

# Intact America

## Children's Rights

<https://www.intactamerica.org/category/voices-2/page/4/>

## Campaign and Advocacy

Mar 3, 2020

I was born and raised on an isolated farm in East Africa, a descendant of a Boer War veteran who settled there in the early 20th century. My younger brother and I seldom saw other children. At the age of six, I was sent to boarding school. I can still remember the feeling of abandonment, knowing that it would be months before I would see my parents again, and the confusion of being with 150 other children in an atmosphere of military organization and discipline. But worse was to come. The first night, our whole dorm was marched into the communal shower room for our evening bath. I immediately saw that my penis did not resemble that of many of the other boys, and I was shocked and sickened to realize I was missing something. I intuitively knew it was something valuable. I wasn't alone in my realization that something horrible had been done to me, for that night, I found myself and another boy standing in the dorm doorway in the light of the hall, pajama pants down, staring at our denuded penises and wondering why this had been done to us. There was absolutely no solace from the knowledge that there were other boys like us. Thereafter, every time I was in a library, I tried to find out more but in those days, there was no information to be had.

I remember at about age 9, my brother and I were in the tub, being watched by my mother and her cousin. I heard my mother say she thought the doctor had done a neater job on me than on my brother. I knew exactly what she was referring to (the doctor who circumcised me must have gotten paid by the square inch, or maybe the square millimeter!). Curiously, even though my mother was a very approachable and open person, I always felt too embarrassed to broach the topic of circumcision with her.

I was 13 and away at school when my youngest brother was born. I saw him for the first time when he was a month old. That evening, I was chatting to my Mum while she bathed him. She must have sensed that an explanation was in order and said that shed had himoh, what s it called? Circumcised? I volunteered. Yes, thats it. She went on to explain that her father, who had been born in Ireland, was circumcised at age 12 because his foreskin got so tight that he couldn't pee, and he felt it better done in infancy when there would be no memory of the event. This explanation never made any sense to me. I wish my grandfather had said nothing, so that I might have remained whole. My dad was also circumcised, I surmise as a consequence of his mothers upper-class English upbringing. I don't blame my parents, though; they didn't know anything. I place most of the blame on the doctor; had he told my mother it wasn't necessary, I'm quite sure it would not have happened. Especially as Dr. Douglas Gairdners article The Fate of the Foreskin was published about the same time.

I frequently see both medical personnel and parents express the sentiment that boys penises should match those of their fathers. But how can any of them predict what the boy might want?

I believe that we all have the right to the body we were born with and that circumcision violates a child's basic human rights from day one. As for religious circumcisions, these should wait until the child has reached an age to choose for himself.

It amazes me how many North American parents choose to circumcise their sons because they fear they'll be teased in school. I have to say that in 12 years of grade school, I never witnessed a single case of teasing based on circumcision status, despite the fact that shower rooms were communal and everyone saw everyone else and knew their status. For a time in elementary school, games in off-time involved armies, with the Roundheads being the circumcised boys and the Cavaliers the intact boys.

When I finished high school, I moved to Canada to attend university. I was surprised at how many Canadian males were circumcised, and I began to resent my own circumcised status more and more. My feelings of violation and betrayal grew stronger, as did my desire to understand the history and rationale for this bizarre custom: the coerced amputation of the most sensitive part of a baby boys genitalia.

In the early 80s, I came across an article by Kelly Servaas in The Saturday Evening Post. The piece confirmed my hunch that there was no good reason for circumcision. Some years later, I found Rosemary Rombergs book Circumcision, The Painful Dilemma, and then the books by Thomas Ritter (Say No to Circumcision) and Jim Bigelow (The Joy Of Uncircumcising). I learned a whole lot about the form and function of a foreskin, what I was missing and how my sex life had been compromised.

I began working on restoring my foreskin. At least I would feel whole, even if I was still missing the specialized nerves. Unfortunately, my wife who had been ambivalent about circumcision, became opposed to my efforts, and between her extreme lack of support and the constraints of my work, I eventually gave up something I resented to this day because I believe restoration might have mitigated the problems I now face. The fact that thousands of circumcised North American men are undertaking the arduous process of stretching what penile skin they have left and restoring some semblance of what was taken from them should be a glaring signal to the medical establishment.

