old when I brought him to the hospital 15 days ago. With every passing day his condition is deteriorating and the doctors kept telling lies and saying he will be alright." Police arrested three nurses and a ward boy who were on duty. Officials sealed the hospital after the allegations of the boy's family were proven during the inquiry. The boy was transferred to another hospital where the attending physician said the blood supply to the genitals was blocked, only a small part remained attached to the body, and chances of recovery were slim because the organ was completely mutilated. *Express Tribune*, 11/1/17.

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town – Surgeons successfully completed a penis transplant on a 40-year-old man, who lost his penis 17 years earlier due to complications from a traditional circumcision. After the nearly 10-hour surgery at Tygerberg Hospital, the surgeons acknowledged a color discrepancy that will be fixed with medical tattooing. Within six months, the man is expected to regain all urinary and reproductive functions. *Dailymail.com*, 5/22/17.

Mthatha – Abulele Zengazi says he went to initiation school looking forward to becoming a man but woke up in a hospital days later after losing half his penis. The 21-year-old was beaten by the circumciser and his friends who left him tied up by the legs and covered in blood and feces. His father rescued him, took him home, washed him, and called an ambulance. The young man spent nearly two months in the hospital. His circumciser was arrested. www.groundup.org.za, 9/30/17.

TURKEY

Ankara – "Having a delicate medical procedure is normally quite a private affair – but not for these boys who are being circumcised in Turkey. Eye-watering images reveal the moment the boys were operated on in Ankara, the Turkish capital, without anaesthetic in a ritual known as sunnet. Circumcision is widely practiced across the Muslim world, but has special significance in Turkey where it is viewed as the first step from boyhood to manhood. The day of surgery is celebrated with extravagant parties complete with music, dancing, and gifts for the boys." <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4650152/Turkish-boys-circumcised-no-anaesthetic.html>, 6/29/17.

UGANDA

Kampala – The VMMC Experience Project is a non-profit organization empowering African men and women to raise their voices on the issue of mass circumcision promoted and provided by western health organizations. A recent investigation revealed "voluntary" recruitment methods include a \$3 voucher to impoverished men and circumcising school boys without parental consent. Vulnerable populations, such as orphans and prisoners, are frequent targets. The campaign results in confusion about immunity. Men claim their HIV status is due to misinformation received when they were circumcised. Others mourn the loss of loved ones who died after being circumcised for HIV/AIDS protection. Prince Hillary Maloba, Director of the VMMC Experience Project in Kenya and Uganda, whose uncles are members of the Bagisu, a circumcising tribe with one of the highest HIV rates in Uganda, reports, "Millions of children are left AIDS orphans. Now, non-circumcising tribes are being forced to accept circumcision based on blatant lies." He adds, "We demand the banning of mass circumcision in Africa!" Max Fish. African Opposition to UNICEF's Mass Infant Circumcision Campaign: UNICEF responds. So do Africans. *www.digitaljournal.com/pr/3434194*, 8/1/17.

UNITED KINGDOM

Amazon removed circumcision training kits from its UK website after complaints that they normalised unnecessary and risky practice. Dr. Antony Lempert, Chair of the National Secular Society's (NSS) secular medical forum, wrote "Male circumcision in the UK is wholly unregulated and we fear that the sale of this product may encourage unqualified practitioners to carry out unnecessary surgery on infants in non-clinical conditions, resulting in serious harm. Non-therapeutic circumcision is unethical and unnecessary and is putting infant boys at risk of death and serious injury. This practice could be encouraged by the morally negligent sale of infant circumcision training kits to the public." The NSS's chief executive, Stephen Evans, welcomed Amazon's decision. "No child should be subjected to unnecessary medical surgery," he said. "A growing number of medics and lawyers are questioning forced genital cutting and recognising the need to safeguard boys from this unethical practice. Religious freedom is not an absolute right and certainly doesn't justify the amputation of healthy, functioning body parts from babies' bodies." *www.theguardian.com*. 12/20/17.

London – Great Ormond Street Hospital is not meeting standards of care for intersex children, a BBC investigation says. A BBC News article reported the hospital is under

investigation for failing to provide intersex patients and their families with fair and adequate healthcare. Intersex activists and their allies have pushed to hold this hospital accountable. *http://oii-usa.org/4560/bbc-reports-on-great-ormond-street-hospital-failing-intersex-children/*, 10/12/17.

Stone – 15 Square (formerly NORM - UK) has moved to a new office. The new address is Charity Hub, First Floor, 69 High Street, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8AD.

USA

California – Bay Area Intactivists joined in the San Francisco Walk for Life Parade to make sure those who want to ensure babies make it into the world also know to protect all babies – male, female, and intersex – from the pain, trauma, and lifelong harmful consequences of unnecessary genital cutting once they arrive. 1/27/18.

