

# NOCIRC NEWSLETTER

Spring 1994

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## THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF CIRCUMCISION INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS

presents

## THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CIRCUMCISION

The First International Symposium on Circumcision (ISC) was organized in 1989 as a forum for leading world authorities on the medical, cultural, psychological, religious, legal and sexual aspects of genital mutilation. The Symposium specifically addressed the practice of routine medical neonatal male circumcision in North America. It became apparent, however, that we could not isolate infant male circumcision in North America from what is done to children worldwide. Genital mutilation is primarily directed at children – male and female – and, with this mutilation, a very definite part of human sexuality is irretrievably lost. On the final day of the conference, March 3, 1989, the General Assembly unanimously passed this comprehensive resolution:

### DECLARATION OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CIRCUMCISION

We recognize the inherent right of all human beings to an intact body. Without religious or racial prejudice, we affirm this basic human right.

We recognize the foreskin, clitoris and labia are normal, functional body parts.

Parents and/or guardians do not have the right to consent to the surgical removal or modification of their children's normal genitalia.

Physicians and other health-care providers have a responsibility to refuse to remove or mutilate normal body parts.

The only persons who may consent to medically unnecessary procedures upon themselves are the individuals who have reached the age of consent (adulthood), and then

only after being fully informed about the risks and benefits of the procedure.

We categorically state that circumcision has unrecognized victims.

In view of the serious physical and psychological consequences that we have witnessed in victims of circumcision, we hereby oppose the performance of a single additional unnecessary foreskin, clitoral, or labial amputation procedure.

We oppose any further studies which involve the performance of the circumcision procedure upon unconsenting minors. We support any further studies which involve identification of the effects of circumcision.

Physicians and other health-care providers do have a responsibility to teach hygiene

and the care of normal body parts and explain their normal anatomical and physiological development and function throughout life.

We place the medical community on notice that it is being held accountable for misconstruing the scientific database available on human circumcision in the world today.

Physicians who practice routine circumcisions are violating the first maxim of medical practice, "PRIMUM NON NOCERE," "First, Do No Harm," and anyone practicing genital mutilation is violating Article V of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "NO ONE SHALL BE SUBJECTED TO TORTURE OR TO CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT..."

The content of the Second ISC was intentionally broadened. Genital mutilation was considered from a global perspective, religious influences were addressed in greater depth, the structure and function of the foreskin were described in detail and foreskin restoration was considered for the first time. As a result of the presentations, two books, *Say No To Circumcision!* and *The Joy of Uncircumcising!*, were published. To date, both books have been reviewed by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the latter has also been reviewed by the *Journal of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* and the *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery*. The *British Medical Journal* and the *British Journal of Urology* have scheduled reviews of *The Joy of Uncircumcising!* in 1994.

The scope and focus of the ISC has changed in response to the social and political environment in which it is held, e.g.,

the new Oregon Health Plan omitted coverage for routine neonatal circumcision and Congresswoman Pat Schroeder introduced a bill to prohibit female genital mutilation in the U.S. The content and scope of the Third ISC will reflect this increased awareness. Authorities from England, France, Canada, Australia, Mexico, Switzerland, Egypt, Africa and the United States will convene to consider the genital mutilation of children worldwide, regardless of its origin and intended purpose. Men and women have come forward to document the harm they have personally experienced. Their collective voice has been heard. During the Symposium, Soraya Mire's documentary on female genital mutilation, *Fire Eyes*, will be featured, and a press conference will be held by Tim Hammond to announce the revealing results of his ground-breaking Harm Documentation Survey.

# THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CIRCUMCISION

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
PROGRAM – MAY 22-25, 1994

## SUNDAY

- 1:00 p.m. Registration, Exhibits, Bookstore
- 5:00 p.m. Welcome
- 5:30 p.m. Keynote Address: Dick Gregory
- 7:00 p.m. Reception