When my father died, I flew overseas to be with my Mum for a few weeks. One night I got up the courage to ask her why she had had her sons circumcised. I got the exact same answer as the explanation a couple of decades earlier. Not wanting her to feel badly about her decision, I merely stated that it was falling out of favor. She asked if my son had been circumcised, and I said no. In hindsight, I wish I had pursued the conversation, because I would really like to know the history in my family. I'm guessing that my paternal grandfather was intact. I will forever wonder what my Dads views were. Did they really think that nature made a mistake? Did they not consider it

weird that only one human body part was being amputated for prophylactic reasons?

I have always been terrified of doctors. I cant even visit someone in a hospital without my blood pressure increasing by a factor of 50%. Because I could count my childhood doctor visits on one hand, this puzzled me until I learned there are two types of memory, and that explicit (recallable) memory does not develop until around 3 years of age. No wonder few children remember the horror of being circumcised. However, implicit memory begins in the mothers womb, and everything the baby is exposed to leaves a trace on its brain. Too little research has been done on the psychological effects of neonatal circumcision; Dr. Ron Goldmans illuminating work is an exception. I find it very sad that so few doctors will admit let alone warn parents that there may be psychological sequelae to cutting the genitals of babies.

Some years ago, I read an article by Dan Bollinger showing that circumcised boys are far more likely than their intact counterparts to suffer from Alexithymia the inability to express feelings. Thats me. In fact, I think it goes further. Circumcision inhibits close relationships. It is well known that babies withdraw after being circumcised and many have difficulty breast feeding. This makes perfect sense: they have just endured what is probably be the most traumatic event of their lives and no one protected them. I dont doubt that these feelings of helplessness and abandonment and the resulting sense of distrust all carry forward into adulthood.

As I reached my sixties, I began having sensitivity issues and achieving ejaculation was becoming more difficult. I wont use the word orgasm because what I felt was far from the exquisite, almost out of body experience that I have observed in my female partners. I believe there is a marked difference between what an intact man experiences versus his circumcised counterpart. A few years later, I began having ED issues as well. I am fortunate that unlike my previous doctors, my current doctor a lovely English woman has tried very hard to find solutions for my issues and to refer me to others who may be better able to help.

I am not a true intactivist in that I cant participate publicly. However, I speak to expectant parents privately when the opportunity presents itself, and I frequent parenting boards to provide information and encourage parents to leave their sons intact. I dont want anybody to experience the same grief that I have, so when I can persuade a parent who is thinking of circumcising their son to leave him whole, it is positively uplifting. I also make my discontent known to medical personnel; when I have to fill in a form listing previous surgeries, I always start the list with 1949 totally unwarranted circumcision. And, when I visit a doctor and my blood pressure shoots up, I explain why I think that occurs.

To those who claim that theyve never heard from a man who was unhappy about being circumcised: You have now!

On behalf of little boys in previous and future generations, I want to thank the people and organizations who have exposed the myths and misconceptions propagated by the medical community for 150 years. To name just a few in addition to those named above: Edward Wallerstein and his book Circumcision, an American Health Fallacy; Dr. John Taylor for his research into the structure of a foreskin; Marilyn Milos and NOCIRC (now Genital Autonomy America); and of course, Georganne Chapin and Intact America.

*H Smith, Alberta Canada*

Interested in lending your voice? [Send us an email](#), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you.

Jan 28, 2020



I believe strongly that baby boys should not be circumcised. For me this is an issue of personal choice, a basic human right that a baby cant claim for himself.

I first thought seriously about this in my twenties when I read an article in a body modification e-zine. The writer listed all the reasons circumcision is wrong. Up until then Id considered circumcision to be the right thing to do because it was so common. Id barely given it a thought. But what she wrote re-ally resonated with me; for the first time I saw how circumcision went against everything I believed about the right to ones own body.

