

ACORN

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 Editor
 David Acorn

Editorial

Here we are with the first edition of another year. We have to apologise for the fact that editions 7 and 8, plus backnumbers and other material, didn't arrive on your doorsteps until the new year. This was because Brian in the first place, for issue 7, was inundated with everyday work, which is at times very stressful, and was ill virtually all December, helped no doubt by the stress. He assures me that he is OK now. In my circular which I send to all prospective members, I have put the phrase '8 erratic editions of newsletters each year'. It would be appreciated if you could send in letters of complaints about this if you haven't received a copy for over two and a half months, or if one is missed out. I get the letters, but I can do nothing about them if I can't get hold of one or the other of the team. And I haven't possibly got the time to answer each letter individually, explaining the situation. We have never failed to get out 8 editions a year yet, and we see no reason why we will fail in the future, unless of course contributions dry up (nudge, nudge). Many thanks for your indulgence.

David Acorn

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Skin Bridges

Born in Italy, living in Switzerland, married, no children, circumcised in Switzerland as an infant because of a phimosis. I do not have any details about the operation itself, or which method was used. I know that I stayed for three days in the clinic after the operation.

As a child, I discovered that I was circumcised when I started to go to school. Living in Italy and in Switzerland, this status was not so common. Later on, as a teenager and an adult, I discovered that I was also different from the circumcised men. The reason is that something went wrong with the operation: seven skin bridges on the right side of the shaft and near the frenulum were connecting the glans with the shaft. Some were positioned exactly on the edge of the scar in connection with the glans, some between the scar and the corona. I never understood where these skin bridges came from. Were they adhesences present before the circumcision and left by the doctor or were they a consequence of the circumcision itself? I did not know who to ask about the circumcision methods.

I never get pain during erections, but the glans was bent on the right side. When I was 26, one of these skin bridges broke during a sexual intercourse. The traces are still visible today, one on the glans, one on the scar. However, when I was 32, during a medical investigation for other reasons, a urologist offered to remove these skin bridges for aesthetic reasons. I accepted to get the six remaining skin bridges cut. It was done with local anaesthesia and took about fifteen minutes. I had no major problem afterwards.

Last year, I found a lot of information on the Internet regarding circumcision. I exchanged e-mail messages with a doctor who helped me a lot to understand what happened. If I summarise my situation, the skin bridges are a consequence of the circumcision done when I was a baby. The edges were not crushed together properly and – as a consequence – the skin bridges occurred. Some skin bridges were at the cut line (scar), but some were placed between the scar and the corona. After so many years, it is of course difficult to construct again what happened exactly.

A couple of words about the scar. It is a loose circumcision, the scar is located just behind the glans, when flacid less than 0.2in from the glans, more than 1 inch when erect. The scar is closer to the glans on the upper side. The frenulum was not removed, completely intact; the skin, where the frenulum is, is quite tight when I am erect. The scar is very smooth.

I am very happy to be circumcised. I like the appearance of my circumcised penis, I would not wish it to be covered by foreskin. This is also the opinion of my wife, especially after the second 'circumcision'. Before it, the erected penis was a little bit curved on the right, without any pain or trouble. The skin bridges were of course very tight. Today, the erect penis is straight.

G.C.D.

Roots

It seems unlikely that a man of 52 could still have a question about male anatomy, but I have! Perhaps someone more enlightened would let me know the answer to this one.

I have noticed that just beyond their scrotum, most guys have a hard, exciting protuberance which seems to be the root of their cock. Even the owners of smallish cocks seem to possess this asset, but there are other guys, sometimes very big made in the dick department, who have none at all. Why is this, and am I right that it is the cock root? If so, how come not everyone has it? Is it only present when they are erect or is it always there? You will gather from this question that I am not one of those proud possessors!

I would certainly appreciate some information about this tantalising equipment.

Will

The American View

For Man & Mate, Which Sex is Better – Cut or Uncut?

These questions are repeatedly asked: How can the foreskin benefit the sexual experience of the woman? Is sex different for the man, whether he's circumcised or intact? I have tried to answer these questions by providing posts made by various people online in different circumcision discussion groups.

I have encountered people who assume that sex with an uncircumcised man is unpleasant. Some have even gone as far as to say, it would be 'nasty'. There is the stigma that men with a foreskin are unclean. It is time for this myth to be laid to rest. The male with a foreskin can keep himself sufficiently clean with total ease. It is not a big production. See Natural Penis – Easy to Clean. Anyone who doesn't bathe adequately runs the risk of causing a 'nasty' experience for their mate, whether it's a male (circumcised or intact) or a female. Our culture's tendency to prejudge the man with a foreskin reminds me of a child who claims to dislike a particular food because he's never tasted it. Think of how many kids have refused to try something new because it 'looks funny'.

Circumcision Diminishes Sensitivity

"Research published last year in the *British Journal of Urology* may well explain the links between circumcision, frequent masturbation and oral sex. A group of doctors headed by Dr. John R. Taylor at the University of Manitoba discovered that the small sheath of foreskin tissue removed during circumcision is filled with extremely sensitive nerve endings and mucus membrane cells. The head of the penis itself is extremely insensitive to light

touch, although it can be stimulated by heavy touch, they found. That lack of sensitivity in the head of the penis may well account for an increased need by circumcised men for the more intense stimulation that masturbation and oral sex can provide, according to Dr. Robert Van Howe...”

The sexual experience of the male can directly affect the female experience. Mentally speaking, if a male’s sexual experience is immensely filled with pleasure, it will usually enhance her experience. In fact, it is often said that “sex is between the ears, not between the legs.” It has been suggested for circumcised men that any loss of sensuality can therefore be overridden mentally. Possibly this is true for some. However, mental effects on sex must vary widely. Some people are less mentally ‘plugged in’ than others. No matter what, it wouldn’t be an issue if all the sensitive nerve endings of the foreskin were never removed in the first place.

Personal Accounts of The Female Experience

“I’ve had a pretty modest number of lovers, but my uncircumcised husband is definitely, far and away, more sensitive than the circumcised men I’ve known. This is such a plus – it is much more exciting for us both (the prematurity mentioned in some posts has never been a problem).”

“Well, my college boyfriend was from Spain, so he wasn’t circumcised. And I absolutely loved his penis. It was so sexy and exotic to me. In fact, I’m extremely dissatisfied that my husband is not intact.”

In another post, the same person said: “Circumcision can harm sexual relations. If you’ve ever had sex with both a circumcised and an uncircumcised man, you’d know. Some women say that it doesn’t make a difference, but I know that it definitely did for me. (Think “ribbed for her pleasure”.) So I do know better... and yes, I have heard a man complain about something he lost when he was 24-48 hours old.”

“Circumcised penises look ugly and unnatural to me! Also, with an uncircumcised penis, when you rub the penis with your hand, the foreskin makes it ‘glide’ up and down easier. Sex is better, too, for the same reason – the foreskin helps it slide in and out better. My husband was the first man with an uncircumcised penis that I had had, so I had nothing to compare to with my previous partners. If my husband ever dies and I start dating again, I will look for an uncircumcised man. The sex is better, and I can’t stand the sight of a circumcised penis. Not only that, my husband’s penis seems far more sensitive than my other partners’ were, so he seems to get more enjoyment out of sex, which helps me enjoy it more. The circumcised penis is ugly, ugly, ugly!!!! The penis intact is beautiful, natural, wonderful! I can’t imagine ever sleeping with a circumcised man again.”

In later years, dry and painful intercourse is usually explained by the idea that women lubricate less. But sex with uncircumcised men is described as much more comfortable. This future scenario is described very appropriately

here: "Well, since you've been through menopause, your vaginal lining is much thinner than it used to be. You also have much less lubrication. Luckily for you, your husband is not circumcised. When his penis enters your vagina, it is one mucous membrane meeting another, and entry is easy and pleasurable. You shudder to think what sex would be like if your husband was circumcised, because your friends tell you that the glans keratinises (sp?) over the years, and the skin becomes thicker and drier. Forcing the dry, leathery penis into your ever drier and thinner-skinned vagina would be less than wonderful..."

Gay sex

Here is a description of the differences in sex between circumcised and uncircumcised men from a circumcised man who is gay. This will surely raise a lot of eyebrows. I would imagine a lot of you will get upset and question how I can include the experience of a gay man when talking about this. Obviously, women's bodies work much differently. A woman can describe the difference for her personally, but she cannot feel what a man feels and cannot describe how it might be different for him. We women are often criticised for even discussing circumcision because we don't have penises. In my opinion, a gay circumcised man would be quite qualified, possibly even more than a woman, to clearly define the differences. Who better to give such a review? What we are talking about here is "the sexual value of the foreskin". A gay man knows what men are capable of feeling. I would think a gay man has more insight because, unlike a woman, he possesses the very same equipment he is talking about. So here is what was sent to me from a gay man:

"I do think I have a lot of insight about this subject... Over the years I have noticed that uncircumcised men plainly have more intense pleasure (I see it as uncontrollable and very intense), erections last much longer and with much less stimulation. Circumcised men always need to be stimulated just so or they lose the feeling of pleasure."

From the Internet

Shame Overcome

I was very interested to read Anthony's article – *Acceptable Circumcision, a Less Controversial Future* in issue 8/98.

I was one of the many who were circumcised at birth, so was never given the opportunity of choice. The operation was performed before I left the nursing home at the request of my father (who was also cut) but not for a medical reason.

My own circumcision was obviously not done with any regards as to what my cock would look like as I grew older. I don't consider it to be a neat job, with quite ragged edges in places, lumpy scar and one skin gathering. I consider that I have had a radical cut as I have no trace of a frenulum. When erect, there

is little skin movement over the shaft. The dark scar line is still very obvious. I have seen many guys who have the same style of cut as myself, and very, very few who I would consider as having a neat and tidy circumcision.

Like so many, it was not until around the age of ten years that I realised I was different to nearly all the boys in my first senior school class. I think there were two other roundheads as well as myself. We were always having fun made of us, especially in the showers, so it rather pushed us closer together, and almost certainly the start for me of having sexual feelings towards my fellow roundheads, and later other boys. This in no way implies that being cut has made me gay, of course.

Until some years ago, I was always almost ashamed of being cut. But I met my partner, who has what I call a perfect uncut cock, but also likes the cut look, so that gave me more confidence in myself. We run a very small B & B with a very private long rear garden, and seem to attract naturists. Most of the older guys are cut, whereas very few younger ones are. I have no trouble now in being naked with other guys, even to the extent of going naked on beaches.

I am also sure that being an *Acorn* member, and reading about other members' problems etc. has greatly helped me overcome my own.

B.B. – Gloucester

Partial Circumcision

It's a pity that in the questionnaire you don't ask for the type of circumcision i.e. partial or radical. Also on the size of the glans for those cut at birth. I am sure that the earlier the circ is done the more 'flared out', expanded, the coronal rim becomes. Whenever I get the chance to examine a circumcision I look to see how flared the coronal rim is and also if the little 'ridges and bumps' are still present. (I think they're called Cowpers Glands and that they produce the smegma.) Obviously they tend to atrophy when the infant has been radically cut as they perform no useful job without a foreskin. In my case, cut as an adult, I still have them, though after many years of exposure they are certainly smaller than they used to be as a youth.

I examined a partial circumcision recently, and how the owner tolerated it I do not know. Only the tip had been removed as an infant so that over half the glans was covered by the remaining foreskin. On erection, this rolled back to expose a typically sensitive small coronal rim with no flaring, and prominent Cowpers Glands.

Possibly in the newsletter we could initiate a discussion on the points raised.

R.W. – Surrey

Celebrity List

Actor Nigel Terry – large, circumcised. Terry, I think, was circumcised fairly recently as I seem to remember he had a longish ‘overhang’ originally.

Actor and comedian Tony Slattery – large, uncircumcised.

Former *Eastenders* star, Michael Cashman – medium penis, long foreskin.

K.G. – London

Baby’s Foreskin

Here is an item from the doctor’s page of the Supplement to the *News of the World*.

Q. Should I clean behind the foreskin of my two-week-old son? I don’t want him circumcised, so what do I do?

A. Leave the poor boy well alone. The foreskin is attached quite strongly to the underlying head of the penis in a newborn baby boy and remains so until he is at least three or four years old. No attempt should be made to pull the foreskin back until then, unless it is so tight that it interferes with passing urine. After the age of five, very gentle washing of the tip of the penis with ordinary soap in the bath water is perfectly adequate.

Me. What does he recommend if the foreskin proves to be so tight that it interferes with passing urine? Surely it’s better for the mother to get the skin ‘working’ as soon as possible (without causing any discomfort) as happened in my case, which probably initiated my fixation and preferring the ‘skin back’ position, although a nice neat circumcision would have been preferred, which was quite popular in the late 30’s. My first wife was a circumcision enthusiast but was unable to have her two sons, born in the early 60’s, ‘done’, due to medical opposition.

C.B. – North East

[According to the medical books I’ve read on the subject, the structure of the foreskin is such that it cannot fuse onto itself at the tip and be closed completely. As the inner foreskin is fused to the glans, the urine can only go one way. Initially this can cause ballooning, which is not harmful, if the hole is narrow, but with use this soon ceases. The mother cannot know if the foreskin is tight until after the foreskin has released itself from the glans. If it is then tight, the use of a steroid cream, under medical supervision, will soon put things to right. – D.A.]

The Questionnaire — 1

When I renewed my subscription at the beginning of this year I dutifully completed the accompanying questionnaire which asked, among other things, what my views were on my own circumcised state.

I'm always fascinated by market research investigations which involve grading my views on a subject on a points scale from 1 to 5, or whatever. The *Acorn* inquiry fell into this category and I can't help wondering how truthful my response was. Indeed, is one's reply to such questions ever the definitive expression of one's views? I suspect that one's mood of the moment can have a very important part to play.

In essence, the question was whether I was pissed off by the fact that I'd been up for the chop in infancy, whether I couldn't give a damn, or whether I was deliriously thrilled at having 'had it off' in the anatomical rather than the sexual sense. The options were fine tuned to about ten variations on the theme, and I was also asked to comment on whether I would recommend circumcision to my friends.

There are days, and when I replied it was one of them, when I don't give the end of my knob a second thought. I've got what I've got, it works handsomely, and nobody has ever criticised me for having been cut, so why the hell should I worry. But yes, there have been occasions when I've asked myself "I wonder what it would be like to have a foreskin?" Then, maybe, I have regretted never having experienced its pleasures, or inconveniences. On other occasions, on seeing an unsightly, long, tight prepuce with stale smegma smelling abominably beneath it, I've thought "Thank God I've not got one of those!"

It's the same old story when I ponder on whether I should recommend circumcision to others. When there are medical needs, or when the owner is less than motivated by matters of hygiene, I'd recommend the op. without question. On the other hand, a pretty foreskin, long enough to cup the glans like a true acorn, but not dangling halfway down to the knee, is too beautiful to sacrifice unnecessarily.