Kentucky – The *Messenger-Inquirer* reports Texas-based nonprofit, Your Whole Baby (YWB), is behind a billboard that went up in Owensboro, December 14. A local anonymous donor provided a year's worth of funding for the sign, which will move to different parts of the city.



YWB founder Jen Williams says she wants to remind parents they have a choice when it comes to circumcising sons. *Messenger-Inquirer*. 12/27/17.

Maine – A bill that would make FGM a crime in Maine is officially dead. Those against the bill said a new state law could isolate immigrants and cause fear, largely because the cutting practice is most often done on girls in Africa and the Middle East. The Senate voted against bringing the bill back up for a vote. *http://wgme.com*, 8/2/17.

Maryland – Using the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) 2012 Report on Circumcision, which claims circumcision benefits outweigh the risks, while in that same paper admitting there are no accurate statistics on the risks, the American College of Nurse-Midwives, in September 2017, issued an equally flawed Position Statement on Newborn Male Circumcision. Nurse midwives should understand how a woman's participation in the pain, trauma, and lifelong consequences inflicted on a male's body and psyche may adversely affect that male throughout life. If you want a midwife to attend your birth, be

sure to find one who refuses to cut the normal genitals of a non-consenting baby! To read their statement, see www.midwife.org.

Michigan – New legislation signed into law by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder makes FGM a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison. The law applies to both doctors who perform the cut and the parents who transport a child to have it done. Gov. Snyder said, “This legislation is an important step toward eliminating this despicable practice in Michigan while empowering victims to find healing and justice.” He also signed a bill allowing a health professional’s license or registration to be revoked if he or she is convicted of FGM. Michigan is the 26th state to ban FGM. www.npr.org/sections/the-two-way/2017/07/12/536863961/michigan-laws-will-increase-penalties-for-performing-female-genital-mutilation, 7/14/17.

Minnesota – Two Minnesota mothers have been charged in an investigation of FGM, months after bringing their daughters to a Detroit-area clinic. The mothers are charged with conspiracy and genital mutilation. This indictment raises the number of defendants to eight. Dr. Jumana Nagarwala, who is accused of performing the procedure, denies any crime and says she performed a religious custom on the girls from her Muslim sect. *The Associated Press*, 9/14/17.

New York – Human Rights Watch issued a 160-page report supporting the protection of intersex children from surgery that is not medically necessary: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/07/25/i-want-be-nature-made-me/medically-unnecessary-surgeries-intersex-children-us>. Press release about the report: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/07/25/us-harmful-surgery-intersex-children-us>.

Washington, DC – On October 26, the US State Department issued this statement:

“In recognition of Intersex Awareness Day, the United States State Department stands in solidarity with intersex persons and advocates around the world.

“We recognize that intersex persons face violence, discrimination, harassment, and persecution on account of their sex characteristics.

“At a young age, intersex persons routinely face forced medical surgeries without free or informed consent. These interventions jeopardize their physical integrity and ability to live freely.

“On Intersex Awareness Day, we reaffirm our strong commitment to promoting a world where all persons can freely and equally express themselves with dignity, regardless of sex characteristics. When those most marginalized in society are afforded equal protection and opportunity, global security and stability are strengthened. Increased recognition, understanding and awareness of intersex persons and their human rights strengthens democracy for all.”

The statement comes as the department faces a federal discrimination lawsuit from nonprofit Lambda Legal group on behalf of intersex American and US navy veteran, Dana Zzyym. Zzyym was denied a US passport because only two choices were available for gender marker on the passport application form, either male or female.

“Dana has been fighting for almost three years for an essential identity document that accurately reflects who they are,” Lambda Legal Senior Attorney Paul Castillo said “The US District Court ordered the State Department to reconsider its binary-only gender policy barring use of a third-gender marker on US passports.” Lambda Legal says many intersex people identify as male or female, but some, like Zzyym, do not. Zzyym uses the gender-neutral pronouns “they,” “them,” and “their” and was born with ambiguous sex characteristics. *Intersex Campaign for Equality*, 10/27/17.

Former US Surgeons General Call for Moratorium on Medically Unnecessary Intersex Infant Surgeries!

<http://oii.usa/4325/former-surgeon-generals-call-for-mor-unnec-intersex-infant-surgeries/>.

The USA spends trillions of dollars on the military, in an attempt to feel “safe,” largely because of the experience of feeling not safe. Instead, being assaulted within days of being born has been imprinted in 85-90% of all American men born during and after the Cold War era. – Alegria del Colibri

Born Both: An Intersex Life. Hida Vilora. Hachette Books. ISBN-10: 0316347841; ISBN-13: 978-0316347846. 3/14/17.

The "Circumcision" Decision: A Catholic Critique. David P. Lang. *CreateSpace* 2017. ISBN-13: 978-1546615569.

CircumcisionDebate.org.