That planted a seed, and I started researching the topic. When I saw what ba-bies when throughhaving no choiceI changed my mind. What solidified it for me was seeing the table baby boys are strapped to for the circumcision. How could I believe in the right to bodily self-expression and still condone a practice that imposed mutilation on an innocent child? When I had my son nine years ago, my husband and I agreed without hesitation that we would not subject him to that.

Society wants to assert its control over people, and circumcision is a good ex-ample of this. You need to look this way; you need to be

this way. If you're not this way, it doesn't reaffirm what they feel about themselves. They need their validation. They need you need to fall in line.

My sister Ellen and I own [BodyArtForms](#), a body-piercing jewelry online store. We opened in 2001, one of just a couple of similar e-commerce sites operating before the boom of online retail. We believe people should be able to express themselves and adults should be able to do whatever they want to their bodies. Back then I had implants in my arms and lots of piercings. I express myself a little differently now, but I believe strongly in the freedom of individuals to express themselves this way.

Our business supports the important work Intact America is doing on the front lines. I don't tend to speak out about circumcision, but opportunities to share do come up. I was taking a pole fitness class and the teacher asked us to do a dance to release something that upset us, an emotion we wanted to get out. I found myself releasing my feelings about circumcision on behalf of all those baby boys. I thought, I can't believe I'm doing this. Some people asked me about it afterwards. They wanted to know why I was so passionate about it, and we talked. Maybe I planted the seed that time. I like to think that maybe I did.

*Amanda Bunch*

Interested in lending your voice? [Send us an email](#), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you.

Dec 18, 2019



I am 77 years old. It has taken me a lifetime to deal with the consequences of the trauma of my circumcision as a newborn infant in 1942. For most of my life, the earliest memory I had of my mother was when we were traveling on a railroad train across the western plains from Louisville, Kentucky to the coast of Oregon to visit my father who was serving in the Coast Guard during WWII. I was two years old. As the train sped over the prairie, we needed to move from one car to another. The shaky and narrow walkways between the cars were open, windy and scary. My mother wanted to carry me, but I fought against her and insisted on walking on my own. I felt I had to do it myself because I could not trust my mother. This feeling hindered a close relationship between us for most of our lives. I was afraid of her. Fortunately, I had great attention and care from close relatives who were always available to and engaged with me for the first three years of my life while my father was absent, and my mother and I lived with her parents and older sister. I am forever grateful for their attention to me.

My first career was as an officer in the Coast Guard. However, in 1985 I turned down a significant promotion and many appeals and inducements by senior officers to remain in the Service. I had begun to pursue my interests in depth psychology and experiential approaches to self-individuation. I had become increasingly concerned about the Coast Guard and the competence and authoritarian style of its leadership, and I no longer wanted to be a part of it.

I decided to pursue a second career in clinical psychology. I recognized that I was suffering from PTSD and moral wounding, and that I was unable to trust or take in the satisfactions and further opportunities offered to me as the result of my accomplishments. I sought to avoid further injury and to obtain personal healing for myself. During my career change, I obtained effective, ongoing personal therapy that enabled me to communicate and heal my relationship with my mother. I was very glad to be able to express to her my love, understanding and appreciation of her while she was still alive.

As I explored academic programs in clinical psychology and counseling, I decided to take a self-indulgent year off and enroll in a new massage therapy school in Connecticut that was integrating aspects of experiential and body-centered psychotherapy. During this time, while receiving massage and while deeply relaxed and mindfully observing, I had body memories of my infancy. I felt hunger and the impulse to nurse along with the beginning of a penile erection. This rapidly turned into intolerable pain in my genitals. I realized I must have had some experience as a nursing infant that had required me to turn off feeling in order to take in nourishment and survive, and that resulted in my associating the pleasure-seeking fulfillment of my needs with unbearable pain. I had developed an ability to strive, to accept and tolerate dangerous and painful circumstances. I became increasingly curious about my vivid body memory and its possible effects on all aspects of my life. I wondered if my mother, while holding and nursing me, had perhaps checked my diaper and accidentally stuck me in the genitals with a diaper pin.