I'm not getting on at anyone by questioning the questionnaire, and I'm looking forward to seeing the published outcome, but I suspect we should treat the results with caution. It's fun to seek the views of members, but not altogether scientific.

I have a point in saying all this. I love my cock and get a lot of pleasure talking about it and about those on other guys. It's great being a member of *Acorn* and having a forum to discuss such matters but, at the end of the day, there's much more fun to be had doing things with our genitals than just talking about them. I read in a little sex book recently that every second of every day world-wide, some 19,000 men are experiencing orgasm, produced one way or another, whereas only 4.4 babies are being born per second.

This, surely, is overwhelming proof that the penis is primarily an organ for recreation rather than procreation. Let's not just talk about it, let's do it! And as for questionnaires, **who gives a toss?**

Ray Hamble

The Questionnaire — 2

Find the recent questionnaire somewhat depressing reading, as it seems to deal extensively with circumcision. As one who was circumcised in infancy and regretted it ever since (and a lot of other roundheads would agree with me, I'm sure), I would prefer to read about the experiences of cavaliers. I suggest the following:-

1. At what age did they first discover that their foreskin was retractable?
2. Who told them how to do it? Parents, doctors, other school friends?
3. At what age did they manage to retract them? Did someone help?
4. Was it painful the first time? How long was it before it became easy?
5. What experiences did they have at school?
6. How old were they when they had their first orgasm? Who showed them, or did they discover it themselves?
7. How old were they when they had their first sexual encounters with girls? Had the girl had previous experience of foreskins?
8. How old were they when they first had sex with a girl?
9. Does their foreskin stay back during sex? Do they prefer it to stay back?
10. Any other experiences relating to their foreskins?

I.D. – Herts.

The Questionnaire — 3

Herewith, the questionnaire, completed as far as possible. I hate filling in forms. There always seems to be such a lot of irrelevant empty spaces even when I have finished. I have a few suggestions for inclusion in future questionnaires. What about pubic shaving, tattoos, piercings, alterations other than circumcisions...? (and that – and that – and that!)

My cock tattoo is quite subtle – the colour of the whole glans is 'intensified' – more visible. I currently have a 1cm thick, 3cm diameter steel ring through my cockhead, via my slit-open piss-hole. My pubic area was successfully treated with electrolysis a few years back, so only the occasional wisp of hair

reappears. I do still periodically shave my scrotum and, sometimes, whole body.

On the subject of newsletter content, in contrast to at least one recent correspondent, I do like to hear about other guys' circumcision experiences, including operation details. I would like to be able to watch my own circumcision, if and when. My only problem being, 'is it a fantasy that I ought not to realise'. Plus being able to justify the expense. Now, if only I had a serious medical need...?

R.M. – Suffolk

My Piercing

Having recently rejoined *Acorn* I'm glad to find the correspondence still very stimulating.

I'm circumcised from birth with a very neat scar line. A year ago, on an impulse, I had my frenulum pierced. The procedure was very simple and I can recommend it. I often wear the ring every day and usually wake up with a fabulous erection in the morning.

At the salon, I was seated in a raised chair with good light to enable the piercer to work. I explained that I found the idea quite a turn-on and he told me of other customers, including couples M/F, who are both pierced at one visit. I had to show him precisely where I wanted the piercing, which he marked with a pen. He sprayed a cooling agent on the frenulum and over the glans. This removed most of the sensation whilst he applied to the skin web of the frenulum a special clamp which resembled a pair of pliers. The mild pain of this was the most uncomfortable part of the procedure. My cock became half erect at this point which helped a little as the piercer gently held my shaft whilst selecting a small spike-like stick. He eased this through an aperture in the clamp and through the frenulum. I could see that the spike was tube-like, open along one side.

I was now pierced and the chosen ring was inserted and fastened through the frenulum. The spike and clamp were removed, at which point there was some bleeding. This soon ceased and I felt quite comfortable with a loose dressing around my cockhead.

After a couple of weeks I was healed and ready to enjoy my adornment. I find my orgasms are often more intense and my ejaculations larger than before. If I masturbate, or a partner masturbates me, I can sometimes be brought to orgasm by massage of the shaft alone. The natural action is to stop hand movement at the frenulum, moving the ring with each stroke. The small ring looks good with my large glans and attracts favourable comment.

I would be very pleased to hear from *Acorn* members with piercings. Perhaps those with knowledge of other practices could also write. Subjects of particular interest include the insertion of ball bearings into the urethra (a Far Eastern practice), electrical stimulation, ejaculation quantity and vacuum developers. Lots of interesting subjects for the magazine pages.

P.L. – Hants.

Natural Circ.

After spending nearly all my holidays for the last twenty years on naturist campsites or visiting nudist beaches, I have been able to conduct my own mini survey each holiday on the cut or uncut status of all the males on each holiday.

Although I am cut myself, I have never experienced some of the negative reactions from continental people that some of your other members have written about. Indeed, I have found either total indifference to my status or people who comment on how they like the cut look. I have actually been chatted up quite a number of times over the years by people who've said they were attracted to me because of my looks and because I was cut.

I attend a French naturist swimming and sauna group that meets at a municipal pool in Brittany when I'm in the area. The group is mixed, but predominately male, straight and gay. I have been going for a while and after several of the wives and partners commented that they liked the cut look, most of the guys there have been keeping their foreskins rolled back, and some have even gone the next stage on and got circumcisions.

This Summer we stayed on a large naturist campsite in the south west of France. We became very friendly with the Dutch family who were staying in the next caravan to us. The ten-year-old boy was quite well developed for his age and had a circumcised penis. One day we were talking by the pool side and the subject came around to circumcision. My wife and I are both keen on circumcision, and after I had my circumcision I had my son cut just after his birth. The Dutch lady commented on how much more aesthetically pleasing and cleaner it looked, and wished her husband would see the light and get cut like me. "So", I observed, "is that why you had your son cut?" "No", she replied, "he was born like that." Having seen very short foreskins that hardly cover the head of the penis, this was not quite the same. She explained that right from his birth the head of his penis has been exposed. When he was younger, she told us, and when we saw him coming out of the sea when it was quite cold, a small bit of skin came just over the edge of the head of the penis. But otherwise it remained uncovered. He was, she told us, of great interest to the doctors and nurses when he was a baby, as they'd never seen this phenomena. On closer inspection, sure enough, there was no sign of there ever having been a foreskin on his penis. The skin was smooth all the way

along the shaft right up to the head of the penis. Where the frenulum was, he had a wide V-shape instead of the normal thin strip of skin. But in all other ways it was a normal looking penis, albeit larger than most 10-year olds have. He was certainly not embarrassed by his naturally shorn penis. His mother was delighted at his status and joked that she must have been wishing aloud when she planned his circumcision during her pregnancy. He saved her the expense and the trouble by doing it himself before he was born.

I am sure some of your more knowledgeable members will have come across this phenomenon before, but I certainly have never seen such a thing, I believe, and our Moslem members will correct me on this, that in the Koran the Prophet was born without a foreskin. Perhaps some other members know of similar instances or can enlighten me on this one?

I would welcome correspondence from other members, bi and gay (pro-circ only please) on any theme concerning circumcision, piercing and penises in general. I would also like to receive exchange photos of cut penises in all shapes, sizes, ages, colours etc. for my collection.

R. – Jersey

The Last Meeting

I thought I had come to the wrong meeting. A procedural wrangle was going on and it was very difficult to tell from the minutiae being discussed what the meeting was all about. Was I at the U.K. Chrysanthemum Growers Society annual bash? Was I the only cock lover in the room? Impatience in myself and others saved the day. The magic word “cock” was uttered and I knew I was among friends.

And what friends they turned out to be. Able and willing to talk on my favourite subject. A chance to talk to the cut and uncut. A chance to talk of operation techniques, scar lines or lack of them. I thought I was alone in my feelings, but here was at least a room full of men similar to me. I suspect that millions of men in the U.K. are interested in the subject but only a handful actually join the Society. It is a popular subject for discussion at my workplace among the mainly male work force.

What a surprise to be able to obtain a circumcision video. I look forward to the meeting in the Spring with great anticipation. Perhaps it could be within easy reach of a sauna so that we can arrange a group demonstration.

To the guys who will be circumcised by the time of the next meeting, good luck! In my experience you won't regret it.

M. – Worcester

New Member's Joy

I have been astonished and amazed at the contents of your journal to find that others share my interest in all things phallic in general and circumcisional in particular. How marvellous it is to be able to talk about it at last, although I'm sure you have read the same thing over and over again. So I'll understand if you look for something more interesting for your august pages.

My interest began (as is often the case) in the school showers, when I observed one of the teachers to have a particularly large and beautiful glans with no skin cover at all. He seemed unabashed as he dried it vigorously with a towel and paraded it around the changing room before putting it into his pants. It seemed incredible to me at the time that a man could bear to have such a sensitive part of his anatomy rubbing and chafing against his clothes. I quickly decided that it looked 'macho' and tried to keep my own foreskin retracted all the time even though it took quite a long time to be able to live with the sensitivity. I have never really managed it successfully as I have quite a long foreskin that tends to cover my glans easily, and I find that I am constantly having to adjust it to a retracted position. I have, however, been doing it for so long (20 years) that having it covered makes it feel waterlogged and uncomfortable. Night time is when the problem starts as it covers automatically (I would be glad to hear of any tips on how to keep the foreskin retracted more permanently/successfully). Since then I have become almost obsessed with trying to guess whether men I meet during the course of a day are cut, have a retracted foreskin nestling in their pants or if they're wearing a hood. You may have guessed that my preference is for the former. And how I love to see them in the changing rooms! I never realised until I read *Acorn* that there are so many variations on a theme.

You may of course wonder why I have not as yet opted to join my circumcised brethren, and indeed it's something that I consider every day of my life. However, my partner is vehemently against the idea, and almost had an apoplexy when he found out that I'd joined *Acorn*. How do other members deal with opposition from partners? Nevertheless, I haven't ruled it out completely, as it is my body after all, but until then, retraction will have to do. In past issues I have noted some rather disdainful comments about men who wear it back (particularly on naturist beaches). Surely, however, everyone should be accepted as they are or choose to be – there is room for everyone, isn't there?

I have particularly enjoyed the 'Celebrity Status' reports (contrary to David I thought that Ralph Fiennes definitely looked circumcised in *Baby of Macon* despite the gory red of the film quality – does anyone agree?) Can anyone give a definite yes/no to Alan Bates' status – the list said yes, but in any films I've seen I would say not. How about Jamie Redknapp anyone? (there's one I'm sure we'd like to know).

I apologise if this seems like a collection of random thoughts, but I felt I wanted to write and say “thank you”, and I am still amazed that I dare to write my thoughts out on paper. Who knows, I may yet eventually get to a meeting so that I can chat with others who will not think me a complete nut-case – or worse. Long may you continue.

Tony – Yorks.

The Frenchman

I was born in the middle of France in 1941. At that time there were no Arabs in France, only a few Jews in main towns, and no protestants where I lived. They were 1.5% of the population, mainly in the east and mid south.

My parents began to get interested in naturism in 1945. Not nudist, but what would be called ‘green’ nowadays. So obviously they were against surgery. My health was bad and it might have been because of it that they became interested in naturism. My grandmother wanted my tonsils out but my mother kept hesitating and finally I escaped the operation after a long time. At the time we hadn’t the health service that we have now. My grandmother suffered much from rheumatism and wanted to be operated on, but unfortunately (or rather, fortunately) for her, she hadn’t the money. But she had what I call ‘the complex of the surgeon’, always feeling like having something cut out. And it happens that I have met a great many women like that, which has made me think: what can they have in their ass (or not have) for always feeling like having something cut. And not only that, they always want others benefitting from cuts as well.

The Germans, during the occupation, were always hunting the Jews, and many people that were no more Jew than you or me had been killed just because they were circumcised (for so-called hygienic reasons). So probably I’d heard much about circumcision at a very early age, although I can’t remember exactly when. But I remember very well that I thought the Jews did it out of perversity, and it couldn’t be in the Bible. At 16 I fancied reading the Bible and was completely astonished to find the story of circumcision in it.

Then a flash came into my mind. “It is that!” This was that operation of the tonsils, and needless operations in general in Catholic countries were pseudonyms for circumcision, because anything that could drive the mind towards sex was unthinkable. Then I began to ask around, “Why circumcision?” (in the spiritual sense, obviously), and it was the confirmation of my intuition. People were incredibly ill at ease, showing it to be their most touchy subject, and indicating to me that it was the most important subject to them in the world. And so it became in me an obsession.

I started to read everything that I could pick up about it, and at 18 I discovered that there existed a female circumcision. I asked around what it could be, but people were so ill at ease that they couldn’t talk about it. So

then it became an obsession on top of my first obsession, and I sought hard for information on that. I thought that it couldn't be the cutting off of the clitoris, because I thought that a woman would die if she had her clit cut out. But at 20 I discovered that it was the clitoris that was cut out, and that flash came into my mind again, much more stronger than the first time. "It is that." It was an incredible pleasure and relief to me that women could have their clits cut out without any obvious inconvenience. It was incredibly marvelous to learn that.

It was obvious. All troubles about sex came from the fact that women feel like having their clits cut out but are too chicken to have it done, so they want to have their boys cut instead. And so I became an enthusiast of female circumcision. It was the solution. If they could have their clits cut off they wouldn't have those obsessions of having something cut, and that obsession of having their boys cut.

Women say everywhere that circumcision is cleaner, so why don't they have all their dirty folds of skin removed as completely as possible? I remember once, my grandmother saying in a violent temper to my mother, "I like what is clean!", and it astonished me. I remember the event because it was out of context as nothing was dirty there and then. It was like a frustration of dirtiness when nothing around was dirty. My grandmother was a coleric and authoritative person, which shows a too yang person.

After a while of being a total enthusiast of female circumcision, I thought that maybe that was going too far, so I became convinced for a long time that the best thing for society would be that 25% of all people, men and women, would be circumcised, then everybody could have sex with circumcised people. I was convinced that it was evil, but it was the desire that people had, and when a desire of something is too repressed it drives people to worse excesses.

I got the conviction that women, as much for themselves as for men, felt like circumcision: that it was a basic tendency towards circumcision in them, and that they projected it onto men. And that it is unconsciously to satisfy them that men adopt circumcision. I also got to the conviction that great chapters of cruelty amongst people, like the Germans in the war, came from the exasperation of women not being freed of their clitorises and inner labia. That the frustrations of a little cruelty accumulate in the unconscious for decades and cause explosions of cruelty, as unconsciously, men try to satisfy women. My reasoning was exactly the one of homeopathy – a little cruelty that could avoid much worse.

