

Non-therapeutic circumcision is a contentious issue on which most readers will drift toward the position that reflects their backgrounds or affirms their cultural affinities. Unfortunately, the efforts of various self-appointed "experts" have done little to clarify the issues, and some are notorious for cherry-picking a vast and inconclusive medical literature in order to advance their prior agenda.

We invite readers to take the time to read the 29 self-citations that Brian Morris provided in the latest e-letter[1], check out the veracity of the claims contained therein, read the studies attacked by the letters to editor and the responses to these, perform their own literature searches, and reach their own independent, fully-informed judgments. Such a review will show that Morris is simply out of line with most other authorities.

For example, Morris and a colleague have recently disclaimed the Hippocratic Oath,[2] thereby rejecting a venerable medical principle.[3] Even the American Academy of Pediatrics is unwilling[4, 5] to support Morris' assertions that circumcision is a "biomedical imperative"[6] that "should be made compulsory"[7]. Finally, apart from a legally questionable[8] German law protecting religious circumcision,[9] Europe has begun to see circumcision as a violation of an infant's human rights[10-11], medical ethics,[12] and even criminal law.[13-14]

1 Morris BJ, Tobian AAR, Hankins CA, et al. Veracity and rhetoric in paediatric medicine: a critique of Svoboda and Van Howe's response to the AAP policy on infant male circumcision. *J Med Ethics* 2013; epub ahead of print.

2. Morris BJ, Tobian AAR. Reply to 'Circumcision is a Religious/Cultural Procedure, Not a Medical Procedure.' *JAMA Pediatrics* 2014;168(3):294.

3 Miles S. *The Hippocratic Oath and the Ethics of Medicine*. New York: Oxford University Press; 2005.

4 American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Circumcision. Technical report: male circumcision. *Pediatrics*;2012;130:e757-e785.

5 American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Circumcision. Circumcision policy statement. *Pediatrics*;2012;130:585-586.

6 Morris BJ. Why circumcision is a biomedical imperative for the 21(st) century. *Bioessays* 2007;29:1147-58.

7 The kindest cut? Sunday Night program. Seven Television Network. May 24, 2009. YouTube. Available on: <http://www.youtube.com/v/7yDvL4hNny4>. Accessed March 23, 2014.

8 Merkel R and Putzke H. After Cologne: Male circumcision and the law. *Journal of Medical Ethics* 2013;39: 444-449.

9 German Civil Code (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch)? 1631d.

10 Council of Europe. Resolution: Children's right to physical integrity. Available on: <http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-EN.asp?FileID=20174???=EN>. Accessed March 23, 2014.

11 KNMG (Royal Dutch Medical Association). Non-therapeutic Circumcision of Male Minors (Utrecht, Netherlands: KNMP, 2010).

12 Suomen Lääkäriliitto. Poikien ympärileikkaus. Available on: <http://www.laakariliitto.fi/uutiset/kannanotot/ymparileikkaus.html>. Accessed March 23, 2014.

13 Landgericht Köln; 7 May 2012; Urteil Ns 169/11.

14 OLG Hamm; 30 August 2013; Az. 3 UF 133/13.

Conflict of Interest:

None declared