When I was 43 years old, I asked my mother if she could recall any accident or difficulty when she was nursing me in infancy. I was shocked by her immediate explosion of emotion and the specific details. She named and swore at the obstetrician, telling me how he had nearly cut off the end of my penis and then sewn it back on with five stitches. She exclaimed how the doctor had insisted that newborns did not feel pain, that the circumcision process did not hurt and could not be the cause of my distress in her frantic attempts to feed me. She told me how the doctor said that her difficulties in comforting and nursing me were due to her breasts being too small and her milk

inadequate, She told me how agitated and terrified she was in her attempts to care for me. Her powerful feelings of inadequacy, regret, helplessness, guilt and rage were evident as she told me things she had never before spoken about.

My mother's account clarified and furthered my understanding of my early injury and its consequences. It increased my confidence in trusting in the power, depth and consequences of body memory existing before conscious memory and the subsequent physical and psychological consequences.

I decided to train and became a body-centered psychotherapist, and had a second career in private practice with self-paying clients for over two decades until I became severely physically disabled due to compression fractures in my thoracic spine and, resulting spinal cord injuries resulting from a rare cancer throughout my spine, liver, and lungs. The cancer was caused by exposure to Agent Orange while I was skippering patrol boats in Vietnam in 1967-68.

My mother's revelations to me about my circumcision confirmed my body memory and explained the basis of a vast number of other beliefs and behaviors resulting from the experience. This understanding helped not only in my personal healing journey, but also in working successfully with clients suffering from severe physical and psychological issues that had not been successfully treated with conventional medical treatments or talk therapies.

The answers to basic questions such as Am I lovable? Can I trust others? Can I get my needs met? and Is this world safe for me? are fundamental in the development of individuals and cultures. The increasing incidence of adverse childhood experiences (ACE) resulting from our rapidly changing culture and the deep feelings of betrayal arising from the actions of authorities upon whom we rely are critical issues we face as individuals and as a nation.

The trust in the power and depth of the body memory of each individual and the use of body-centered psychotherapy and many wholistic practices have been of life-saving value to me, as well as to many of my clients. I am grateful that the complexities and difficulties in the paths of possibilities in my life journey are ongoing. I attempt to share what I believe might be beneficial to others.

Many find the topic of circumcision too painful to discuss, or even consider. I believe that the present conflicts between systems of human authority, privilege and control (including religion, politics, economics, science, and communication systems) are causing great harm, carried out by individuals attempting unsuccessfully to overcome their own deep personal insecurity and developmental traumas.

I am grateful for the critical work that Intact America is doing to recognize and end the trauma of genital mutilation of infant males.

*David Arnold*

Interested in lending your voice? [Send us an email](#), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you.

Sep 20, 2019

*Since her days as a hospital floor nurse more than 35 years ago, Marilyn Milos, RN, has been at the front of the fight to end forced circumcision in the U.S. She founded the National Organization of Circumcision Resource Centers (NOCIRC), now Genital Autonomy America, and is a co-founder of Intact America, a member of its Steering Committee, and also serves as its Clinical Consultant.*



When I began my work in 1979, I naively thought it would take a couple of years to stop routine infant circumcision. It seemed so obviously wrong, and I'm outspoken and pretty determined. So, I figured if someone put a spotlight on it, rational people would see the truth.

I witnessed a circumcision for the first time when I was a nursing student, and it changed me forever. Before the doctor came into the nursery, the baby was lying on a molded plastic board, struggling against the restraints that held his arms and legs down. I asked the nurse if I could comfort the baby and she said to wait until the doctor arrived. I asked the doctor when he came in, and he said to put my finger in the baby's mouth. The baby began to suck on my finger. I stroked his little head and told him what my doctor had said to me before my own three sons were circumcised it wouldn't hurt, just took a minute, and would protect him throughout life. As the doctor began, the baby let out a scream I'd never heard come out of a human before. It wasn't like a baby's cry when he's hungry or needs his diaper changed. It was primal. He screamed for the next 15 minutes.