Twenty five years passed and I spoke of that to a psychoanalyst woman, a most intelligent woman. I told her about my opinion that it was a basic desire in women to have their clits cut off, and it was as if God made the clits for the sole purpose of having them cut. She looked at me dubiously, so I said, "But look how many women feel like being operated on for something!" She

laughed and said, "Yes, it is a fact that that is quite common." But she refused any explanation of the problem.

A few years later I read Kushi, which says somewhere that too yang people hate hairs, and that when they see cats on the street they would like to shave them. And that was another revelation. The repulsion for foreskins and inner labia is the same as repulsion for hair. Let us imagine that for an unconscious reason you have a repulsion for trees and that you have a gardener. Perfectly unconsciously, you will seek on any pretext, the cutting down of the trees in your garden if you have any. And it's just the same for circumcision. So the only solution is in having a not too yang diet.

I remember when I was a child, my parents were vegetarians. My grandmother was exasperated with that. She was convinced that humans need much meat for being strong. She would shout and shout after mother, "Your kids will have T.B."

A perfect yang man is small, very strong, ugly, idiot, cruel and a pervert. A perfect yin man is tall, beautiful, intelligent, but weak. So only the well-balanced between them makes a sage. But for our subject here, everything which is cutting, cruel, perverse, is the sign of a too yang diet.

Let us be serious, only basically evil and perverted people can circumcise their children. See my letter about the yin and the yang – 'Macrobiotics', Issue 8/96.

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that female circumcision may pre-date male circumcision. If you have read the "Modern Primitive" literature, Fakir wrote somewhere about the traditional tortures, that it is more something of women than of men. So women may be softer physically than men, but stronger mentally.

The Frenchman.

[In this instance I have edited this letter. Firstly to put it into better understandable English and secondly to cut out the more passionate parts. It does give an insight into how childhood events, conversations and feelings can have a frightening effect on the rest of one's life. Who, among us hasn't, to one degree or another, been a victim of something like this. – D.A.]

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ACORN

Issue
N^o 2 1999
Editor
David Acorn

Editorial

We've just got back from the meeting at High Wycombe, which included the A.G.M. (a copy of the minutes should arrive on everyone's doorstep later). There were about 25 members at one time or another. Not all stayed for the whole time, a few turning up as their other commitments would allow. A disappointment to me was that only one of our new members came along, after our best year of recruitment as well, with so many being so pleased to have found us. Never mind, maybe next time. Again, I'm sure that every one went away with more knowledge than when they arrived.

A pleasing aspect about the meetings is that friendships are being formed through other shared interests. A couple come to mind – playing church organs and canal narrow boats.

In this issue there are items which beg comment one way or the other, so do please pick up a pen and make your opinions and experiences known.

David Acorn

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My Conclusions And Viewpoint

Circumcision has been practiced in various parts of the world for thousands of years, but it has never become worldwide. It couldn't have survived if there had been something really detrimental about it. Similarly, foreskins would never have survived if it had been shown that circumcision was of greater benefit. Therefore it comes down to choice, be it by race, religion, or personal choice by parents or individuals.

Most *Acorn* members, as we have read so often, who have had an adult circumcision, have had a compulsion for it since early childhood for one reason or another. Modern medical opinion shows that there are only two reasons physically for circumcision, torn foreskins through accidents, and BXO, where the whole front of the penis swells up enormously (very, very rare). This is the only true phimosis, a tight foreskin not being a phimosis. A foreskin that's too long (rare in actuality) in the eye of the owner isn't useless for good sex, a tight foreskin can be freed with the aid of steroid creams, and balanitis is rarely recurring with a loose foreskin. Yet these are the usual reasons why most of our members say they wanted a circumcision, and have been unhappy when doctors said no. I would suspect that the real reason lies solely in the mind, generated by an incident or finding during the growing up period (a lot of our members do say this), causing envy of another's state or a wish to become the same. And why not? If a person is totally unsatisfied with the state of a part of his body, which leads to a lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, then that is a good enough reason to remedy it. A pity that the NHS has never, from its institution, had the funds to support this.

One thing amiss though, is that, in their euphoria at accomplishing their hearts desire, most exhort everyone else to do the same. Only one or two, at the end of their circumcision stories, qualify it with, "If you feel the same as I did!" The rest forget that others have no such desires. I myself have often pondered whether I would rather lose a leg or my foreskin, and I still can't answer it. Still, it's nice of them to want everyone to feel as good about it as they do.

One other thing. In fantasy stories, and what purport to be true stories in magazines like *Forum*, men often refer to women playing with their foreskins etc, but never do you get women mentioning whether the men in the story have foreskins or not. Never, also, have I seen mention of bad smell or mutilation. From this I can safely gather that women are happy with what they get, the look and feel of a cock is not a talking point, and probably all they are interested in is what it does to them. It's only us what worries about them things!!

David Acorn

Naked Acorns

I was delighted to meet fellow *Acorn* members at Leicester recently, and I hope that I shall be able to maintain some of the pleasant contacts I made there as a 'new boy'.

As I mentioned then to some of the members, I had already arranged to hold a party for fellow circumcised gay naturists here. In the event, 15 of us met in Oxford, including one 'honorary' *Acorn*, who had a naturally retracted foreskin which could pass muster except on close inspection. It was very much open house for most of the day, with people arriving from 2pm onwards and departing as convenient, with a few staying on overnight. I had quite a wide geographical scattering of guests, with visitors from Sussex, Kent, Dorset, Hereford, Cardiff and the North Midlands as well as locals, with one friend from the Netherlands. Oxford is a useful centre for meetings as it is reasonably readily accessible from a lot of the country.

The idea of naturist parties horrifies a lot of people, but they are very sociable occasions, and initial embarrassment soon vanishes for newcomers. Quite often there will be the interesting question when someone new arrives of "Is he or isn't he?" – this time we all knew we had something in common and it provided a mutual talking point as we compared experiences. Some people had not come across the term 'acorn' before, though my Dutch friend said it was usual in the Netherlands. He had been circumcised whilst working in the tropics, but most of the rest of us had been done neonatally.

All of us were fiftyish or over and many regretted that the operation was now done so seldom with younger men. I could assure them that after my Leicester experiences that it was still possible to arrange for the operation privately.

As a general comment on several years of attending all-male naturist functions it is usual for around half of those attending to have been 'cut', though the proportion seems to be higher in London. Should any member of *Acorn* be interested in attending a gay naturist meeting perhaps they could contact me via *Acorn*.

D.D. – Oxford

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Reactions

For anyone with the urge to do so, I suppose it is quite logical to get themselves circumcised. But for the rest of us it seems a bit odd, to put it mildly. With all the reports in the media about how the foreskin has more pleasure-generating nerve endings than the glans, and how important it is for ensuring sexual enjoyment both for men and women, it does seem puzzling that some people are so keen to cut it off. My brother joined the *Acorn Society* some years ago and to our parents' disgust had himself circumcised a short while ago. I tried to talk him out of it (and my husband called him daft), but his mind was made up and he went and did it. He's gay, and one of his men friends convinced him, that despite a possible risk, it would be worth it to make himself more acceptable in gay circles. This is not the end of the story, because he says that when it all heals up, if it's not really tight, he might consider getting a 'revision'. I was quite appalled because I had read that some men were so obsessed that they went on having the shaft skin removed until their knobs were tacked directly onto their ball bags. I've begged him not to do it – it would probably destroy his sexuality for good.

He passes on the *Acorn* newsletter to us when he's finished it, and we find it fascinating reading, although some of the more extreme stuff can be depressing. We appreciate the fact that you present both sides of the argument: the only thing that stopped him getting himself done earlier were the stories of how unhappy some men – and their wives – were with the effects of circumcision.

Last week he came round for a drink and was so enthusiastic about it, describing exactly how the operation had been done, and how he'd watched as his foreskin had been cut away, and exulted as it was dropped in a tray (yuck!). As a joke, my husband challenged him to let us see the finished article. He didn't hesitate for long and stood there proudly showing off his willy to us. Compared with when I'd last seen it as a teenager, I thought it looked awful, with a raw livid scar where his previous smooth, velvety foreskin had been. My husband's reaction was to ask him if it hurt because it really did look so traumatised. He admitted that it was tender, but he seemed so proud of his new cock that we hadn't the heart to say what we really thought.

We then went on to discuss foreskins and the various types. My brother used to have an "elephant's trunk" before he was done, a type I think always looks very sexy, but which the pro-circumcision community had brainwashed him into considering 'loathsome'. My husband on the other hand, used to have a foreskin which was long enough to hide the knob with a wrinkle of skin in front. I thought this looked the sexiest of the lot and, during 'girl-talk' with my friends, used to boast about it, although really I suppose it was nothing out of the ordinary, since most men probably have similar foreskins. It just looked particularly balanced and neat to me though. Over the last few years, though, he'd had trouble with his foreskin receding, so that the tip of his glans

always remained uncovered. Although it didn't actually hurt, it was a constant niggle as the tip rubbed against his underwear and, since his urine was no longer forced into a neat jet by the foreskin tip, he peed in two streams, one of which usually ended up on the floor. I was rather unhappy about this as you can imagine, but I also found his naked tip distasteful because I've always had the notion that a knob should only be bared if it is to be used. Anyway, my husband has now largely cured the problem thanks to a device called the 'Cut/Uncut' ring, supplied by someone in Hawaii (website hyperlink <http://www.aloha.net/~uncut>), which gathers the foreskin forward of the glans and holds it there until it stretches back to its original position. It took my husband six months and he now has a foreskin to be proud of once more.

One thing, which really upsets my husband, is the claim that men with foreskins are inherently 'dirty', and need circumcision to force them to be clean. Not only is this an outrageous slur on the vast majority of normal men who are quite capable of using soap and water, but also is untrue even if they don't! For instance, my husband never produces smegma, and even if he doesn't wash he never becomes smelly or unpleasant under his skin. He was forced to go for a week without washing (or having sex) while away on a course, and the only residue under his foreskin was the normal moist lubricant which is always there – which has a faint but sexy male smell which is not in the least offensive. I wish I could say the same for myself!

A.B. – Bucks.

The Club

Reading through some old back copies of *Acorn* recently, I came upon a small article sent in by John from Yorkshire in Issue No 1 of 1992, which was entitled 'Advertisement' and read as follows:- Circumcised? A cut above the rest? Take this opportunity to join the world's most exclusive club. Your very own membership diploma, also an ideal birthday or xmas gift for the man without skin – £5 to S.N.I.P. (and then a Private Eye box number).

I can't ever remember seeing this before although I must have read it. Did anyone ever reply to this box number? If so, what was the resulting reply? Was it just a humorous, vulgar, crude or rude diploma for quick, cheap laugh or was there some more positive side to this advert, with something more to being a member other than a piece of paper? If anyone has any information would they care to share it with us? If anyone did reply, was there then a continuing follow-up? If we hear nothing back then we can only assume this was some way of conning people out of £5 for some piece of paper implying its owner was circumcised.

I.W. – Dorset

Rising To The Occasion

Boasted the Jewish insurance salesman, “Not just from the cradle to the grave, but from the erection to the resurrection!” The humour is actually a real ‘gas’ in more than one respect. Every erection, hard-on, jack or cockstand (according to taste) is dependent on the secretion of nitric oxide (NO). Sufficient nitric oxide released within the penis institutes enzyme reactions, which, by causing muscle relaxation in the blood vessels of the penis (or clitoris), leads to enhanced blood flow and consequently erection.

Within the complicated chemistry produced by nitric oxide, guanosine triphosphate is reformed as the vasodilator cyclic guanosine monophosphate using activated guanylate cybase. Of course, the monophosphate is inactivated eventually by hydrolysis, causing the erection to subside. Maintaining an erection requires the production of fresh vasodilators and backing up nitric oxide release from continued sexual stimulation.

Most impotence or erectile dysfunction results from insufficient NO production. Viagra slows down the hydrolysis of the monophosphate, strengthening and prolonging any erection. In an age when NO should mean NO, it becomes a biological YES!!

Sensuous erotic stimulation of nerve endings in the penis causes the release of nitric oxide and vasodilators. As the foreskin comprises at least 50% of penile skin, with a high concentration of nerve receptors (exceeding 20,000), and nerve endings contribute to secreted nitric oxide, there could be a connection between circumcision and erectile difficulties, especially in later life. With reduced vitality in old age, the foreskin’s contribution could be essential in maintaining potency. In early to middle adult life, though deprived of his entire foreskin, the circumcised male has sufficient vitality of remaining nerve endings to produce enough NO for vasodilation and erection.

There may be a modern scientific basis in the ancient wisdom of Jewish circumcision, where the entire frenulum and large areas of adjoining foreskin are left intact. Not only is there less risk of haemorrhage, but the retention of a rich supply of nerve endings in the vicinity of the frenulum. That could extend the period in which the Jew could, “Go forth and multiply!”

I wonder if that is why the (then) Princess Elizabeth chose a mohel for her sons, rather than have them share the radical circumcision given to a high proportion of infant citizens by the medical fraternity at that time.

One last footnote or ‘wilting word’ – of the three million men successfully treated for impotence with Viagra, I wonder what proportion are radically circumcised?

Anthony

Ring, Ring

I was interested to read the article by P.L. – Hants, 1/99, regarding his frenulum piercing. I have always found my frenulum to be an exciting erogenous zone, and am delighted that it wasn't cut away with my foreskin. Like P.L., I also had it pierced about three years ago, but mine was fitted with a small barbell. Having lost two of these in the sea whilst on holiday, I decided to try a small ring when my next holiday came around. The difference in sensation was amazing, as the backward and forward movement of the ring is extremely erotic and arousing. I have since advanced to having a Prince Albert piercing which I have enlarged to 5mm thickness over a period of two years, and find the added weight on my cock very stimulating. However, two rings so close together felt a little overcrowded, so I have reverted to another barbell in the frenulum – now at 3mm thickness. These two harmonise very well and I am now considering an apadravya if I can pluck up the courage!

I also enjoyed Ray Hamble's contribution, and thoroughly endorse his views.

V.W. – Leics.

Naturist Resorts

I was most interested in your piece about Cap d'Agde (6/98), which, as is your wont, was totally sensible and unbiased. Cap d'Agde may not be the largest naturist reserve in the south of France, but to me it is horribly overcrowded. The camping sites are minimal, probably consisting only of less than about three acres, whereas Montalivet, on the west coast, must have well over a hundred acres of woodland camping sites – totally uncrowded, excellent shops, restaurants and swimming pool, with a wonderfully long sandy beach. It is perhaps the earliest of the naturist reserves (an aunt of mine was there in the early thirties), and well worth a visit.

