

# ■ NOCIRC OF MICHIGAN ■

# INFORMANT

EDUCATING A NEW GENERATION — FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ALL CHILDREN

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## *Eyewitness Reports Confirm* **Baby Boys Damaged in Michigan Hospitals by Traditional American Social Ritual**

by Norm Cohen

Several eyewitness accounts have confirmed that a normal, functioning part of baby boys is being ritually removed by Michigan tribal doctors in area hospitals. Speaking on the record, Dr. I. M. Quack admitted this in a telephone interview with **NOCIRC of Michigan**. “Yes, yes, we amputate male foreskins everyday. But it keeps boys clean and healthy. Who has time to bathe these days?”

Circumcision is a tribal tradition in most Michigan households and part of the American pop culture. Primitive fear of the penis and the human body in general keep the practice alive. Hospitals are the ideal place to perform the ritual without troubling parents with its bizarre history. Hospitals here make it appear much more like a medical procedure than the barbaric tribal marking ritual it is.

The painful, ancient tribal ritual, known for billing purposes in the United States as a “medical procedure,” is over 6,000 years old and now rare throughout 85% of the civilized world. However, it can still be spotted in hospitals in late 20th century America.

Tribal doctors, known by the locals as “licensed physicians,” were willing to speak on the record to us. “After all,” said the Minister of Health for the Academy of Archaic Propaganda (AAP), “it doesn’t matter what we say about it. This proud American tribal tradition is going to continue to be practiced by observant Americans anyway. It’s an old-fashioned American social custom that needs no other reason than tradition to continue. People don’t have to be rational when they have tradition to fall back on.”

“Of course, we’re always ready to come up with some medical excuse when pressed by thinking people for a rational explanation.”

“Before each previous medical excuse is discredited by solid scientific research, we publicly speculate on a new excuse. We’ve got to keep up with the current phobias of the public, you know. The ‘prevents AIDS’ excuse was announced just as the last excuse was being disproved!”

Each foreskin amputated by this rite would have served protective and sexual roles throughout the life of a male. “Yes,” the minister admitted, “it’s a disfiguring surgery, but we’ve changed all the anatomical charts sold in America to show only circumcised penises. That

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### DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

The American Academy of Pediatrics has spent over a year now struggling with what to say next about their bizarre practice of routine infant circumcision. This will be their fourth policy statement on the subject in the last 27 years. They have been reluctant to admit that it is not the penis that is in need of repair, but the culture in which we find ourselves—the culture that has denied us both our pain and our pleasure.

Let us hope the U.S. medical establishment will finally stop aiding and abetting this culture of denial that brought us circumcision in the first place. They will make our job of re-education easier and will keep the penises of more babies, and the men they will become, working happily, the way they were designed!

*On behalf of all the children, thanks! Norm Cohen, Director*

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way, men won't have to feel bad about having had the cultural surgery without their permission."

"I'm only following the orders from the parents!" exclaimed Dr. Mercedes Benz, the former Nazi doctor. Dr. B. M. W. agreed that he does it only if parents ask. "Don't bother me with the ethics of this primitive rite, I was forced to learn it in order to finish medical school. I'm only trying to make an honest living here! I can pocket a quick \$200 off the ten-minute ritual."

Dr. Whora preaches daily on her call-in radio show about the benefits of the procedure. She refused our questions by saying, "Don't challenge me to a rational discussion! I've converted to this custom. We bring fathers and sons together in a way that neither will ever forget—by carving a lasting mark on their genitals."

Dr. Victoria Puritan believes the penis is a filthy, dangerous sexual organ. "More than once, it has gotten me into trouble. Men are such scum! They think with their penis, so by circumcising them I'm helping them be less sensitive to sexual stimulation."

Preparations for the primitive ritual actually begins early in a woman's pregnancy. The parents have already been programmed by their culture into thinking that a penis is dirty and troublesome. Scenes are now invoked of naked adolescent boys mercilessly teasing their son in a locker room unless he, too, is ritually scarred.

The mother is repulsed at the thought and purpose of her son's penis. However, whenever she expresses her normal fear that the circumcision might harm her baby, a spell of silence and denial is cast over her by her tribe. Her doctor chants long-disproved "medical reasons" and then sings anecdotal praises to circumcision. "For example," recited Dr. Joe Camel to one mother, "it prevents penile cancer." Any discussion of the function of the foreskin is traditionally avoided.

Fathers, as loyal tribal leaders, seem to accept the ritual scarification without complaint. For the first time, they realize

they were ritually circumcised without their consent. They now seek to confirm their superstition that their penis was not damaged by the rite. "Yeah, we're going to do it," he compulsively recites aloud. "It didn't hurt me any! And besides, if it did, I don't remember it."

The grandparents also participate in preparations for the ritual. They put private pressure on both parents, refusing to care for the baby unless they follow the American ancestral tradition.