Intact America launched CircumcisionDebate.org, a new website that is an entry-level introduction to the question of circumcision for curious people who are not (yet!) Intactivists. October 2017.

Female Genital Mutilation: A New Crisis for American Practitioners. Deborah Ottenheimer, MD, FACOG, April 20, 2017. <http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.naspag.org/resource/collection/2289316F-D060-40F3-9247-C9B94E44C7F3/L9%20%e2%80%93%20Female%20Genital%20MutilationCutting%20A%20New%20Ch.pdf>.

The Deepest Well: Healing the long-term effects of childhood adversity. Nadine Burke Harris, MD. 2018. ISBN 978-0-544-82870-4.

First Do No Harm: How Intersex Kids are Hurt by Those Who Have Taken the Hippocratic Oath. Pidgeon Pagonis. *Griffith Journal of Law & Human Dignity, Gender, Culture, and Narrative*. Special Issue, 2017; 40-51. ISSN: 2203-3114.

"7 Things You Need To Know To Be A Good Ally To An Intersex Person", <http://www.newnownext.com/intersex-awareness-day-2017-how-to-be-an-lgbt-intersex-ally/10/2017/>.

Skyclad Farm. Richard Lawson. 2018. Available on Amazon Kindle. \$3.99.

UN's Intersex Fax Sheet. https://unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex_Factsheet_ENGLISH.pdf.

15th International Symposium Program

Friday, 4 May

- 1800 – 1900 Registration
- 1900 – 1930 Welcome
- 1930 – 2100 Keynote Address – Brian Earp
- 2100 – 2230 Meet & Greet

Saturday, 5 May

- 0730 – 0830 Registration
- 0830 – 0900 Welcome
- 0900 – 0925 Genital Autonomy's Transformative Impact – Hida Viloria
- 0930 – 0955 Female Genital Mutilation – Soraya Miré
- 1000 – 1025 The Anatomy of the Human Prepuce and the Physiological Complications Consequent to Posthectomy – Steve Scott
- 1030 – 1055 Coffee
- 1100 – 1125 Listening to Babies: Integrating mother-baby attachment into your activism and advocacy - Janel Mirendah
- 1130 – 1155 TBA
- 1200 – 1225 International Classification of Disease – John Geisheker
- 1230 – 1355 Lunch on Your Own
- 1400 – 1425 Genital Autonomy and the World – J. Steven Svoboda
- 1430 – 1455 Duty to Report – Maltreatment of Minors: Taking the fight for genital autonomy to the street – Zenas Baer
- 1500 – 1530 Male Circumcision Violates the Physicians' Fiduciary Duty to the Child – Peter Adler
- 1530 – 1555 Coffee
- 1600 – 1625 Twenty-eight years of circumcision litigation: What have we learned? What progress have we made? – David J. Llewellyn
- 1630 – 1655 Breaking Down the Wall of Denial: The San Francisco MGM Initiative – Lloyd Schofield
- 1700 – 1730 Meet Your Whole Baby – Jen Williams and Ashley Truman
- 1730 – 1900 Dinner on Your Own
- 1900 – 2200 American Circumcision Screening – Brendon Marotta

Sunday, 6 May

- 0800 – 0900 Registration
- 0900 – 0925 Documenting Intactivism: 25 years of progress – James Loewen
- 0930 – 0955 Three Decades of Jewish Intactivism: From emotions to strategy – Lisa Braver Moss
- 1000 – 1015 Celebrants of Brit Shalom – Mark Reiss
- 1015 – 1030 The Circumcision Movie, a trailer – by Emily Rumsey and Emily Fitzgerald
- 1030 – 1055 Coffee
- 1100 – 1125 Maximum Impact – Marketing Based Strategies and Emotional Messaging for Foreskin Protection That Win! – Anthony Losquadro
- 1130 – 1155 TBA
- 1200 – 1225 Frontline and Online: Intactivist strategies of resistance – Brother K
- 1230 – 1355 Lunch on Your Own
- 1400 – 1425 GA Down Under: The persuasive significance of non-type III FGC – Paul Mason
- 1430 – 1455 INTACT: Men As They Were Born To Be – Trish Causey
- 1500 – 1530 The Challenge to Educate Inclusiveness for Intersex Children Born into Our Society – Clive Elwood Dunn
- 1530 – 1555 Coffee
- 1600 – 1650 Intact America: Implementing a tipping point strategy to change the way America thinks about circumcision – Georganne Chapin and Dan Bollinger
- 1650 – 1800 Discussion – Everyone included
- 1900 – 2200 Banquet Dinner
Concluding Remarks – George Denniston
Entertainment – Ms. Blu

15th International Symposium on Genital Autonomy and Children's Rights

4-6 May 2018 - Hotel Kabuki, San Francisco, California

REGISTRATION FORM

(On-line registration at www.gaamerica.org)

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