Regarding the piece I sent to you for inclusion in the newsletter [it already went in 1/99. – *Ed.*], please edit or scrub the first grumpy sentence about the survey being seemingly only interested in circumcision. There are one or two additional queries to be added to my suggested survey for cavaliers:

11. How much of your glans is covered a) when flaccid, b) when erect?
12. Several contributions to the newsletter have mentioned that they wear their foreskins folded under. Is this possible for you? It would seem an excellent plan for those of you who complain that your foreskins are too long.

Your opinions would be welcome on all these points.

I.D. – Herts.

Obsession

Thank you so very much for the 1998 issues of *Acorn* and the first of 1999. As Will says in 7/98, "What a revelation!" I read all eight 1998 issues in one evening. I echo his thanks for producing such an interesting magazine on my favourite subject, dicks, in a level-headed (nearly said 'serious') and intelligent fashion. I'm only sorry I didn't hear of *Acorn* many years ago, and can only wonder what I've missed.

I am totally fascinated, borderline obsessed, with cut dicks and often wish I was circumcised. For me, the surgically bared knob is absolutely beautiful, particularly when erect, and just so 'out there', if you know what I mean. Again, I echo Will's remarks regarding his attraction to cut guys, and would say the subject and difference is also important to this gay guy. Giving oral to a cut guy is wonderful and, I dare to say, easier.

I don't remember ever having any problems with my foreskin as a child, although I can clearly remember having a medical at school when I was about five (1966) by an elderly female doctor (I assume) who yanked down my pants to inspect my dick. She grabbed me with cold bony fingers and pulled my foreskin right back, painfully hard. I remember my mother being told that it was OK and she being given advice on how I should keep myself clean. Following that event, whenever I had a bath, I was instructed by my mother to wash myself 'down there' by pulling the skin back with finger and thumb, then wriggling my bare knob in the bathwater.

Like others writing in *Acorn*, I saw my first cut dick at school; I was about 8 and shared a changing cubicle after a swimming lesson. The other boy had no inhibitions about stripping off naked, while I hid under a towel. I couldn't resist looking at him and was intrigued as to how or why his foreskin stayed back, there seemed so little of it as well. I didn't realise or understand that it had been cut off. Personal and intimate subjects were simply not discussed between my father and I, so I had no-one to ask. I made sure I shared a cubicle with the cut boy at every chance, and stopped hiding under my towel. Eventually one of us raised the subject – I don't remember who.

The boy's brother and father were cut so he had no experience of uncut dicks. Rather than being shocked to find that his skin had been cut off, I was totally fascinated and rather envious. Using the urinals at school, I took more notice of the boys beside me, but can't now remember seeing any other cut dicks until I moved on to grammar school and communal showers after games lessons, where of course circumcision status was obvious. Cut were sadly few and far between.

When erections began and I discovered wanking, I also discovered that, although I could retract my foreskin and bare my knob OK, the frenulum was very tight and the skin would bunch up under the corona. Frequent wanking would leave the frenulum and corona very sore. Rough handling could even

result in tiny rips in the frenulum where it joined the glans. Not knowing that this was a problem rather than an inconvenience, my wanking technique altered to take account of the tight frenulum etc., so that I'd rarely pull my skin more than halfway down my knob when hard. Having a generous overhang of skin, I also got into the habit of pinching off the opening to my foreskin at the moment of ejaculation to collect my spunk and avoid embarrassing stains.

Two of my first three sex partners were cut (at birth), wonderful for my interest, and me, but they weren't accustomed to playing with uncut dicks, and the tight frenulum became a problem as they expected my foreskin to retract further than it did. I quickly found out that my problem made intercourse uncomfortable, awkward, and occasionally quite painful. The frenulum area and front of my foreskin could be very sore and sometimes quite swollen the morning afterwards. However, being more inclined to the passive rather than the active role, it has been, and is rare for me to penetrate.

Several years ago the frenulum split again and I plucked up the courage to see my G.P. about it. He said it would heal and, so long as I was careful, would be OK. Some time thereafter it happened again and I returned to my G.P. After an examination he suggested I put "a dab of vaseline on it in future" for extra lubrication. He knows I'm gay and should be practicing safe-sex, but still suggested an oil-based lubricant. On a third visit I raised the idea of a circumcision, but he thought that was quite unnecessary. I took matters into my own hands (so to speak) and investigated the possibility of a private circumcision, but the cost at that time of £640 was beyond my means.

In 1991 I was finally diagnosed as diabetic after several visits to my G.P. with persistent thrush on my knob and foreskin. The thrush seems to cause a tightening of the foreskin, particularly around the opening, and it takes quite a time after the thrush is cured to return to normal. The thrush re-occurs in hot humid conditions, like summer; I am a chef by profession and work in a hot humid kitchen. My work takes me to southern Africa from time to time where it is very hot and often very humid. I have been told that if I was cut I wouldn't get the reoccurrence of thrush. My G.P. tells me to be more careful controlling my blood glucose levels and writes another prescription for Canestan cream.

During my teens I tried all sorts of ways to hold my foreskin back, such as sticking plaster, to give me the appearance of being cut, but to no avail. The foreskin would invariably work its way forward, often leaving me sore, uncomfortable and frustrated. After I became diabetic, I tried again to 'train' my foreskin to stay retracted, but again to no avail. Then a cut friend told me of his having a P.A. piercing done. At the time I thought that there was no way I could have that done, no way... Then I saw a picture of an uncut guy with a large P.A. ring, which very effectively held his foreskin back. After some serious thinking I went for it and had a P.A. done in May 1997.

Since then I have enlarged the piercing and wear a ring 5mm thick by 19mm internal diameter. Each time I move up a size of ring, my foreskin does stay retracted, but gradually over a period of about two weeks it slowly works its way forward and stays there as the skin becomes accustomed to the larger sized ring. And the old problems still exist!

Shortly after the first *Acorn* journal for 1999 arrived, I again made inquiries into a private circumcision, but the price in a London clinic is now £1390, well beyond my means. I really wish I were cut, for both the aesthetic look of a cut dick and to alleviate the other problems, although, now that I have the P.A. which I really love and want to keep, there is the added problem that the surgery to remove my foreskin could/would compromise the piercing, ie. close it up.

I'm considering visiting my G.P. again, but find it very difficult to talk to him and he's always in such a mad rush to get on to the next patient. I've carefully thought of what I want and need to say so that I can explain myself clearly and succinctly, without waffling and getting nowhere. But as soon as he calls me into his consulting room I know it will all go out of my head. Any suggestions?

A.F. – Berks.

Britons Abroad

When it comes to sex, we British are the stuffiest, most repressive and most prudish nation in Europe. Sexual material and services which are openly on sale in the rest of Europe, where it clearly does no harm, are strictly forbidden here, whilst the most bloodthirsty and violent rubbish Hollywood can churn out is freely shown on our TV screens for children to see. As a consequence, we tend to kick over the traces whenever we can escape from the dead hand of Grundyism by going abroad, and we tend to behave, some of us, with a lack of inhibition which appalls even our broadminded European cousins. Jokes about hordes of British girls queuing up to drop their knickers for the dishiest Spanish waiter are not at all far-fetched, and the horrible drunken behaviour of British louts is famous throughout the world.

Older Brits, too, tend to let their hair down on holiday to an extent, which ought to cause them severe shame and embarrassment, but probably doesn't. I remember last year in Magalluf (Majorca) being woken up at 2am by three ladies in their forties from the next apartment, who were taking a break from their husbands and kids. They had been tipping sangria down their necks all night, and sampling a bit of local dick, if their drunken conversation is to be believed. They were screeching with laughter as they searched fruitlessly for their key, and one of them yelled out, "Hurry up and find that effing key Sharon, or I'll piss meself!" "Me too," said another, and Sharon shouted back, "I need to go as bad as you, but I can't find the effing thing." By now I was

up, and I peered through the curtains in time to see the three ladies whisper together, then screech with drunken laughter again as they all stood round a huge urn of geraniums right outside my window, hiked their tight skirts up their thighs, pulled their knickers to one side and pissed in the grossest possible fashion into the pot, as curtains twitched all round the courtyard.

Now let's not be mealy-mouthed about this. It was no genteel little tinkle hidden by skirts spread round a ladylike crouch. This was a proper piss in the full ribald significance of the word, and as entertainment goes was the most outrageously provocative and appalling sight I have ever seen. But then when I was talking to some friends the other night, we were comparing experiences of shocking behaviour of Brits on holiday, and two of the girls who had also been to Majorca stoutly defended our boys, saying they had seen drunken foreigners behaving far worse. The thing that really scandalised them was when some lads from a well-known country tried to revive a comrade who had passed out by pissing all over him – in the middle of the main street. When the lads saw they had caught the interest of the two British girls, they started hamming it up by insultingly pulling their foreskins back and exposing their knobs at them – which the girls thought dreadfully rude. But what really shocked them was when they hit on the idea of blowing their foreskins out with urine to double the size, and then let it go with a rush, instantly reviving their drunken companion. They both said they had never seen anything so rude in all their lives, and no woman would behave like that (only because they couldn't, I thought).

At this point I decided to put them right on that subject of maidenly modesty and mentioned Spanish waiters, at which they both blushed a deep scarlet (I wonder why?). I then recounted how the three ladies had pissed, standing and thrusting their hips forward in a disgracefully immodest and unladylike fashion, into the pot of geraniums. Whilst the girls had been shocked by the rude exhibition of the bare glans, and at the unfamiliarity of ballooned foreskins, which they had never seen before – and couldn't experience themselves – I explained that I had been even more amazed at the enormous power, volume and horrifying indiscriminate delivery of female urination when in a state of urgency. Although most males would be disgusted at the thought of peeing down their legs, it meant nothing to these ladies (one of them bellowed laughingly, “ere Trace, I've filled me effing shoes!”, and what totally gobsmacked me was to see how the compost in the pots was sent flying by the hissing, splattering torrents of second hand sangria. Unless they have actually witnessed it, most men just don't know about these things, since they could never match such a degree of virtuosity themselves.

We then went on to discuss foreskins and, following on from the ballooning trick, how elastic they were. One of the girls giggled and said she had read the press report of the philistine (in every sense) pupils at Eton College – with particular reference to Prince William – who had instituted the ‘shilling ceremony’, whereby they judged a comrade's worth by the number of shillings

he could cram under his foreskin. An older woman in the group made the interesting observation that, between the wars, boys with foreskins were barred from Eton, but that since then things had swung very much the other way and, following the royal example, the toffs now favoured foreskins. One of the girls sweetly suggested that this only happened when they realised that it was an ideal place to tattoo the family crest! Naturally, the point was raised that William only qualified to take part in the shilling ceremony because his mother had stopped him being circumcised when the powerful palace authorities tried to have it done. One chap said that he had read in the Court Circular at the time that a Jewish circumciser had been in attendance at the palace, presumably to circumcise the princes. He then laughed and said that the rabbi didn't stay there long. When the Princess realised what he was there for, she told him to piss off, although she may not have used those exact words. But I wouldn't bet on it!

Steve – Bucks.

Rite To Reply

Circumcision certainly brings things to a head, so I would like to reply to some interesting points raised in *Acorn*. From the excellent description of G.C.D.'s circumcision, he appears to have undergone a Jewish-style operation rather than a ritual one. His skin bridges were caused by the freshly cut edge of foreskin resting against the tender torn surface of the glans' adhesions, with healing at contact points.

Had the full Jewish procedure been followed, the reflected mucous membrane would have been completely eased back down the shaft away from the glans, then secured with sterilised lint strips, leaving the glans totally bare beyond the dressing. The lint would be changed daily or soaked off in the bath, and reapplied until healing took place, each time the entire glans projecting beyond it. Only then would the frenulum and its associated prepuce be able to reassert itself around the lower portions of the glans.

M.B. coined the phrase 'circumcised smegma', which would cause a real American scream! It is formed in the sulcus, and not from ridges and bumps on the glans as described by R.W. Smegma is no secretion, but fatty degenerated epithelium retained in a confined space. Jewish smegma is equally emotive, but the erect penis of a plump circumcised Jewish baby can have up to two-thirds of the glans covered without it being necessary to cut away more tissue (according to the translation of the *Dinim of Milah*).

During my attempt at taped restoration, I managed to maintain continuous glans cover for over three weeks. When the plaster gave way (whilst reading the newsletter), I expected to find traces of 'circumcised smegma'. There was no debris from the artificial confined space, only moistness and a delightful heightened sensitivity.

R. from Jersey mentioned the child born circumcised, though the term is a misnomer, since there is neither cutting nor scar! Born without foreskin is probably more appropriate. This anatomic curiosity, though rare, is well documented. As well as the Dutch example, confirmed by the ten-year-old boy's mother, I have read about a French-Canadian baby, born with the identical condition, in medical literature. Yes, Mohammed had congenital absence of the prepuce. He was born without a foreskin as were other early prophets, but there is no directive on circumcision in the Koran. In Judaism, the absence of foreskin is catered for with the operation of 'Drawing Drops of Blood of the Covenant' by puncturing the already bare glans.

Whether the foreskin is congenitally absent or more commonly cut away, I agree with R.W. that the glans will flare out at the coronal rim through years of unrestricted exposure. Even after a few months, the denuded infant glans becomes noticeably plumper compared to the shaft. At maturity the coronal ridge can well exceed 1cm in height even when flaccid: even to overwhelming the modesty panels of trunks, briefs, swimming costumes and shorts. During sports and leisure activities, concealment of the circumcised state has become well-nigh impossible! Sightings at adolescent school showers proved all 14 circumcised in a class of 31 to be well and truly flared at the glans edge, irrespective of penis length and maturity.

Accepting the 'flare theory', I was amazed to come across a perfectly curved, plum-shaped glans with no ridge whatsoever – on a penis that had been circumcised Jewishly at under a week old decades earlier. There were skin bridges, but not on the upper side where flaring should have been present, a perfect exception to the rule.

Anyone wishing to add to my observations, or seek information, can write to me via *Acorn* or formally to the newsletter. Please excuse any propensity to pedantry and hair-splitting. I can only quote my response to Jewish foreplay – “Call it a prelude – there's no fore' to play with!”

Anthony

The Big Cover Up Mystery

Crisps, cocks and condoms have one thing in common. They all come in various sizes, shapes, colours and flavours. As far as condoms are concerned, the range is enormous. Magnums or snug-fits; teats or plain-ended; lubed or dry; ultra-strong or featherlight; mulberry or marsala, and enough colours to compete with the ubiquitous rainbow flag – whether for straight or gay use, or even for avoiding the mop-up after solo indulgence. The choice is a vast one. But how much of this huge array is scientifically tested for either safety or consumer satisfaction?