## MONDAY

- 7:30 a.m. Exhibits/Bookstore
- 8:00 a.m. The Anthropology of the Body: Paradigms and Politics of Circumcision, Robbie Davis-Floyd, Ph.D.
- 9:00 a.m. Modern Horrific Medicine: Unnecessary Sexual Surgery, James DeMeo, Ph.D.
- 10:00 a.m. Coffee Break/Exhibits
- 10:30 a.m. The Epidemic of Circumcision, George Denniston, M.D.
- 11:00 a.m. The Prepuce Defined, John Taylor, M.B., FRCP.
- 11:30 a.m. Primal Health: The Bacteriological Perspective, Michel Odent, M.D.
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch On Your Own/Exhibits/Bookstore  
Harm Documentation Press Conference
- 2:00 p.m. Medical Board: James Snyder, M.D., FACS, Moderator
  - Foreskins are Normal: The Pediatric Penis in Australia, Mervyn Lander, M.B., B.S., Dip.Ter.Ed., F.R.A.C.S.
  - Cost Benefit Analysis, George Williams, M.B.Ch.B., F.R.A.C.P.
  - The Prepuce: 43 Years of Study, Including Synechiotomy, Dr. Andres Straffon
  - Care of the Intact Penis, Paul Fleiss, M.D., MPH
- 5:30 p.m. Dinner On Your Own/Exhibits/Bookstore
- 7:00 p.m. Strategies for Media Exposure, A Round Table Discussion, Barry Ellsworth
- 8:30 p.m. *Nurses of St. Vincent: Saying No To Circumcision*, Documentary Film by Barry Ellsworth
- 9:00 p.m. *Fire Eyes*, Documentary Film by Soraya Mire

10:00 p.m. Discussion, Soraya Mire

10:30 p.m. Adjourn

## TUESDAY

7:00 a.m. Exhibits/Bookstore

8:00 a.m. From Genetic Cosmology to Genital Cosmetics: Origin Theories of the Righting Rites of Circumcision, Duane Voskuil, Ph.D.

9:00 a.m. Religious Considerations: Jim Bigelow, Moderator

Evangelical Christianity, Jim Bigelow, Ph.D.

Jewish Roots of Circumcision, Moshe Rothenberg, CSW

10:00 a.m. Break

10:15 a.m. Religious Considerations (continued)

To Mutilate in the Name of Jehovah or Allah:  
Legitimization of Male and Female Circumcision,  
Sami A. Aldeeb, Doctor of Law

Jewish Feminist Perspective, Miriam Pollack

11:30 a.m. Transcultural, Multireligious, & Interdisciplinary Dimensions of Appropriating Universal Paradigms Regarding the Human Rights Challenge of Genital Mutilation, Anastasios Zavales, Ph.D.

12:30 p.m. Lunch On Your Own/Exhibits/Bookstore

### BREAK-OUT SESSIONS: FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

2:00 p.m. FGM in Egypt, Mohamed Badawi, M.D., Ph.D.

2:40 p.m. Approaches Toward Eradication of FGM: Community Mobilization, Alternative Rituals, Etc., Susan Rich

3:20 p.m. Similarities in Attitudes and Misconceptions toward Infant Male Circumcision in North America and Ritual Female Genital Mutilation in Africa, Hanny Lightfoot-Klein

2:00 p.m. FGM in the U.S. Practice, Prevalence, Politics and Priorities, Catherine Hogan

2:30 p.m. Medical Ethics, Trissa Baden, M.D.

3:00 p.m. Second Generation Females at Risk: A Need for State Department Policy, Rebecca Lodge

3:30 p.m. Prosecuting FGM: From the Prosecution, Defense and Child Perspectives, Melinda Douglas, J.D.

## TUESDAY

### WORKSHOPS:

#### FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION AND FORESKIN RESTORATION

- 4:15 p.m. Female Genital Mutilation: Eradication Through Sensitive Education and Confidentiality, Asha Mohamud, M.D.
- 4:15 p.m. Foreskin Restoration and Support Groups, Jim Bigelow, Ph.D. and R. Wayne Griffiths, M.S.

5:30 p.m. Dinner On Your Own/Exhibits/Bookstore

7:00 p.m. Long-Term Psychological Effects of Circumcision, Ronald Goldman

8:00 p.m. Healing Ritual for Men and Women, Jeannine Parvati Baker

10:30 p.m. Adjourn

## WEDNESDAY

7:30 a.m. Exhibits/Bookstore

8:00 a.m. Abuse, Armament and Addiction, Jed Diamond

8:45 a.m. Men's Rights, Fredric Hayward

9:30 a.m. Circumcision: A Class Perspective, Moshe Rothenberg

10:15 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. Foreskin Restoration: From "Lunatic Fringe" to Medical Credibility, Jim Bigelow, Ph.D.

11:30 a.m. Harm Documentation, Tim Hammond

12:30 a.m. Lunch On Your Own/Exhibits/Bookstore

2:00 p.m. Activism, The Essential Element: Jody McLaughlin, Moderator  
Taking A Conscientious Objector Stand, The Santa Fe Nurses  
Political Realities, Possibilities, and Opportunities,  
James Prescott, Ph.D.

Parents, The Final Frontier, Elizabeth Noble, P.T.