My chin began to quiver, and I knew I was going to lose it. I started to cry uncontrollably. The doctor looked at me and said, There is no medical reason for doing this! This baby was being tortured, and I was just realizing what had been done to my sons and that my own

doctor had lied to me.

After witnessing a circumcision, I began learning everything I could about it. How could I have let this happen to my precious boys? I shared what I learned with other nurses working on the obstetrical unit. I thought, We're all learning together. We'll be educating parents and changing things.

But in the end, I was forced to resign. That was 1985, and that same year I started NOCIRC. It was the desperate screams of those babies that have driven me all these years. It was in my 30th year that a generous donor asked if his contributions were being as effective as they might be. I had learned that, after three decades, grassroots movements typically step it up a notch, and I suggested to him that I put together a group of the movers and shakers for this discussion. I invited Georganne Chapin to be part of that group.

Our conference call included the leaders of other organizations that formed after I founded NOCIRC including Attorneys for the Rights of the Child, Doctors Opposing Circumcision and Nurses for the Rights of the Child. This phone call was the beginning of the formation of our new organization, Intact America. Georganne was the perfect person to lead this new level of intactivism. She ran a health care company and knew how to get things done. She was an attorney, a respected expert in the healthcare field and had a network of colleagues and media connections she could tap.

A core group of us continued to plan this new phase of activism in person with support from our donor. The third time we got together we met in Tarrytown, New York at Georganne's Hudson Health Plan office. During one of our meetings that weekend, the consultants hired to help us organize went over the budget with us. It was based on more money than any intactivist organization had ever had or that I could even imagine having.

So when the donor offered that he planned to donate a million dollars, I burst into tears and cried for 15 minutes. I'd been challenged and discredited for more than 30 years, and suddenly I was being told the thing I hold so dear is worthy. It was overwhelming. And Georganne, bless her heart, was willing to step up and make it happen.

Intact America is the organization that is fighting on a level that none of us ever had been able to fight before.

In the early days of the work, we focused on getting accurate information about the normal penis and the harm of non-therapeutic genital cutting into the hands of parents, childbirth educators, midwives, doctors, lawyers, and concerned individuals. Today, with information readily available, we're working to challenge those who profit from genital cutting and refuse to put their scalpels down, those who provide misinformation and disinformation to promote genital cutting, and those who advocate for the circumcision-to-prevent-HIV/AIDS agenda, which undermines the programs that truly will end the spread of the disease (for example, education about safe sex and condom use). Education continues to be key and the Internet has helped immeasurably. Intact America's Internet outreach has been large, productive, and effective. And, now with more intact boys in the United States, our work includes educating parents and their sons, doctors about proper care of the intact penis, about letting each boy be the first person to retract his own foreskin, and about treating foreskin problems medically instead of amputating them. Our work also includes helping men who have penile problems and dysfunctions resulting from their circumcision years before.

Medical organizations have to be very careful now. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control, hospitals and academics who are making their career from the bogus and unethical African HIV studies Intact America is taking on all of them. Georganne has stood up to the powers that be with strength, dignity, and experience. She is not afraid to ask the tough questions about ethics and human rights, and the medical organizations and the doctors who head them are unable to provide answers that would put them on solid ground.

This is not surprising. No excuse is good enough to allow cutting off parts of the normal genitals of minors. It is time for American medical organizations to join with Intact America, other intactivist organizations, and medical and ethics organizations in Europe and elsewhere in protecting the bodily integrity and genital autonomy rights of infants and children.

*Marilyn Milos, RN*

Interested in lending your voice? [Send us an email](#), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you.

Jul 18, 2019

When I became an intactivist, I found that simply bringing up the subject with others provoked responses falling into one of two categories: disgust, horror, and disbelief; or entrenchment and defensiveness. If this person was a circumcised man, the reaction would be magnified as though he instinctively anticipated that the topic would bring on strong and uncomfortable feelings better avoided than



confronted.