It's fine to test the strength of a Virgin 'johnnie' by blowing it up to match a Branson round-the-world 'hot air balloon', but, equally to the point, do the various contoured shapes really stay in place more firmly than a straight sheath? Does a teat-end really catch the semen at the time of ejaculation, or does it merely act as a reservoir into which the fluid drains at the time of withdrawal? Is the teat itself not a hazard in that it stretches backwards during insertion, thus actually presenting a thinner and weaker point in the latex immediately in front of the penile meatus (opening) which bears the greatest strain during thrusting? These questions, and there are many others, have exercised my mind for years, but I can find very little hard evidence to suggest that they have been properly investigated.

Then there are the substantial issues surrounding user suitability and satisfaction. Of course, personal preference has an important role to play and choice is essential. But is there any widely available advice, based on fact rather than conjecture? I am a circumcised gay man of average endowment with an ejaculate volume of 3.5 – 4ml. I prefer a plain ended, non-ribbed, non-contoured, non-lubricated sheath to which I can apply KY to the outside as necessary. But that's my personal choice for pleasure and comfort. It isn't based on what may be truly safest or most advisable for my needs. If I were not circumcised; if my penis were two or three inches longer; if the volume of my ejaculate were to take up more space; if I were to be engaged in heterosexual, rather than homosexual, intercourse, would my needs (not necessarily my preferences) be different? I enjoy fish and chips and suet dumplings, but are they really a suitable contribution to my diet? At 16 stone I know there are better sources of nourishment to safeguard my survival. I'm afraid, though, that I don't know what are the most suitable condoms for my sexual appetite.

Talking of food leads me to the question of condom 'taste' – as in flavour rather than decorum! Raspberry Ripple or Exotic Caribbean Coconut may be delicious to the taste buds of those of us who enjoy a lively '69', but has anyone stopped to consider scientifically whether, as with those magical pheromones, some flavours are more passion-rousing than others. Is the taste simply for fun, or should it not be researched to see if it can provide a definite enhancement to satisfaction?

As a doctor with an extraordinary active 55-year sex life behind me, and a long-standing commitment to sexual counselling, I began this article with the intention of pontificating on some of the questions I've raised. I thought I knew a fairly sound formula for matching cock to condom under a variety of usage circumstances. But once I started thinking through the subject I realised my arrogantly assumed expertise had burst – just like the sheath I used last night!

So I throw the subject open for debate. Even if we can piece together a database of user experience it will be a step forward. What have *Acorn* members found to be the most satisfactory condoms in a wide range of circumstances

varying from penis size through to volume of ejaculate, vaginal, anal or oral use, cut or uncut state, duration of intercourse, intensity of thrusting, etc. etc.? The more we know, the better informed, and safer, we can all be.

Ray Hamble

Yet Another Seven In Circumspection

A shy adolescent called Ron,
A had part of anatomy gone.
No skin on the end like brother or friend.
He'd love to put it back on.

A Jewess, sweet Hannah seemed bad,
A to prefer one gentile, a lad.
She pulled back his fore', but wanted much more.
Unconverted, he's lover and cad!

A nother, a Judith from York.
A She loved nibbling cheese from a fork,
Collected from friends' uncircumcised ends.
She said she preferred it to pork!

T here was a young fellow called Paul,
T whose surgery led to a fall.
"I was done as a child and later reviled.
Now underpants cover it all."

A livelier fellow from Bude,
A was oft to go out in the nude.
His skin was so tight, its loss put things right,
but stumpiness made him a prude.

F rank shook when the girl in the car,
F went circling his personal scar.
"It goes up and down", she said with a frown.
"But the knob is more plumper by far!"

A Simon of persuasion gay,
A had trouble with preputial play.
With skin cut away, left 'mushroom' display,
"I must be a 'fun-guy' today!"

Anthony

Distraught

I am a 52-year-old victim of male infant circumcision (senseless mutilation). Although from the medical point of view, one might say the procedure was done well, and completely, that does not mean that I have not suffered because of it. There has been nothing on the positive side to offset this suffering. I am unaware of any benefits to me whatsoever.

Until I was 51, the memory of this tragedy was suppressed deep in my subconscious mind, and although it has caused lifelong torment in my thoughts and in my dreams (my parents can confirm this from a most early age), I never understood why or where these thoughts (feelings of inferiority, fear and distrust) were coming from. I am only now beginning to realise how devastatingly it coloured and affected nearly everything I ever did or ever was. It has had a tremendously negative effect on my life.

Last summer, I came across some web sites dealing with circumcision, and as I sat there reading the screens, the actual memory, including the pain, came flooding back to me for the first time in my fully wide-awake state. Instantly I understood why my life has been as it has (I have a deep distrust of females and consequently never married, though I am clearly heterosexual and have long desired a wife and children, two female nurses took me to the room and stood by as I was mutilated, not lifting a finger to protect me). The level of rage I experienced, stored in my memory and deeply suppressed ever since that day, returned to me last summer while I was sitting in front of my computer. The feelings were almost overwhelming and unlike anything I had ever experienced before. It has taken me this long to be able to deal with this issue on a more rational (I won't say unemotional) basis.

Many people, including many doctors, believe an infant feels nothing, has no awareness, no memory, and so there can be no psychological harm. I am here to say that this is grossly and obviously false. My memory of that event is quite detailed, far more than anyone would expect. I can remember each separate cut, the pain, and the feel of a restraining harness of some kind. I remember people speaking and facial expressions (one nurse became concerned because I would not stop crying). Believe me, this is not a fabrication. I could never make up anything like this. To those who say there is no evidence of psychological harm, I say the evidence is all around you, but you will never find it if you refuse to look.

I now feel that if I am ever to salvage anything at all of a normal life, I must somehow help in the effort to expose and end this indefensible and barbaric practice.

Joseph – U.S.A.

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David Acorn

Editorial

I know I have said this before, but I have to say it again. This magazine comprises the be-all and the end-all of the Society. It is the link between all the members. If there is no magazine there is no Society. The magazine comprises the thoughts, opinions and experiences of the members. Yet for every item submitted for publication I have to send on about 15 letters to members who have written articles. Not requests for contacts, mind you, just written articles. I never open closed letters, but I'm sure that most of them could be open letters and be published.

It will not have escaped many members' notice that most of the contributors are regulars (and they have my heartfelt thanks for it), leaving some 150 who have never contributed a word. In the main, this is a Society which people join because they have strong feelings about the basis of that Society, so they must surely have something to say, or at least disagree with.

We know a lot about the circumcision habits of America, but not much about anywhere else. We have members in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland,

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Austria, Spain, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Indonesia and more. I'm sure our members would like to know about the circumcision rates in these countries, the attitude of society to circumcision, the attitude of the health services, alternative religious rites, any changing of attitudes, the feelings of being in a minority group, one way or the other. Also, in the English language, the prefix 'un' generally means, to do something positive about something. Uncircumcised (or uncut) is one of the exceptions. What are the uncircumcised called in your country?

I have enough material for the start of the next issue, but, as the Internet information is so polarised in one camp or the other, the truth is the sufferer, so I don't want to rely on that. Therefore my plea. You don't have to be a novelist or an English academic, just write what comes into your head.

PS. It would be nice to know who is sending letters to be passed on. For all I know, I'm doing it for non-members.

David Acorn

Credits

I like to give credit where it is due, and I thought I had done so in the case of the book excerpt which I sent you some time ago, and which you printed in 8/98, as "Circumcision: Rome 16 January 1645, *Eye Witness To History* (Harvard Un. Press, 1988; copr. John Carey, 1987): pp.178-80." The excerpt in question is from the *Diary Of John Evelyn* (1620-1706), an intrepid traveller, diarist and dilettante. In his list of sources, Mr Carey cites a 1959 Oxford University Press edition of Evelyn's *Diary*, edited by E.S. de Beer. I have a World's Classic Edition of the *Diary Of John Evelyn*, but could find nothing in it about circumcision. Perhaps the editor(s) 'sanitised' it for 'family use'.

I hope this will clear up the attribution.

In 8/98, p.10, I opined in favour of 'low' circumcisions which leave a substantial preputial cuff. Doctors differ, but one medical opinion supporting my view is Dr Frederick Christopher (*Minor Surgery*, 5th. Edition: Philadelphia; Saunders, 1945, pp.478ff.). Dr Christopher also favoured a 'freehand' technique with suturing; i.e. no clamp. In future I'll try to cite medical opinion favouring 'high' or radical circumcision.

M.S. – Utah

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of *The Acorn Society* or its other members.

Questions And Answers

Some items from Miriam Stoppard's medical column in
The Mirror.

Q. What is female circumcision? I'm 12 and I was watching a TV programme about it in several African countries and it sounded awful and painful. It was done to girls my age and even younger and everyone had to have it in certain tribes. I asked my mum what it was exactly and why they had it done, but she said she had no idea and that I should write to you. Can you help me?

A. Sometimes it's hard to understand or agree with traditions of other cultures, but it's important to realise there are probably things about our life in Britain which foreigners find very strange. Female circumcision requires the removal of all, or parts, of the clitoris, labia majora and labia minora, sometimes combined with narrowing of the entrance to the vagina. The operation is common in parts of Africa, and in the 1980s it was estimated that more than 84 million women in 30 different countries had been circumcised. I'm repelled by the idea as there's no valid reason for the operation. It's designed by men to stop women enjoying sex, and violates the human rights of women. It can cause retention of urine, and make childbirth more dangerous. There are strong moves to end the practice, but so far with little success in some countries.

Me. As a 'follow up', Richard and Judy, on their *Good Morning* programme a few days ago, interviewed a lovely young lady from Somalia, now living in New York, about her recent book, *The Day That Changed My Life*, which I think was the subject of a recent BBC programme (which I didn't see), and she gave details of being forcibly circumcised at the age of 5. This practice is a violation of the female body. Only something equivalent to male circumcision should be allowed in these primitive African countries. She now has a son of her own.

Q. Our son has to go into hospital shortly to be circumcised because he has a very tight foreskin. Our other little boy's fine and the doctor says there's no medical reason why he should need the same procedure. But we're worried that the boys will notice how different they are while they're growing up and whether it would bother them. We're wondering whether we should have our other son circumcised as well. Our doctor is dead against any unnecessary operations for our son. He wants us to leave it, but we're not convinced. We'll abide by your answer.

A. My view is to leave well alone unless there's a good medical reason for interference. In baby boys, the foreskin is stuck to the glans and normally begins to separate at about the age of three. Once he reaches the age of seven, a boy should be able to pull his foreskin back over the head of his penis. If he can't, the foreskin is too tight and the sooner it's sorted out the better. If it's left alone it will be difficult to clean the penis properly, and men with tight

foreskins can experience very painful erections. It makes perfect sense to have your older son done, and to prevent embarrassing comparisons between the boys, just be open about it and explain the op. My book *Sex Ed.* has illustrations that youngsters can understand, and you can talk them through it.

Me. This should bring some response from members. Miriam thinks they shouldn't be the same, but I personally don't agree with her. I don't have any brothers, and my first wife's two sons, aged 9 and 7 when I met them, were both intact, although she was, and probably still is, pro-circumcision. Depending on the age of the boys, especially the younger one, perhaps he could be asked if he would like to be circumcised to be like his brother? The booklet, *Circumcision*, by Dr John Smith, makes specific comment on this situation on page 8.

Another letter to Miriam was from a young man who was worried that his penis didn't look the same as men in a porn film he had seen. If he continued masturbating, would his foreskin disappear? Miriam put him straight on this.

C.B. – North-East

Book Review

Circumcision; Frankly Speaking by Gerald N Weiss MD and Andrea W Harter

Let's take out the confusion factor right away. We're talking MALE circumcision here. The abhorrent female clitoridectomy procedure, wrongly ascribed to that word, is not in the frame. This book, as its back cover synopsis heading states, is; 'Dedicated to the education of parents of a newborn son and concerned others'.

There are probably only three types of people on this earth; lets call them A, B and C. A's are against the whole idea of circumcising babies and some even hate the thought that many males carry or choose this 'mutilation' in adulthood. The C's are convinced otherwise. For them circumcision is a procedure for which they will happily submit their sons for reasons of religion, family custom or (God bless America!) conforming to a very secular culture. In between are the B's who are indifferent to or anxious about circumcision. Through lack of information or the confusion of conflicting advice some are undecided and uncommitted. Dr Weiss's book is written for them but it will also be a happy hunting ground for the other two groups. A's will attack it, C's will be content to have their convictions confirmed in it.

Hitherto raising this subject in mixed company has been one of the last taboos. As sex became more explicit, dinner table talk advanced to take in most of it. People have jettisoned their inhibitions to share surprising details

of their sexual secrets. Just one topic seemed to remain off limits. Those bold enough to mention c*****n often found it to be a real conversation stopper and to enquire after someone's circ status can still cause surprising embarrassment. People can be very coy about this particular aspect of themselves, their partners or their sons. In such a climate ignorance thrives and I believe the good doctor sets out to dispel it.

Alongside this, the more passionate of the A's have an agenda in trying to prevent C's from following their wish and custom to circumcise. A's are to thank for getting this matter aired on radio and TV chat shows, forums and websites. They are calling for an end to what they deem to be a mutilating and cruel practice that has no medical merit. Nowadays whenever a new book comes out with 'circumcision' writ large in the title we expect it will run over the reasons why we shouldn't do this terrible thing to our sons.

However, here at last is a worthy 95 pages which redress the balance. It's a reasoned book, well chaptered and easy to read. Dr Weiss is clear, calm and polite. He doesn't duck any of the issues, indeed his opening sentence reminds readers that making this decision on behalf of your son can be a sobering experience. He then takes all who care to follow him through every aspect, every issue, steadily building up the information into a powerful pile. Each time a point is made he leaves the reader to decide. Nowhere does he push or harangue; the choice is still yours.

After the introduction Dr Weiss takes his readers on a quick tour of the medical reasons that support circumcision; cleanliness, cancer prevention etc. Then goes on to quote case histories which demonstrate how most people are unaware of these issues and circumcise their boys for cultural reasons of family conformity: outside of a religious context it's just something middle America feels they need to do. They don't ask why, they just do it.

We canoe up the river of history to find the source of this, one of the world's oldest operations. There are backwaters briefly explored but the main tributary is undoubtedly Judaism and the navigating handbook is the bible.

The Jewish people are the religious guardians of this surgery who have preserved, perfected and spread it ever since the diaspora. As with their faith, there has been no great missionary zeal to draw in converts, just a willingness to explain, advise and assist those who are curiously drawn to it. Thus by a process of osmosis the operation has transferred to other faiths and countries. It's greatest manifestations are in the world of Islam and by contrast, also across the great swathe of modern, middle class America.

It's likely that Dr Weiss could promote his reasoning from a Jewish perspective but he makes no mention of this and rests his good authority on his 50 plus years as an eminent surgeon. He concludes this chapter with a brief mention of instruments invented to facilitate the procedure.