Open Discussion: Bring Ideas and Information to Share

5:00 p.m. The Magical Child, Joseph Chilton Pearce

6:00 p.m. Exhibits/Bookstore

7:00 p.m. Banquet

Closing Address: Routine Neonatal Circumcision:  
Symbol of the Birth of the Therapeutic State, Thomas Szasz, M.D.

# SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

## LOCATION/ ACCOMMODATIONS

The Symposium will be held at the University of Maryland University College Conference Center, University Blvd. at Adelphi Road, College Park, MD (near Washington, DC), and is accessible from BWI, National and Dulles Airports. Ask for directions when you make your reservations.

Special hotel rates are \$69 single and \$84 double per night (plus 5% sales tax). Please make your reservations directly with the hotel. For special rates, request the NOCIRC Third International Symposium. For toll-free reservations in the United States, call 1-800-727-8622. Otherwise, call 301-985-7310.

**HOSPITALITY:** If you have a place for others to stay, need a place to stay or are looking for a roommate at the hotel, contact Accommodations Coordinator David Saldana at 410-721-5637.

## CE CREDIT

Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number xxx for 21 contact hours (pending).

## SYMPOSIUM FEES

**EARLY REGISTRATION**  
(Postmarked by April 15, 1994): \$195

**REGULAR AND ON-SITE REGISTRATION** (Postmarked after April 15 or at the door): \$225

**PARTIAL PROGRAM REGISTRATION:** \$25 Sunday, \$75/day Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday

**DISCOUNT REGISTRATION:** \$50 off registration price for full-time students, senior citizens, handicapped or groups of 5 or more (first 5 members of group must register at same time).

Scholarships are available for Symposium volunteers. To apply, call Frederick Hodges at 510/486-1373.

**BANQUET DINNER:** The menu will include a chicken or vegetarian meal at \$30.00 each, please specify your preference. Include reservations on your registration form.

Conference speakers are confirmed for all program dates; however, we reserve the right to replace speakers who are unable to attend.

## CANCELLATIONS

Requests must be made in writing and postmarked no later than May 10, 1994. A \$45 per person processing fee will be deducted from the refund.

## DISCOUNT AIRLINE INFORMATION

America West and USAir have been designated the official air carriers for the Third International Symposium on Circumcision. Both airlines offer reduced "Zones Fares" to Washington National and Baltimore International Airports, as well as other low, published air fares. We recommend that you make your air reservations immediately, since the Symposium ends just before the peak travel period of Memorial Day Weekend, and availability of seats at these special fares is limited. Call:

America West: 1-800-548-7575  
(Refer to CAMS Code 17266SZD)

USAir: 1-800-334-8644  
(Refer to Gold File #56390128)

AMTRAK: 1-800-872-7245

## REGISTRATION

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Make check/money order payable to:

**NOCIRC**  
**P.O. Box 2512**  
**San Anselmo, CA 94979-2512**

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Please include my name in the conference directory for networking purposes.

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(All fees payable in U.S. Dollars)

**Please Note:** Refunds (less \$45 processing fee) granted only on written requests postmarked prior to May 10, 1994.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

**AUSTRALIA** In the first case of its kind, a Children's Court magistrate last December labeled female genital mutilation a "surgical intrusion...which really amounts to an assault." She said it was evident that two young girls, on whom the procedure had been performed overseas, had suffered "significant harm" and that their parents had failed to protect them from the injury. The girls were placed under a protection order until the case resumes this Spring. *Herald Sun*

**ENGLAND** A private consultant who agreed to perform an illegal female circumcision for £400 cash was found guilty on November 25 of serious professional misconduct and barred from practice. Professor Sir Herbert Duthie, chairman of the General Medical Council's professional conduct committee, told Dr. Farooque Hayder Siddique: "The committee is appalled by your willingness to perform an abhorrent, illegal and mutilating operation with no possible medical benefit to a patient." *The Guardian*

**ISRAEL** Commenting on post-mortem circumcisions performed without the permission of the family, Israel's Ashkenazi chief rabbi Yisrael Lau said, "The chief rabbinate sees circumcision as a privilege and not something that should be forced on anyone." Former

Shepard chief rabbi Mordechai Eliahu says circumcising a Jewish corpse would "allow the person to enter the Garden of Eden," but added that family consent should be obtained, and it should not be done if the man had refused circumcision while alive.

Israel's Ministry of Religions dismissed kidnapping charges in October against a rabbi who mistakenly circumcised a baby boy without the mother's consent. The panel determined the rabbi circumcised the baby in "good faith," even though the baby was not Jewish. *Contra Costa Times*

**UNITED STATES** The Federal Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act of 1993 (H.R. 3247), introduced on October 7 by Congresswomen Pat Schroeder and Barbara Collins, has been referred to the Judiciary and Energy and Commerce Committees. Encourage your representatives to endorse this important human rights bill. Once this bill has passed, it will be much easier to introduce a bill regarding routine infant male circumcision.