I first learned this lesson in a place of learning and discussion. In 2003, I was working on the general education requirements for my college degree. As a freshman, the options weren't impressive, but Introduction to Sociology is memorable as the first time I ever gave circumcision any thought. The instructor was new to the teaching world; being young and part of the liberal arts program, she seemed keen to tackle controversy. At this time, the 21st century still had that new-century smell. Liberal arts programs were really ramping up their social studies and analysis work, taking it upon themselves to solve the unsolvable. Three short papers made up the bulk of our grade for the semester, each on some topic of social taboo. Lectures included pre-selected readings meant to expose us to taboos in foreign cultures, to help us identify our own. The instructor had compiled a list of suggested topics, among them recreational drug use and driving restrictions for the elderly. We were not required to stick to the list, though, so long as our topic was approved beforehand and was not being written about by another student in the class.

In 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Court had handed down its landmark ruling legalizing same-sex marriage rights within that state. In my senior year of high school, we had staged an exhibition of The Laramie Project, introducing me to the equality struggle faced by my LGBT peers. Unfortunately, though, same-sex marriage as a topic had already been claimed by another student in my college sociology class.

So, I sequestered myself in the library for an afternoon, looking for inspiration. I don't remember in which section I found it, but the spine of Ronald Goldman's book *Circumcision: The Hidden Trauma* caught my attention. Perhaps it was how the sterile objectivity of the block typeface paired the word circumcision with trauma in such a matter-of-fact way. At the time, I did not even know I had been subjected to circumcision.

Skimming the table of contents provided more than enough to convince me that circumcision qualified as a socially controversial and taboo subject, and thus a good topic for my first paper. I threw together an outline and e-mailed it to my instructor with the hope of having the A-OK two days later. Silly me. In an after-class meeting, the instructor told me I hadn't understood what was necessary to meet the definition of controversy. In her words (as best as I can recall), a social controversy had to have heated debate over the merit of the topic, with fervent support and opposition that sees little progress because of the uncomfortable nature of the topic. Circumcision, she said, was simply an uncomfortable topic that lacked any disagreement over its merit. I provided her the book I found at the library; she suggested that the issues anyone might have over circumcision were rooted in a broader controversy of sex and sexuality, and that my efforts would be better focused there. During the talk, she wouldn't even mention the word circumcision, and she never once laid a hand on the book I had placed on the desk. When I questioned the difference between disagreement with a premise and not wanting to learn a premise, she ended the conversation: Circumcision was not in the scope of the assignment, she responded. Period.

That was 16 years ago. Women's studies, gender analysis, sexual paradigms. Liberal arts programs have flourished with conversations and examination of the women's liberation and sexual liberation movements. Lines previously drawn in the sand were now meant to be crossed. Everything was opened to critique and analysis, and the structural supports of the pre-eminent social order were to be torn down to make room for a new order where appreciation for human identity and human sexuality prevail over the rigidly-defined spaces each person had been expected to inhabit unquestioningly. It was the emergence of an era promoting the natural beauty of the human body in its many varied forms. Every penis was the right size, every vulva perfect as it was. Every body part was great just the way it was made natural and normal and something to be celebrated.

Every part but one the foreskin. That part was just too uncomfortable, and it continues to be for many people today.

But in the 16 years since I was prevented from opening discussion about circumcision in a social sciences class, I've witnessed events and had conversations that convince me that this is changing. In 2011, the people of San Francisco collected thousands of signatures for a ballot measure that would have banned routine circumcision from being performed within the city. It was, of course, stricken from the ballot, but that it made the popular threshold for inclusion in the first place showed that support for intactivism was growing. The next year, a German court in Cologne ruled routine circumcision illegal within its jurisdiction. That decision was similarly unsuccessful overruled by the German parliament. But again, legal footing for the intactivist position had been sought and accepted as valid.

When the San Francisco and Cologne cases were in the news, I read for the first time about David Reimer; a Canadian boy who when he was a few months old had been subjected to terribly botched circumcision. It was a gut-wrenching story to read because I knew that what happened to him could have happened to me, and it returned me to the topic I had not thought about for a decade.