This leads us nicely into his next detailed discourse called 'anatomy of a circumcision' which is the meat of the book. It should serve to acquaint parents with several methods by which circumcision may be performed, including that of a Jewish Mōhel. Not for the squeamish perhaps although a clinical description is not nearly so chilling as the real thing.

Many parents who would otherwise be prepared to circumcise their son sometimes shrink from doing so because they don't wish to put their baby through any pain. This is natural enough as maternal and paternal instincts are first to protect. The thought of having their baby taken away to inflict this pain upon him is too much for some so they opt out. Others say better a few minutes of hurting now when he won't remember it, than several days of it in the total awareness of child or adulthood. Dr Weiss addresses this issue square on and doesn't pretend that babies don't feel pain. His most reassuring contribution is to point out that pain in adult experience is a conditioned reflex. We react to what we expect or are told about, or see coming or know. A baby doesn't know or anticipate and doesn't feel in quite this way. The question of anaesthetics is explored with a strong hint at caution.

One of the big arguments of the protagonists in this eternal circumcision debate is 'Does it prevent cancer?' A chapter is devoted to a convincing argument that it does. Many opponents of circumcision who concede this, simply dismiss the prophylactic solution by pointing at the low incidence of penile cancer. To them the statistics are so small as to be of little consequence! I've always thought those 'insignificant' few who suffer should be invited to have the last word. Here Doctor Weiss says it for them in a powerful three word sentence: 'Cancer is cancer'.

In the sexual arena in recent years, AIDS has certainly deposed cancer and syphilis and other venereal diseases as a major concern. These and other health issues in the context of the circumcision argument are given a good airing. Dr Weiss fairly pauses to include a dissenting view from his conclusions. If by now you are confused, you'll find this section ends with his evaluations neatly listed under headings: 'To C or not to C'.

Obviously he feels the medical argument is good enough on it's own, because at the end of this chapter he steps aside from the sexual dimension, explaining it is too personal and multi-faceted. I would certainly like to have seen an expansion of his book into this field. Perhaps here he could have drawn on more input from his co-author Angela Harter as she in turn could have trawled for other female testimony which favours the circumcised state in their menfolk. It's not hard to find.

'Money talks' is a short account of circumcision costs then and now. It ranges from the 35¢ 'cut' done on cowboys at the turn of the century (so that's how the West was won!) to present day fees and insurance coverage.

Those who take the decision to circumcise their son soon realise another hurdle presents itself; when and how to tell him. Some have anxieties about

this. The book gives a resume of how growing boys relate and react right through to adulthood. It suggests that parents be prepared and secure in their answers to questions which may come from both sides of the family on this issue. Little boys and girls are going to spot the difference and ask about it. Dr Weiss suggests the emphasis be on your own reassuring rationale and not to enter into speculation on the motives of those who left their sons 'intact'.

Dr Weiss signs off his section in this book with a splendid chapter titled 'What's natural?' It is a common sense philosophy and draws together the religious, sexual and physical strands for us. Alone, it is worth buying this book. I'll leave those who do so to enjoy reading it without further comment.

The concluding corollary comes from Angela Harter who is as frank as Dr Weiss as she relates her own personal experiences in circumcising two sons. It is a journey in which she admits to going along with the procedure through instinct and in ignorance. Her education is in that experience – which doesn't end once the boys have been cut. As a journalist she is ever questioning and passes through belts of doubt and guilt as she explores the motives of her decision to submit her sons to this. Like most parents of circumcised boys she rests happy with her rationale in the end and is well able to share her story as an endorsement.

Don't buy a copy of this book – **buy two**. One to pass on to friends after you've read it and become better informed, the other to stay on your shelf until that day when your son asks; "Why am I circumcised?" If your son can read, Dr Weiss will do a great job answering that question.

The book (ISBN: 0-9667219-0-X) is available direct from Wiser Publications, PO Box 273085, Ft. Collins, CO 80527, USA at \$12.95 plus \$1.50 P&P, or through booksellers.

Anton Shaw

First Time Meeting

Regarding the meeting at High Wycombe and your comment about the lack of new members attending. As I am sure you are aware, it is a big step for some to go to a face-to-face meeting for the first time (and I include myself in that category), having only previously had contact in written form. Is there any way this process could be eased, possibly by asking those who had previously attended if they would be willing to bring another member(s) with them and show them the ropes? Many of us are single/alone, and I am sure would welcome such an offer of support in 'breaking the ice'.

C.A. – Kent

My Answer To I.D's Questionnaire

I discovered that my foreskin was retractable at a fairly early age and achieved this in the bath at my mother's request to do what she quaintly called my "little job". It was something that was never discussed really at school, and so I continued with my bathtime ritual without a second thought. I found it a pleasurable rather than a painful experience, which gave me a marvellous feeling of uncovering something which was really meant to be covered. Foreskins only became of real interest at puberty when I saw other boys and men in the school showers and noticed that some of them seemed to have permanently exposed heads. One boy in particular took my eye and every week I checked to see that his foreskin wasn't covering the end of his penis. It never was, and he thought nothing of standing around exhibiting it to all and sundry. I couldn't conceive how he could bear to rub this most sensitive of parts with a towel and suffer the chafing of clothes. At this time I began keeping my own foreskin retracted until the sensitivity decreased, and I have enjoyed doing this ever since, mainly for the awareness that it is pulled back which does contrast greatly with the forward position. During puberty I found that rubbing my glans on the sheets gave me lots of hitherto unfelt sensations and of course, eventually, I experienced my first orgasm, which promptly sent me into a panic as to what damage I had done to myself (I was quite an innocent child who knew little of such things). My sexual identity took me down the path which meant that I went out of my way to avoid sexual encounters with girls. However, I can answer the last two questions as follows:-

My foreskin moves backwards and forwards during sex, and I find this particularly annoying when wearing a condom as it gets stuck in the forward position, thus preventing any friction on the glans. At such times I wish wholeheartedly that I had been cut, and to experience the tightness of the unfettered glans. Conversely, however, post-coitus, I do let my foreskin cover my glans as it feels too sensitive to continue with my customary retracted position. Does this post-coital super-sensitivity disappear if one is circumcised, I wonder?

To sum up. I have many fantasies about being circumcised, and long for the feeling of 'nakedness' it surely brings, judging by some of your other articles, so many of whom recommend it with as radical a cut as possible. Set against that is the fact that it is an irrevocable operation and there is always the possibility that I may regret it later. Who knows - maybe I'll find out someday.

Tony - Yorks.

No Contest

It's ages since I last wrote and I can't help feeling that it's time to shake things up again. Looking through old numbers it strikes me that the articles were

much more punchy a few years ago. So let's put the cat among the pigeons and look at a new angle on the disadvantages of circumcision, as seen by a disconsolate, non-gay ex-roundhead.

One thing I noticed browsing through the Celebrity Status lists of past issues was that, in line with rock stars in general, Mick Jagger was uncut. Then the next day I read a report by journalist Toby Young that a "gorgeous new dark-skinned beauty" of a girl friend dropped him after a few days for — Mick Jagger, whom Toby describes spitefully as having spindly little legs, an oversized head, a mouth like a sack and a face like a mummified horse. She tells Toby when he asked what on earth she saw in him that he was the best lay she'd ever had. "He's got incredible stamina" she said. "We're talking five times a night" and it wasn't Viagra! And that's at the age of 55! As Toby ruefully admitted, he'd been dropped in favour of the world's most notorious shagger.

Even in my youth there was no way I could ever have achieved five times a night, but if I had, it wouldn't have done me any good. My partner used to complain all the time that my skinless organ made her sore after one moderate session – five would have been unbearable. The reason of course is that without a foreskin the woman is not cushioned from the battering she gets from a bare, unnaturally flared glans. If I had had a foreskin, the glans would have been narrower and the hard edge restrained within the skin, so that its movement would not have connected directly with her vagina until it emerged at the end of the stroke, ready lubricated, to give much greater pleasure. (I know this from experience after a successful restoration.)

In California where the majority of young men, spared circumcision after the NOCIRC campaign, are just beginning to become sexually active, their girl-friends are starting to appreciate the difference. Older women in the rest of the USA, most of whom have never seen, let alone experienced a foreskin, still have an unreasoning prejudice against it caused by ignorance and reinforced by brainwashing. This attitude is beginning to change as more and more people get convinced by the unshakeable logic of the California-based pro-foreskin lobby. Furthermore a campaign of education is under way to instruct such ladies of the mystery of the foreskin and to show them what they're missing – (see, for a laugh, www.geocities.com/Wellesley/1889/maleana.html which gives numerous pictures of foreskins, including a moving picture of one being manipulated from behind the glans to beyond it), backed up by comments of those who actually know what they are talking about:

"AOL Member, 4/13/99: I have experienced both cut and uncut. Uncut is by far better, the feelings are more exquisite. It is gentler and the man seems to enjoy himself more."

"Sharon, Age 44, April 11, 1999 – Most of my boyfriends have been circumcized. However, I had a few that were uncut. I was totally fascinated at looking at them with all the extra skin, and I discovered that since the penis

goes in and out of its own skin, the vagina does not get sore from frequent sex. It is a much smoother process. I have had times when I was having frequent (what I call 'nuclear sex' at the beginning of a relationship) and got so sore and raw, from the common circumcized penis, of men in my age group, I had to sit in a hot bathtub, and then smear cortisone cream on my vulva. With a 'ragtop' (yerwhat?) that does not happen. I wish all guys were uncut, and I would never have a son of mine cut."

"Being American born and 35, the chances that I or my peers to have experienced sexual relations with both intact and circumcised men is a rarity. Of the few friends that I know that have been blessed to experience both intact and cut first hand, we all agree...the anatomically correct intact penis with a foreskin is a much better ride...A Talklist Member, 3/8/99"

"My ex-husband, father and brothers were all circumcised. It was all I was brought up to know about. I recently divorced and started to date again. I fell back in love with a wonderful all American born hunk! We got serious in our relationship and that's when I saw my first uncircumcised penis. I was mesmerised and didn't know what to do next. He sensed my hesitation and asked if I had ever seen one before. I told him no and he proceeded to educate me first hand. I learned and experienced the true nature of god's gift - the endless pleasures the foreskin gives to both of us during foreplay and sex. I found I could last longer without getting sore and could experiment with different oral techniques that I never could have performed on my previous lovers. I feel that opening up and letting the public know about the sexual benefits of having an intact partner would open the eyes of many sceptical women like myself and perhaps spark their curiosity to want to go out and experience it for themselves."

Next a "Personal Account of The Male Experience":

"— Now I'm comfortable with my intact status, though socially careful about speaking up on the subject. I've just gotten married. Since my foreskin is the looser variety, reaching just over the tip when flaccid and automatically rolling back when erect, my wife really didn't know about it at first. (It was, of course, always erect by the time she saw it.) Finally, after our first two sexual experiences together, I pointed my foreskin out to her and showed her what part comes off in a circumcision. She toyed with it a while, then said she couldn't imagine why anyone would want to be circumcised. She decided then that she would encourage any girlfriends of hers not to have their baby boys cut. Later, while I was entering her lying on her back with her knees up high, I reached below us and held the skin back to demonstrate how abrasive a cut penis can be when there's no rolling skin to 'give' just a little with each stroke. She got a look of sudden familiarity - that was how it felt to have sex with her first (circumcised) boyfriend, and she had never liked the feeling. During sex, his fully exposed penis would dry just enough to make the friction slightly painful. She had thought that was the way sex was supposed to be. I think intact men who are considerate can offer their wives a benefit. Before entering my wife,

I roll my foreskin forward, then push slightly inside her to moisten the loose skin and glans. Then I hold the skin still and push the glans through it and into her. She loves this because the head enters her with no 'dry' friction. My wife has been wonderful about my foreskin. She loves and is fascinated by it. Once, on a trip to the zoo, she started laughing uncontrollably in the reptile section. I asked her why, and she pointed to a tortoise just pulling his head back into his collar of skin, 'He has a foreskin, too!' In my opinion, the most persuasive arguments against circumcision are (1) it is unnatural to force an internal organ (the glans) into becoming an external organ, and (2) if God meant for us not to have foreskins, he wouldn't have put them on us in the first place. 3/10/98."

This may be the American experience but the same thing applies to Brits as well. I remember as a young man 30 years ago working with a guy, an ugly, vibrant little Welshman, who I bitterly envied – for his long muscular foreskin. Unlike me he never found it difficult to find or keep sexy girlfriends. On the contrary, he had to fight them off and I remember on one occasion he even had a girl come all the way from Canada to re-sample his uncut dick. She was quite a luscious piece who must have found it easy to get boyfriends, but the Canadian boys she had met were sadly lacking, according to what she told him. Similarly there was an older woman, happily married but not that happy. I remember being in his office when he got a call from her begging him to let her come over for a 'servicing' that evening. 'Sure', he said. 'Why not?' He explained that this was a regular monthly occurrence. He confided that her husband was circumcised and couldn't provide the excitement she craved!"

Finally we should take a look at history and ask who were the world's most famous lovers? Byron, Nelson, Don Juan, Casanova, and then of course the French as a nation – all of them uncircumcised! I rest my case and wait for the fallout!

Best wishes, R.B.W.

Always Ready

Suddenly, from out of the blue, my wife said to me, "Do you like being circumcised because it makes you look always ready?"

Surprised, I thought a moment, and then replied, "Yes, that certainly is one of the reasons."

D.L. – U.S.A.

Books

Here are some books which might interest members.

Griffin, G. – *Decircumcision: Foreskin Restoration Methods & Circumcision Practices*. Added Dimensions. 112 pages. 1992. ISBN: 1-879967-05-07

Berkeley, B. – *Foreskin: A Closer Look*. Alyson Publications. 208 pages. 1993. ISBN: 1-55583-212-1

Griffin, G. – *Sex for One: The Art of Male Masturbation*. Added Dimensions. 80 pages. 1995. ISBN: 1-879967-15-4

Litten, H. – *Joy of Solo Sex*. 3rd Revised Edition. Factor Press. 193 pages. 1997. ISBN: 0-9636531-4-4

Baron, R. – *Solo Sex: The Ultimate DIY Handbook for Men*. Irvington. 150 pages. 19???. ISBN: 0-8290-1917-0

Griffin, G. – *Penis Enlargement Methods. Facts & Fallacies*. 8th Revised Edition. Added Dimensions. 180 pages. 1993. ISBN: 1-879967-13-8

Griffin, G. – *Vacuum Pumpers' Handbook*. 4th Revised Edition. Added Dimensions. 96 pages. 1993. ISBN: 1-879967-07-3

Griffin, G. – *Legendary Endowment Project*. Added Dimensions. 100 pages. 1995. ISBN: 1-879967-16-2

Griffin, G. & Rheinschild, G. – *Penis Enlargement – Facts & Fallacies: All Men Are Not Created Equal*. Hourglass Books. 200 pages. 1995. ISBN: 0-934061-24-6

Griffin, G. – *Penis Power – A Complete Guide to Potency Restoration*. Added Dimensions. 112 pages. 1993. ISBN: 1-879967-08-1

De Martino, M., Editor – *Human Auto-erotic Practices*. Human Sciences Press. 378 pages. 1979. ISBN: 0-87705-373-1, 0-87705-403-7

Marcus, I.M. & Francis, J.J. – Editors – *Masturbation: From Infancy to Senescence*. International Universities Press. 634 pages. 1975. ISBN: 0-8236-3150-8

Sarnoff, I. & Sarnoff, S. – *Masturbation & Adult Sexuality*. M. Evans & Co. 336 pages. 1978. ISBN: 0-87131-469-X

Woods, M. – *Masturbation, Tantra & Self-love*. Mho & Mho Works. 107 pages. 1981. ISBN: 0-917320-15-8

Anon

Another Circumcision Clinic

Emergency Plus, 89-93 High Road, Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 7QS. Telephone (01932) 334 999. £195 inclusive for adult circumcision under local anaesthetic. Weekend and evening appointments available.

