

Afterword

by George C. Denniston, M.D.

This book has the potential to make the world, and especially the United States, a happier place to live, by opening our eyes to the importance of the foreskin as an inherent element of sexual pleasure. Its comprehensive explanations show how some humans, in sanctioning circumcision, have acted to deprive other humans of their full sexual functioning and experience.

While the author has put forth some advanced, controversial ideas that are sure to invite scientific scrutiny, she demonstrates that she knows far more about the true value and functioning of the foreskin than most American doctors. Sadly, many of these doctors have bought into the illogic of cutting away healthy, natural tissue without ascertaining its worth. In their defense, it must be admitted that the bizarre paradigm of circumcision has been fraught with numerous myths that have pervaded our culture and confused even the brightest of minds.

Doctors Opposing Circumcision (D.O.C.) was founded to help end routine neonatal circumcision in America, and its members, in 50 states and on 6 continents, are working to bring out the facts concerning this tragic practice.

All non-religious circumcisions in the U.S. are performed by doctors. Yet, paradoxically, routine circumcision violates not only the Golden Rule, but also the first tenet of medical practice: *First, Do No Harm*. In fact, circumcision violates *all seven* Principles of the A.M.A. Code of Ethics.

Doctors' licenses do not authorize them to cut people unless they are performing surgery. And circumcision is not surgery, *by definition*. Surgical procedures have been defined as: repair of wounds, extirpation of diseased organs or tissue, reconstructive surgery, and physiologic surgery (i.e., sympathectomy). Routine circumcision does not fall into any of these categories. Therefore, ethically, doctors performing this operation are outside their authorized domain.

American men, circumcised in infancy, are now documenting the harm that has been done to them by doctors who operated on them without their consent. The bizarre practice of parents telling the doctor to operate and remove healthy tissue occurs nowhere else in medicine. According to modern medical ethics, parents do not have the right to consent to a procedure that is not in their son's best interests. The removal of a normal, important part of the male sexual organ is not in their son's best interests.

America has the highest rate of AIDS in the industrialized world, and also circumcises the majority of its males. There may be a connection. We do not yet know. Before a doctor performs a circumcision, he should first have the answer to this question: *Might this baby have an **increased** risk of AIDS as a result of circumcision?*

The time is approaching when doctors will be unwilling to perform this painful, contraindicated procedure. Already, an ever-growing number of physicians are opposed to routine neonatal circumcision. These doctors recognize that no one has the right to forcibly remove normal sexual body parts from another individual. They recognize that doctors should play no role in inflicting this painful, unnecessary procedure on newborns or children.

In order for a doctor to stop circumcising babies, he or she must take a courageous step. The doctor must recognize that what has been done in the past was not in the best interest of the infant, and he must say, "I will not circumcise any more babies."

Many doctors have already taken that sometimes personally challenging step, and we honor them. Those who lack the courage to change continue to circumcise.

We have the greatest admiration for men who, having been cut themselves, have moved past their denial and refused to permit the circumcision of their sons. Countless millions of American parents have said NO! to circumcision, increasingly more as time has progressed. Every parent and grandparent now has the opportunity to learn what circumcision does to the penis and its long-term potential consequences. With this knowledge, the tragedy of circumcision will not be passed on to their descendants—saving them much grief and enriching their lives. To this end of greater understanding, this book serves a valuable purpose. And if the revolutionary ideas it asserts hold up and make their mark, we will undoubtedly see an end to circumcision in America, and hopefully, someday soon, the world.

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