The mother is used to doing what she is told in order to win the approval of her family. Said one mother, "I wouldn't dream of hurting my son in any other way but this!"

Immediately following birth, her doctor and his underlings circle around Mother to break her protective bond with her new baby and to get her to sign a cleverly confusing paper disguised as a "Consent Form." This must be done while she is still drugged and recovering from her own unnecessary childbirth rituals.

Dr. Quack said, "I re-introduced Misinformed Consent at my hospital, Ignorance General. We tried the more modern, Informed Consent, but it took much longer to administer and it didn't always get parents to do what we wanted them to. Besides, blue collar parents are a pretty dim-witted bunch and can't understand the subtle human rights issues actually raised by this practice."

Nurse Friendly added that she did not want to upset parents by telling them how awful the circumcision would be for their baby. "After all, I could get fired for speaking out!"

The baby is carried to the secret ritual circumcision room which has been sound-proofed for the comfort of visitors to the hospital. He is Velcroed down to a sadistic traditional device known as a *Circumstraint*. The ritual cutting begins in earnest by the tribal doctor. Without the male's permission—under little or no anesthesia—normal, healthy, functioning tissue is actually amputated from his penis, radically altering its function and appearance for the rest of his life. The scarring that results is cleverly designed to match the scarring of his peers.

During the ceremony at St. Misery, the Holy Sufferer, doctors must pretend they don't hear the screams of the babies and later they are required to deny that babies feel pain. "Don't get me wrong," admitted one young intern on staff there, "It's a tough job. We're not completely insensitive, you know. That's why we make penis jokes during the procedure. It helps us disassociate from the reality of what we are doing."

Mr. Joe Profit of Limited Choices HMO admitted, "We would like to drop coverage for this medically unnecessary surgery, but it's usual and customary in Michigan. Our subscribers would flock to our competition! Instead, we save money by refusing coverage on new, life-saving treatments, so we come out ahead in the long-run."

Dr. A. Cohen said that the Jews first learned the procedure from the Egyptians. "Jews have been practicing it for 4,000 years, at times in the most unhygienic way, long before any scientific studies of the procedure were carried out. I think we've had enough time by now to learn from our mistakes and get it right. Our own ritual circumcisers pride themselves on how fast they can take a swipe at a boy's tiny penis with a razor-sharp knife, so we have avoided the new American fad of using anesthesia."

One doctor admitted he won't risk hurting the feelings of his Jewish colleagues by criticizing the ritual. "I know I should speak out against this obvious violation of the bodily integrity of baby boys, but I golf on Fridays with a Jewish doctor, and I don't want to upset him."

Referring to Norm Cohen, the director of **NOCIRC of Michigan's** efforts, Dr. Ann Ty-Child said, "He's a single-minded anti-circumcisionist who is only concerned for the babies. He is letting himself be manipulated by their piercing screams during their traditional cultural surgery. He has insulted a long-standing American social tradition and the highly-paid doctors that are stubbornly dedicated to its continued ritual observance. He ought to be more concerned for his culture!"

The truth hurts.

## Dr. Ronald Goldman Speaks in Detroit

Ronald Goldman, Ph.D., author of *Circumcision: The Hidden Trauma* and *Questioning Circumcision: A Jewish Perspective* spoke May 17th at the Birmingham Temple, in Farmington Hills. He is a psychologist, educator, writer and the executive director of the Circumcision Resource Center in Boston.

Introducing Dr. Goldman was Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine, the religious leader of the Birmingham Temple and the Society for Humanistic Judaism. Dr. Goldman provided key insights into the psychological, cultural and religious aspects of infant male circumcision.

His talk emphasized the cultural ties that both Americans and Jews have to circumcision, which blinds them from understanding the trauma inflicted on their children as a result of the procedure. The first time a boy finds out about circumcision is when he recognizes that something was cut off from his penis. This is traumatic for him.

Mothers, too, are also traumatized by the event. Goldman asked, "What feelings can she ever trust if she is unable to trust her most fundamental feelings about protecting her child?"

"A ritual must *match* feelings, not deny them," he emphasized. "A ritual puts values into practice. By the time parents hear their son's painful cries, notice the feeling in their guts, and ask, 'Why are we doing this?' it is too late."

"When the welfare of children is an issue, neutrality is unacceptable. The Jewish community has a significant role to play in the international discussion about circumcision. Speaking one's truth is a powerful act."

"*Tikkun Olam* is Hebrew for the repair and healing of the world. Jews take personal responsibility for this."

Goldman said that Jews who are challenging the practice of circumcision are an essential part of this healing.

## Another Happy Boy

Justin Tyler Jackson

"I am a nurse and chose not to circumcise my two sons. My husband and myself felt this was too violent of a procedure to perform on our sons since it is *not* medically necessary. *We know the foreskin is necessary.*"

Cherie and Tim Jackson  
-parents of two *intact* sons-  
Goodells, Michigan

Send us a picture of *your* happy, intact boy and the reasons why you chose to leave him that way!