I.G.

S.C.N.

Further to the comments made by D.D. – Oxford on Page 3 of Issue 2, may I remind the author, and other members of *The Acorn Society* who are similarly interested in naturist gatherings, of the existence of SCN. *Smooth and Cut Naturists* (SCN) is a club for smooth naturists (ie at least pubically shaven, hopefully more) with the added interest that the males must also have been circumcised to gain entry. SCN, started in 1996, continues to flourish, and holds nude meetings either indoors or out (if it is warm enough) about twice a month throughout the year.

If D.D. – Oxford or any other members would like more details of membership, visit our Web Site at: <http://www.164northwood.freemove.co.uk>, Email us at: scn@164northwood.freemove.co.uk or send off for details from: SCN, PO Box 164, Northwood, HA6 2QR.

Smoothie John

Cogitations

Let's face it, whatever the size of the cock, the long tapering elephant's trunk type foreskin is an ugly sight! Somehow, the tapering effect seems to diminish the boldness and presence of the cock, and the roundhead, or the cavalier with a short foreskin with some of the helmet showing through, looks far more masculine.

I have this type of foreskin (unfortunately on a rather small cock, which compounds the problem!) and I've found that the long overhanging skin is not only ugly, but also uncomfortable, and I'm always aware of this piece of skin protruding from the end of my cock. Then there's the hassle of either skinning back to pee or peeing through all the length of foreskin – I don't know how I used to manage this in the days before I could retract my foreskin, but I can't

now. (By the way, to what extent do cavaliers pull their foreskins back when peeing – I don't know as I don't look!)

The solution for me was circumcision, which I investigated seriously for some time, mainly because of a tender inner foreskin which was prone to infection and painful sex. I've now overcome this with the use of lubricants (a dab of KY jelly, baby oil or even saliva at the foreplay stage does the trick, and also means that my wife can rub my helmet without it getting raw, sore or shooting off too soon).

I'm off the idea of the cut also because I am aware that the foreskin has so many nerve endings which add to my orgasm. I need to use some of the foreskin to get the full effect – the tight shaft and helmet only leaves me unfulfilled, and I'm afraid that circumcision may deprive me of this fantastic sensation. I don't know to what extent my foreskin moves back and forth during a fuck and this depends to some extent on position, angle etc., but I'm certain that I'm better off with it than without.

The other solution is the foreskin rollover, which means that I retain the full benefits of the skin, but it is rolled over so that about a third of my helmet shows. This has several advantages – it looks better, makes peeing easy and clean (no necessity to skin back), and I have the constant sensation of having the open end of the peehole and part of the helmet against my clothes. I've been wearing my foreskin this way for more than ten years, and there is a definite difference in the colour of the helmet where it has been exposed. Interestingly enough, the surface of my helmet has reduced in sensitivity considerably over the years and I can't distinguish between when the skin is fully retracted or forward. This has disadvantages in sexual stimulation as, when younger, just touching the helmet would mean an immediate stiffening.

Another aside regarding age. I think I'm hairier in the pubic region as I've got older and some of the hairs are going white, especially those on the front of my ball bag and at the base of the underside of my cock. Is this a general occurrence? I am pleased that the angle of my erection is a good 45 degrees, which is what it was ten years ago, and I wake every morning with a good hard-on.

I mentioned size earlier. I'm still not reconciled to having a small cock, and in many ways my lack of girth worries me more than length. It's just about 5" long when hard, but the girth of under 4.5" gives it a definite lack of bulk. Some time ago I bought a cock-ring tickler which I thought might be fun during sex, but it was too large for me. However, having said that, I've always had a satisfactory sex life, and my wife hasn't suffered from a lack of orgasms, so maybe size isn't everything! Sometimes when I see a huge cock I wonder how this would affect a woman seeing it for the first time. I think some guys so well endowed actually have more of a problem than tiny Tims like me!

Whatever our sexuality, we men are all curious about each other's cocks – although we won't admit it. Everyone has a good look in the showers or

changing rooms, just to see how they measure up, but once you've seen someone's cock, unless it's particularly noteworthy for size or special features like an outsize helmet or a particularly tight foreskin etc, I find that I don't even notice my fellow club members' cocks. I always found this also at school. I think we men are also to some extent exhibitionists, and want to show off our tackle – perhaps asserting our masculinity.

But, are younger men shyer than older men? This may be so because of the greater sensitivity of the younger cock, and the possibility that it may stiffen in the showers. I also wonder why most cavaliers turn away shyly as they pull back their foreskins to wash. Is this prudish, or is it regarded as too up-front and bad form to expose the bare helmet? I have no worries about this and always leave my skin retracted after showering. It either remains like that when I dress and falls forward naturally or, if I'm private enough, I can do my rollover. But I don't like doing this in front of other guys as they may wonder why I'm playing with my cock in the changing room!

One thing that has never been discussed in *Acorn* is the size of balls. After all, these are the source of the sexuality, the cock being merely a hosepipe. Despite the smallness of my cock, I think that my balls are at least average size – say the size of a large walnut and warrant my protecting them in the pouch of a jockstrap when I play sport. I can't understand why so many men wear boxer shorts. Surely it's uncomfortable having your balls hanging loose all the time? I know it's sometimes nice to go without underpants, but generally I prefer the tackle snugly supported.

My last point is one which many men may feel but cannot act on. I would like to be able to discuss, compare notes, experiences etc, on matters sexual and cock-related, with other men in a frank and non-sexual way. I'm sure that a lot of us face the same problems and have the same questions, but are too afraid to ask or talk about it. I'm sometimes tempted to ask someone in a changing room, e.g. if he has a specially tight foreskin, whether he has difficulties, has considered circumcision etc, but I'm sure I'd be regarded as somewhat peculiar!

Maybe these views and notes will draw comment from other members.

Anon

Contact Corner

Well-endowed Londoner, 36, seeks company on weekend for fun. Age not important. No strings attached. Serious enquiries only, and please mention whether uncut or cut.

J.

Comments And Topics

With regard to the letter from R.W. – Surrey (1/99, p6), partial circumcision is a topic that needs more attention and more research. And I don't think Cowper's Glands (named for, and probably by, Thomas Cowper, 1666-1709) produce smegma. Rather, they produce a mucoid secretion, and they discharge into the bulbous part of the urethra. Smegma is probably produced by sebaceous glands in the skin of the penis. The BNA term for Cowper's Glands is *glandulae bulbourethralis*; and their equivalent or analogue in the female are Bartholin's Glands (*glandulae vestibularis major*; Caspar Bartholin, 1655-1738).

The comments of The Frenchman (1/99, p14) are interesting to a point; but as for his obiter that "only basically evil and perverted people can circumcise their children", well, one wonders, with F.W. Maitland, when such ungracious remarks will come home to roost; and as the late Stanley Baldwin once remarked (to Lord Brownlow, I think), "Is that the best you can do?"

Some topics for further research (and for input/questions/comments by *Acorn* members):-

Partial circumcision (see above)

Circumcision in Japan

Circumcision in Mexico

Circumcision in Brazil

Circumcision in Holland

Frenotomies (or frenectomies) without removing the foreskin

Uncircumcised Jews from Russia and other Bolchevic-bloc countries (I've met one of these: a Jewish emigrant from the former USSR; in his thirties).

M.S. – Utah

Articles For The Magazine & Letters For Forwarding

Articles for submission to the magazine are always welcome and can be sent by post to our PO Box, or by e-mail to: acornsoc@aol.com

Letters for forwarding to members should be stamped 1st class, enclosed in a covering envelope, and sent to the PO Box. It would be helpful if you include a covering note with your identification so we may know we are providing the service to members.

ACORN

Issue
N^o 4 1999
Editor
David Acorn

Editorial

This is my last magazine as editor. After nearly ten years I think it's about time I hung up my boots and let a younger, fresh editor with maybe different ideas take over and, as I am among the top five aged members of the Society, it is becoming a bit of a burden. I must say though that I have enjoyed it very much and look on you all as a sort of family, as I feel I know you better intimately than maybe your own families do.

Your new editor is working on the next edition and I think it best if I allow him to introduce himself in that. Quite a few will know him from our meetings, where he has been a regular attender, and I think is well liked. I'm confident that he will show the same lack of bias as I have striven to maintain.

A new P.O. box number will be forthcoming, but this one will still be in existence for some time as it is widely distributed on the Internet and in the magazines of other organisations, so I will be forwarding anything that comes into here.

And lastly, of course, I will not be deserting the ship, as after all, I'm still the Society's Chairman.

David Acorn

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Letters for forwarding should be marked with the recipient's identifier in pencil. They should be stamped 1st class and enclosed in an envelope addressed as above.

E-Mail may be sent to: acpnsoc@aol.com

Circumcision — My Story

Part I

How it began.

When I was still at school around about 14 I started to look up words in dictionaries and things like most of us. I also had a interest in science so I often looked at factual books. I started to see pictures of men and growing boys and noticed that the skin on the end of the penis in most of the pictures showing men was not like mine! I had a piece of skin that hung over the end like, well some say an “elephant’s trunk”! Often I read about the 3 states of a penis 1. flaccid, 2. semi erect and 3. fully erect. Books showed what they said was the average male organ in the flaccid state with the head just showing though the foreskin and as it gets more and more erect so the skin folds back. Well mine did not do that or look like that for that matter! I thought, well, perhaps I am not old enough. It was when I was 15 that I then read about aboriginal initiation ceremonies and read a lot about circumcision. I had also noticed that a lot of men at that time kept their skin pulled back.

My first time with the skin back.

I was 16 and still at school when I decided to pull the skin back, I also decided that I would pull it back in the toilets at school so that I had to do it quickly and not play with myself (I was doing this all the time and knew that I would not leave the skin back if I did) I had to go straight into class with it back so that it had to be left there! So this is what I did. After about 40 mins it started to get uncomfortable and I ignored it as much as was possible. When school was over that day I went straight home and had a look at what had happened. It had ballooned up around the end and was very painful. After about 30 mins manipulation the swelling went down and I got the skin forward. I remember at the time thinking that if I had not got it forward then perhaps this is how men may have got the skin to stay back, of course I was wrong! After that day the skin was a lot looser and I tried to keep it back.

The trials and tribulations of having a loose foreskin.

After that first day I tried to keep my skin pulled back but it kept slipping forward. This is the first problem and one that a lot of men will know if you have a loose foreskin, the hairs get caught between it and the head. (We all know that is why most men end up pulling at themselves so often.) Also I found that when it slipped forward the head was getting slimy and more smegma was produced. I started to not like this, and found it so annoying. Lastly I was forever pulling it back and it was forever slipping forward.

The decision to cut it off.

At 19 I had read a number of things about initiations and circumcisions and most of what I read suggested that it was only performed in these types

of rites of passage. So I did not know that I could go to the Doctor saying that I had a problem and have it removed professionally perhaps on the NHS. My parents were very open but I thought that they would freak if I said that I wanted my willy cut! So I decided to do it myself, (and the aborigines seemed to do all right in the bush). So I tried with the thing that was most like a scalpel which I thought was a razor blade, but that turned out to be slow and painful. I then got to thinking about a carving knife, well that was the thing used to cut meat and I might be able to cut it quickly enough to not feel too much pain.

The first cut is always...

I chose the day when I was going to do it, also a day when my parents were going to be out. I psyched myself up by reading some of the things on circumcision and saying to myself "I am going to do it!!" over and over again as I washed the carving knife and cutting board. I then sat on the kitchen floor with my back to a wall and my legs spread with the cutting board in between them, I was determined to do it! I just wanted to have the tip of my head showing when soft, and for it to pull back when hard. So I pulled the skin slightly forward and rested the knife on the skin, it felt cold to the touch. By then I had learned to let the knife do the cutting. So I ran the knife over the skin in a straight line careful not to lift the knife off, so as to run the blade over the same place with each stroke. With the first stroke I did not notice the pain, it was there but I had a natural high from what I was doing. But I do remember feeling every burr and pit in the knife blade as it cut into my flesh. The feeling as I pushed and pulled the knife over the skin harder and harder was so intense (not so much pain as intense feeling). I could almost hear the sound the knife was making when it was running over the skin, like running a fingernail over the teeth of a comb.

The pain is too much.

I managed to get half way though the job when I started to cut into the sensitive inner skin. This is when the pain got to be too much for me and I ended up stopping. I did try to continue but just could not. I managed to stop the bleeding and in fact I was not bleeding too much at all. I have always healed up relatively quickly so I wrapped a dressing round my cut willy and went around for two days like that. So I ended up with two holes in the foreskin I could push my head through.

Finishing the job (3 cheers for the NHS).

Something had to be done as it was not normal for a man in the UK to have two holes for the head to go through! There was also a bad infection that I was getting worried about as it was starting to smell somewhat. So I went to the local hospital's A and E department, it took me 3 goes to get the courage to talk to the nurse. When I did it was most embarrassing since after they took the details she shouted "split foreskin" down the ward. Well, I saw the Doctor and he said that he would try and save as much as possible but because of

infection I had to have a circumcision and it would be done under a general anaesthetic. So it was done and I ended up with a job that was not either loose like I wanted or tight. But I was cut!!!

The end of part I

I was never absolutely happy with the job but that was because of me trying a DIY job instead of getting it done professionally. I lived with it and had a good sex life until I was 30 when I experimented with piercing and then with re-circumcision but I had learned a lot and did a better job and I am much happier now but this is for part II. Please see a Doctor if you want anything done but make sure that you get what you want!

Steve – Northampton

If any one wants to get in touch then they can ring 01604 785515 or E-mail 'steve@topcat.skynet.co.uk'

From France

Your readers' letters are quite interesting, but I cannot see what all the fuss is about – except for Joseph's letter (2/99), which I will respond to later.