**South Carolina** State Representative John James (Bubber) Snow, Jr., on January 12, introduced House Resolution 44-87, which requests a reevaluation of existing policies pertaining to circumcision and episiotomy and HR

47-10, on February 9, which would outlaw FGM. Anyone who circumcises, excises or infibulates a woman younger than 18 could be sentenced to five years in prison.

**Portland, Oregon** A deportation hearing was held on February 7 for Lydia Oluloro, 32, who is fighting to have her immigration regularized in order to protect her 4 and 6 year-old daughters. If forced to return to Nigeria, the girls, who are American citizens, will be subjected to genital mutilation, as was their mother. The decision on Oluloro's case, which has received national attention on ABC's *Nightline*, in *U.S. News and World Report* (Feb 7) and *Time Magazine* (Feb 21), will be announced March 23.

**Oregon** After years of statewide debate and federal scrutiny, the new Oregon Health Plan, which excludes coverage for routine male infant circumcision, went into effect on February 1.

**The World Health Organization** A Resolution of the Executive Board of the WHO recommended to the Forty-seventh World Health Assembly "2.(2) to establish national policies and programmes that will effectively, and with legal instruments, abolish female genital mutilation...and other harmful practices affecting the health of women and children" (25 January 1994).

## BULLETIN BOARD

### BOOKS

*Say No to Circumcision!* Thomas Ritter, M.D., Hourglass Publishing, \$10.95 plus \$2.00 P & H (\$0.79 sales tax in CA) from NOCIRC, P.O. Box 2512, San Anselmo, CA 94979.

*The Joy of Uncircumcising!* Jim Bigelow, Ph.D., \$16.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling (plus \$1.23 sales tax in California) from UNCIRC, P.O. Box 52138, Pacific Grove, CA 93950.

*The Warrior's Journey Home, Healing Men, Healing the Planet*, Jed Diamond, New Harbinger Publications, 1-800-748-6273, \$12.95.

### PAMPHLETS

*Circumcision: What Your Baby Can't Tell You*, 20 pages of statements from authoritative sources, \$5, compiled by John A. Erickson, 1664 Beach Blvd., #216, Biloxi, MS 39531-5421.

*Deeper Into Circumcision: An Invitation To Awareness & Guide to Resources For Parents, Researchers, Restorers, Activists and the Merely Curious*, \$5, compiled by John A. Erickson, address above.

*Newborn Circumcision - An Enigma of Health*, Dr. George Williams, presentation to the Second International Childbirth Conference, University of Sydney, Australia, October 1992. With

a \$20 donation to NOCIRC, P.O. Box 2512, San Anselmo, CA 94979-2512.

### COMMON INTEREST GROUPS

Interested in networking/strategy meetings during the Symposium? Call Moshe Rothenberg 718/859-0650

### BURNING ISSUES

A demonstration is scheduled for Thursday, May 26, to bring awareness to the issue of childhood genital mutilation. Please plan to attend, and make travel plans accordingly. Attendees are requested to bring a specific item - call Tim Hammond at 415/826-9351 for details.

# THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CIRCUMCISION

May 22-25, 1994  
University of Maryland  
University College Conference Center  
College Park, MD  
(Washington, DC area)

## FROM INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS, YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT:

The Anthropology of Circumcision:  
Genital Mutilation of Males and Females  
Cultural and Religious Considerations  
Current Medical Issues

Long-Term Psychological Effects of Genital Mutilation  
Harm Documentation Survey Results  
Foreskin Restoration Information  
Care of the Infibulated Woman  
International Developments  
Litigation/Legislation Concerns and Considerations  
Activism, The Essential Element  
AND YOU WILL SEE:

Documentary Films  
*Nurses of St. Vincent: Saying No To Circumcision*  
*Fire Eyes, A Film on FGM*

## AT THE END OF THIS PROGRAM, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND:

- The cultural dynamics of male and female genital mutilations
- The structure and function of normal male and female genitalia
- Historical and contemporary roles of circumcision in religion
- Current medical considerations of routine infant circumcision
- Potential psychological consequences of genital pain to infants and children
- How to care for the infibulated woman
  - Legal and ethical implications of genital mutilation of children

## FULL PROGRAM AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION INSIDE

### PLEASE POST

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## NATIONAL ORGANIZATION of CIRCUMCISION INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS

Post Office Box 2512  
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