Since that time, I've been seeking ways to reach, inform, and educate those who see nothing wrong with circumcision, without making them want to tune out at any cost. I believe that to be effective, we must focus on the future and not hamstring ourselves by assigning blame for the errors of the past. We, as a society, got it wrong. The work before us requires that we commit to changing it going forward, for



our sons. The first step is guiding society to a more complete understanding of what circumcision does, what it forever takes away, and most importantly, why that matters.

Fortunately, the tide is turning where it matters most: peoples attitudes. More and more parents are keeping their newborn sons as nature made them. More and more people are overcoming their discomfort that surrounds this taboo topic, and that is the beginning of the change we want to happen.

Finding that mission in Intact America encouraged me. In June, I attended New York City Pride, and witnessed the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising. Pride is about refusing to be kept down by antiquated and oppressive social regimes, about standing up and proclaiming that theres nothing wrong with questioning what society calls normal. I saw that proclamation in action at Intact Americas tent at PrideFest. The positive and inquisitive reactions of the many thousands of Pride-goers who stopped to take pictures at the tent, and the passion shown by the volunteers engaging with and distributing information to people from all walks of life, gave me greater hope that this work will be successful. We will overcome.

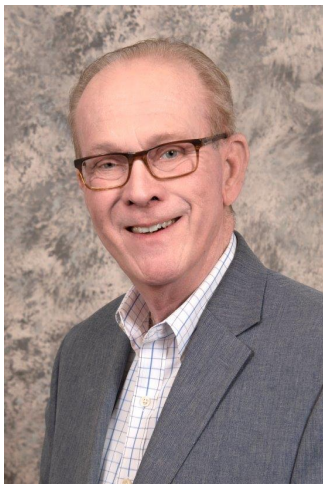
*Joshua Armitage*

Interested in lending your voice? [Send an email tous](#), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you.

Jun 20, 2019

Recently, a longtime friend confided that had his wife given birth to a boy rather than to their daughter, he would not have allowed his son to be circumcised. He had researched circumcision and found it unnecessary and unjustified. After hearing my friends revelation, I began to reflect on my own father. My father was intact and by no way or means were his sons going to be circumcised; I dont believe this was a matter of ego but, rather, because he understood the harm that cutting off the foreskin would cause. Therein lies a lesson to all fathers: Do what is in the best interest of your sons future; not to make him look just like you. Give your son the rightful autonomy to make his own decisions about his own body.

Growing up as an intact boy put me in the minority. I did not feel out of place, but I do recall feeling happy and affirmed in my youthful mind when I saw other intact boys. Again, we were in the minority, but it wasnt until much later in life that I discovered how being intact is common and prevalent throughout most of the world.



As I grew older, I became self-conscious about being intact, as a gay man. For me, Intact America was a watershed moment in learning so much about the value and purpose of the foreskin. For some time, gay men believed the intact penis to be dirty. They assumed smegma to be penis dirt. Only recently through Intact America did I learn that smegma is the Latin word for soap and that it serves as a lubricant to allow the foreskin to retract easily.

The benefits of retaining the foreskin far outweigh the negative myths that are posited by the poorly informed or less informed.

Intact America is an excellent resource of information on why males should be kept intact. After learning more about the procedures for circumcision, I have concluded that circumcising males is barbaric; as if to punish the penis. Here, again, Intact America raises awareness about what I deem the horrors and brutality of circumcision.

Another aspect of male circumcision that raises questions, at least for me, as a Christian minister: Why is it that certain Christians insist on having their sons circumcised? The Apostle Paul makes it quite clear: Those who have accepted Christ (the Anointed Jesus) do not need physical circumcision because they have been circumcised through Christ. I consider circumcision committed on religious grounds to be a vile form of butchery. Even some modern Jews are opting for different Mitzvahs for their newborn sons in order to avoid circumcising them.

I have yet to understand the American obsession with circumcision. Circumcision is an abomination; thats why I follow Intact America for advocacy, for support, and for information.

In closing, I will use a phrase often applied to other matters: If it isnt broke, dont try to fix it. Think about that! It is not trite. It is right.

*Rev. Vincent Turner*

Interested in lending your voice? Send an email to [\[emailprotected\]](#), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you.