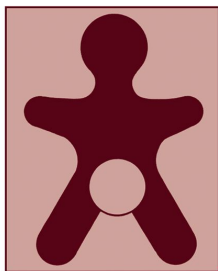


Flesh and Blood

*Perspectives on the
Problem of Circumcision in
Contemporary Society*



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Springer

1st
edition

2004, XVI, 254 p.

Printed book

Hardcover

Printed book

Hardcover

ISBN 978-0-306-48333-2

Available

Discount group

Science (SC)

Product category

Proceedings

Other renditions

Softcover

ISBN 978-1-4419-3446-8

Medicine : Pediatric Surgery

Denniston, G.C., Hodges, F.M., Milos, M.F. (Eds.)

Flesh and Blood

Perspectives on the Problem of Circumcision in Contemporary Society

Who owns your sex organs? Different cultures today and in different epochs have given a variety of answers to this question. It may seem self-evident that every individual owns and has sovereignty over his or her own body parts, such as the head, legs, nose, stomach, pancreas, and other body parts. The sex organs, however, seem to be an exception. Even though they are as much an integral part of the individual as a leg or a liver, the sex organs are unique in that many cultures have established laws and taboos over the use and even the mere display of the sex organs. Thus, certain cultures have placed constraints over the individual's ownership of his or her sex organs and actively regulate and restrict the individual's access and use of those organs. In other cultures, the question of ownership of the sex organs is more decisively answered. In any culture where circumcision to any degree of either the male or female is practiced, permitted, encouraged, or even merely tolerated, it is clear that the individual is not considered to own his own sex organs. In the United States today, the medical establishment has created an environment where it is considered acceptable and desirable that anyone for any reason can authorize or execute the amputation of the foreskin from a male child's penis.

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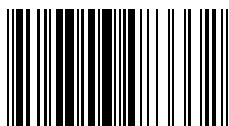
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ISBN 978-0-306-48333-2 / BIC: MNC / SPRINGER NATURE: SCH59079

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