WEB WATCH

[www.cirp.org](http://www.cirp.org)

The Circumcision Information and Resource Pages is the largest on-line collection of medical, technical and popular circumcision articles. A video clip of a circumcision and photographs are available. Lots of credible resources and links are offered by this award-winning site maintained by Geoffrey T. Falk.

MISSION STATEMENT

## NOCIRC OF MICHIGAN

NOCIRC of Michigan is a consumer rights advocacy group helping parents understand that circumcision is harmful to their children.

We educate mothers, fathers and health care providers in Michigan about the harm of circumcision and about proper intact care. We protect consumers from fraudulent medical claims. We actively promote the benefits of normal genitalia.

We know the removal of normal, healthy tissue from a child's genitals—in the name of medicine, religion or social custom—results in a loss of sexual function and is a violation of human rights.

We are a non-profit group consisting of health care professionals and dedicated lay people. We are committed to effective education, advocacy and activism on behalf of children to protect them from harm. We are part of a worldwide organization dedicated to ending all forms of male and female genital mutilation.

*The Informant* (ISSN 1092-020X) is published three times a year by **NOCIRC of Michigan**. It represents our commitment to provide educational information in this state and to activists everywhere. Articles, comments, and questions are welcome.

**NOCIRC of Michigan**  
*Experts In Caring*

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## NOCIRC of Michigan Exhibit Dates

Volunteers are needed to help staff NOCIRC information tables at the exhibitions listed below. Come and enjoy sharing our message with others!

Please call (248) 642-5703 to volunteer.

◆ **July 15th - July 18th**

*Ann Arbor Art Fair*  
downtown,  
Ann Arbor, MI  
9:00 am to 9:00 pm

◆ **Sunday, August 2nd**

*Babies-To-Be Show*  
Novi Hilton Hotel  
Novi, MI  
11:30 am to 3:30 pm

◆ **November 12th - November 15th**

*Midwifery in the Mainstream*  
sponsored by  
Midwives Alliance of North America  
Michigan Midwives Association  
Grand Traverse Resort  
Traverse City, MI

### Getting Personal

Interesting personal accounts of circumcision, or its avoidance, are needed for our newsletter, **The Informant**. Call (248) 642-5703 to propose an article of your own.

## Defending Babies in the Name of Reason

Norm Cohen, Director of NOCIRC of Michigan, takes on a hospital circumciser in a lively public debate Sunday, September 20th, 2:00 - 4:00 pm, at the meeting of the Humanist Forum of Metro Detroit. Call (248) 642-5703 for location.

### Restoration Support Group Now Meeting

A support group meets once a month in metropolitan Detroit for men seeking technical as well as moral support in foreskin restoration.

Interested? Please call William Taylor at (313) 531-8495 for more information.

Any health care provider in Michigan can receive these free pamphlets in bulk for distribution to their clients: "Answers to Your Questions About Infant Circumcision" and "Answers to Your Questions About Your Young Son's Intact Penis." Please call (248) 642-5703 to order.

## The 5th International Symposium on Sexual Mutilations

NOCIRC presents the *Fifth International Symposium on Sexual Mutilations: Medical, Legal and Ethical Considerations in Pediatric Practice*, August 5th - 7th, 1998, at the University of Oxford, Oxford, England.

Doctors, nurses, researchers, lawyers, ethicists and activists from Europe, North America, Africa and Australia will gather to address the medical, psychological, legal and human rights implications of male and female genital mutilations taking place around the world.

Internationally respected experts will present their latest research, documentation and analysis. The latest steps in the world-wide campaign to end all sexual mutilations will be reviewed. Dr. Margaret Somerville, medical ethicist, will receive the symposium's *Human Rights Award* for her outspoken stand against male circumcision in North America.

Every year around the world, 13.3 million boys and 2 million girls have part or all of their genitals cut off. There are striking similarities in every culture's stated reasons for either female genital mutilation or male circumcision. In both cases, tradition, conformity and identity top the list. Fears about dirt, disease, sex and community survival are all revealed.

### BAD IDEAS FROM THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

*"Drops of urine get mixed with smegma and that combination is highly carcinogenic."*

Dr. Marc Goldstein, M.D., Professor of Urology and Director of the Center for Male Reproductive Medicine, New York Hospital - Cornell Medical Center, New York City, in **Total Health for Men**, p. 216, edited by Neil Wertheimer, Men's Health Books, 1995

**FACT:** *Smegma and urine are natural products of males and females and though they may smell bad, have never in combination or separately caused a single case of cancer in anyone.*

### TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT CIRCUMCISION

#### Become An Informant

A tax-deductible membership fee of \$25 or more makes you a NOCIRC of Michigan **Informant**. Help us to educate parents!

**PO Box 333, Birmingham, MI 48012**

NAME:

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