I was happily uncircumcised until the age of 29 when, after working in Malaysia, I developed a persistent type of athlete's foot under the foreskin and elsewhere. On my return to France I was treated for a year with creams, lotions, pills and jabs, but it kept returning. After a visit to England, when my granny told me her brother was circumcised when about 12 because he had "problems down there", I asked my doctor whether circumcision would solve the problem. He replied "100%", and when I asked why he had not suggested it before, he said that people here did not like it. It is true that the French are very rarely circumcised. Some friends over here even asked how I was going to make love afterwards!

Anyhow, in I went at 8 in the morning and out at 4 in the afternoon after a little cut under general anaesthetic, stitches out 8 days later, and gently making love a week later. I am now a happily circumcised man! My girlfriends who knew me before and after, prefer the 'after' version, especially during intercourse as they have more sensations due to the skin being tightly drawn back and thus rubbing with the whole shaft length. If you are uncircumcised, try holding your foreskin tautly back during intercourse and see what she thinks of it. Personally I have the same erections and ejaculations whether solo or accompanied. The only difference is that previously the pleasure was mainly concentrated on the glans whereas now it is spread over the whole penis and the groin, which gives a slightly fuller, deeper pleasure.

Most of the women here have never had a circumcised partner, and are quite happily surprised afterwards. I still have persistent athlete's foot on my right foot and belly button, but amputation of my foot does seem rather excessive, though circumcision, apart from curing my little problem, has had no disadvantage, and I could say even a slight advantage insofar as the little extra pleasure it gives to my partners.

In answer to I.D. of Herts' letter, I had a foreskin that wholly covered my knob without any excess when limp, and half covered it when erect (at 18cm if of any interest), neither tight nor loose, and a frenulum long enough for it to be pulled back wholly and smoothly. My glans has not flared since the operation 5 years ago, but a friend of mine says his glans increased greatly after being circumcised. I have never had problems with smegma either, water and soap being abundant and cheap. Surely, if a man has a cheesy knob, then he probably has a sweaty bum, musty balls, B.O. armpits and socks that stand up by themselves, so I don't think circumcision is a remedy for that problem.

What I really would like to say to you all is that circumcision has no negative effects, so if you need circumcising for medical reasons, then go ahead and do it rather than suffer from a tight foreskin or whatever. If you are circumcised already (usually at birth), and are not too happy about it, you have no advantage in being uncircumcised, so don't let your genital state hinder your present state of mind. I have also heard talk of mutilation, but all men have a genital scar that runs from the anus to the frenulum via the scrotum and the underside of the penis, which is more or less visible, as it is with the trace left by circumcision. Uncircumcised, my willy was pink and brown when retracted, and circumcised it is the same. We all also have another scar; the belly button – except for Adam.

However, if you simply wish to be circumcised for no medical reason, then why not have it done. Men and women undergo cosmetic surgery in order to feel better about themselves, and why should the removal of a piece of nose be any different from a piece of skin? I think the only problem here is that the wish to be circumcised may be a way of blaming a sexual dissatisfaction on a foreskin, and the operation may not resolve your problem, though it will do you no harm. The same applies to those circumcised who wish to be uncircumcised, if that were possible.

As for A.F. of Berks, regarding the cost of private circumcision in the UK, he should go to France. A ferry trip there and back and a few nights in a hotel near the clinic before his return (hotels are cheap in France). My circumcision cost 2500 Fr. all included (about £250). You need to see a 'URULOGUE'. The appointment can be made by phone and there is no waiting list.

I was also very touched by Joseph's letter as, if I now had a baby, I would have him circumcised when young, but with anaesthetic. I was horrified a few years ago when I learnt that circumcisions on babies, as well as other operations

such as tonsils, were done without anaesthetic. I just cannot believe that in our 'civilised' world we actually practice barbarism in our hospitals. Joseph's problem is not that he was circumcised, but that he was tortured. He should not fight circumcision, but the lack of anaesthesia and respect for toddlers. Would you have your appendix removed without any anaesthetic whilst fully conscious? Then don't operate on your children without ensuring they will receive an anaesthetic. And that applies to Jews and Muslims who may claim traditional rites but are quite happy to accept progress when treatment for cancer etc. is on offer.

R.H. – France

Reply To 'Distraught', (2/99)

You don't really expect us to believe that after 51 years you can suddenly be overwhelmed with distress at your circumcision, especially in such detail. Might I suggest that you are looking for a scapegoat upon which to blame your feelings of inferiority, fear and disgust – feelings about what?

OK, so you distrust women. Have you been to some whacky Regression Therapist lately who has put these thoughts in your mind? Are you so afraid that you have never, in 51 years, had sex with a woman? How did it feel if so? Sounds to me like you are closeted and don't want to admit it.

So now you say you no longer have a normal life, surely your normal life has been for 51 years without a foreskin and a fear of women and I don't think anything has changed. If you intend to push the bandwagon against RIC then please ensure that you have all the facts and realise that whilst RIC is not an individual choice on the part of the child, it certainly has proven benefits.

I would like to know if anyone else in your position feels the same way or does anybody have thoughts similar to mine as to your state of mind and ridiculous assumptions?

Chris – Aussie

The Time Has Come

Iam to be circumcised tomorrow. I have only just found this site and it is interesting to find so many favourable testimonials from guys who have been done as adults. With so much anticirc debate going on I thought I was in the minority for wanting such a procedure. I have wanted this for a long time. In some ways I almost feel like I am being initiated into the realms of adulthood; strange as it sounds.

I have weighed up all the arguments and now its 10 hours to go till surgery. I am nervous but I have made my decision and I can't wait. It has taken me

years to pluck up the courage and finally its all going to happen. If you could e-mail me more information regarding the Acorn Society I would be most interested.

Many thanks.

denn45b@netscape.net

Comments On 'No Contest' (3/99)

I don't believe any chap at 55 years old, or even younger, makes it 5 times a night, whether he be circumcised or not, But I suppose we all like to brag a little when the ladies are around. I would like to comment on the fact that a circumcised penis is likely to make a woman sore. I find this a bit far-fetched with the amount of juice that a woman should produce, and also the amount that a man produces. This should lubricate a woman and not cause undue friction. (They say it's a poor fanny that can't supply its own grease.) Personally I have found women get a bit too wet at times, and the friction is not enough to make me come sometimes.

My wife found my long foreskin to be very uncomfortable and insisted that I be circumcised. She said that my foreskin was like a roll of lino being pushed up her. After I was circumcised we both found that the result was right, we have always encouraged our friends to be circumcised if possible, and out of those that find the condition quite satisfactory, none have ever complained about soreness.

For those who like oral sex, the circumcised state is very much the best and a lot cleaner, as is the shaven woman. Getting your mouth full of hair when you try to suck her clit is not as nice as a shaven one.

In this day and age, most women know all about foreskins and pulling them back. That is one thing that comes naturally, they shouldn't need educating on the subject. If Sharon at 44 has only just found foreskins fascinating, she must have lived quite a sheltered life.

Since I was circumcised I have had much more feeling in my penis, especially when I visit a massage parlour and the girls rub oil into my knob, which make it very sensitive. All the parlour girls I have had dealings with, and they are many, all like the circumcised penis for their looks and cleanliness.

I am a naturist, and being circumcised and shaven makes me feel a lot more naked. As for the comment that God meant us to have foreskins, he also gave us testicles, appendixes, kidneys, and many other bits and pieces which all get removed sometimes, so why not remove foreskins if you like your body without one, as I do.

I watched mine being cut off and loved every minute of it. In fact, I have contacted the clinic in Byfleet which was mentioned in the last issue and I

have an appointment for the 25th of September to see if I can have even more foreskin removed to tighten things up a bit. As you can tell from my comments I am very much in favour of circumcision and cut as short as possible. Being a naturist I get around the house and garden naked, and the girl next door sometimes joins me sunbathing. She says she likes to see my circumcision and is trying hard to get her boyfriend circumcised. I always look forward to the *Acorn* magazine and we need a lot more women's response to circumcision. I'm always happy to correspond with male or female through the magazine with those interested in circumcision, and exchange photographs any time.

C.P.- Wiltshire

Contact Corner

Uncircumcised man, enthusiastic foreskin player, tattooed and pierced, is keen to make contact with other men who are attracted to cock modification.

Mike – East Sussex

After Frenulum Surgery

Good morning! I had the frenulum until I was twenty and I made sex, then I injured it with my nails; after a year the urologist operated the frenulum in 5 minutes with a cut: it remained only the tip of the frenulum and a scar underneath.

My question to you is: What differences exist, in the same psychological conditions, making sex (more stretch feelings or what uncomfortable sensations or feelings?) and in its performance (ejaculate frequency and distance) and during, before and after the frenulum's injury and in particular after the surgery?

Being sure that I will receive a reliable reply, I thank you.

102909@ticino.com (Pier Serta)

[I'm not sure whether he means the frenulum or the foreskin in this. If any members can interpret what he is meaning, and can answer some of his questions please either reply to him by e-mail or through me. – D.A.]

Acorn Inspections

Thank you for the latest edition (No 3/99) of *Acorn*, and for including my short article about *Smooth & Cut Naturists* (SCN) on page 13.

Following on from the penultimate paragraph of the article called 'Cogitations' on page 15 of the same issue and as the issue also contained an invitation to the next *Acorn* Weekend in November, my mind focused on the missing link in *Acorn* activities which would make the club more enjoyable.

It is basically that one essential thing is missing amongst all the excellent *Acorn* organisation and the magazine itself: It's all writing or talk with no inspections of the parts we are talking about!

All males (and a great number of females) are interested in the male sex organs – sex organs which, although all of a basically similar design are in fact all individual and different in so many ways, making everyone curious as to what 'equipment' the other fellow has. Shoot the person (probably a woman?) who said, "If you've seen one, you've seen them all" – absolutely NOT TRUE!

The author of 'Cogitations' (Anon) states: "I would like to discuss, compare notes, experiences etc. on matters sexual ... with other men in a frank and non-sexual way". I think most members would agree with this. He goes on to say that "lots of us face the same problems ... but are afraid to talk about it".

In my view, placed in the right environment, members would most certainly have mutual benefit from such discussions and an even better environment would be one where, if they wished, those present could be nude or at least openly able to compare their 'tackle' (especially circumcisions, of course) in an honest and open way.

So why not select a private venue for an *Acorn* Weekend where, for at least part of the time, members would be encouraged to discuss matters of mutual interest freely – illustrated by inspections and comparisons?

Such venues do exist – as a devoted nudist, and Organiser of *Smooth & Cut Naturists*, I am organising an exclusive nude weekend for SCN members at an hotel in the very near future.

What better environment (exclusive to *Acorn*) in which to be open about discussing mutual problems and comparing notes (etc!) with other members?

How about it Committee?

Smoothie John

The SCN Web Site may be found at: <http://www.164northwood.freeserve.co.uk>

Dear David,

Firstly many thanks for getting my newsletter 3/99 released. I do hope the system does not collapse – I enjoy reading some (but not all) of the letters.

Bearing in mind your comments on lack of copy, I attach below a report on a statement by the AAP which is extremely relevant to our organisation and which should fill a slot or two. I know I've recently sent you some notes on the *BJU* supplement on circumcision which was equally relevant (hope you got it) so I'm doing my best, even if it may not be to everyone's taste.

R.B.W.

Report on the Policy Statement of the American Academy of Paediatrics Task Force on Circumcision

My impression on reading the statement is one of a dismal and depressing document. An attempt to clear the decks and help American doctors and parents to make an informed decision on the matter has succeeded purely in clouding the issue. The authors' claim "to give parents of all male infants accurate and unbiased information" is patently false: in every case they trot out the tired old claims for the benefits of circumcision, most of which have been so thoroughly discredited in the past. Very much in second place, they then state the case against circumcision, dismissing it in as few words as possible.

Some of the most telling factors of all, such as the violation of human rights of the victim, are not even mentioned. No mention is made of the word 'mutilation', although this is unequivocally the right description and one they do not hesitate to use elsewhere in connection with similar operations on females. Their use of adjectives provides clear grounds for an accusation of bias: they demonstrate the 'potential' medical benefits of circumcision, which to the layman could indicate 'expected to be considerable', when it should in fact be 'negligible'. Most notable is their claim that "there is no 'absolute' medical indication for routine circumcision", with the implication that the next word should be "but - -". Understand that the word 'absolute' did not figure in a previous statement but was added subsequently to placate the pro-circumcision lobby, when they first introduced the largely spurious claims about UTIs in an attempt to counter the mounting publicity of the anti-circumcision lobby.

In fact a large section of the statement is devoted to "Circumcision Status and UTI (Urinary Tract Infection) in Males". Much play is made of the fact that intact males are up to 10 times as likely to develop them as circumcised ones. They then shoot down their own argument to some extent by stating that differences in statistical methodology can cause confusion, i.e. that the

results are suspect. But the most telling point of all, that such infections are usually only of minor importance is hidden in the phrase “UTI usually necessitate a physician visit and may involve the possibility of hospitalisation” [my emphasis]. So what? The same could apply to most childhood diseases. The point is that the layman will read huge tracts of bilge which, without actually saying so, give the impression that UTIs are a real problem for intact boys, when they patently are not.

Even worse is the emphasis put on the claimed higher incidence of cancer of the penis among intact men. Once again a whole page is devoted to this subject when it should have been dismissed as a non-factor after the first paragraph – in which it states that the incidence among predominantly circumcised American males is slightly higher than among the non-circumcised male population of Denmark. Instead of accepting this as a valid comparison, since Denmark enjoys a similar life-style and first world status, it goes on to mention the much higher incidence in third world countries such as Brazil and India, where conditions are in no way comparable. The authors admit at the end that “in a developed country such as the USA, penile cancer is a rare disease and the risk of it developing in an uncircumcised man, although increased compared with a circumcised man, is low”. Even so the reader is bamboozled into thinking that, since so much space is devoted to it, it must be an important factor. Otherwise why make all the fuss about what is essentially a non-issue?

In the section entitled “Penile problems”, there is a refreshing honesty in the admission that in a study in New Zealand, “circumcised infant boys had a significantly higher risk of penile problems (such as meatitis) than did uncircumcised boys”. They then spoil it by stressing that after infancy, intact boys suffer much more from balanitis and inflammation of the foreskin, without mentioning that such problems usually clear up spontaneously or are easily treated with medication. They fail to mention that meatitis is a much more serious condition often requiring surgery. They also fail to mention that infant ‘phimosis’, by which they mean an unretractable foreskin, is not pathological, is also usually resolved spontaneously with time and if not, can successfully be treated with the application of steroid creams. However they do admit that “there is little evidence to affirm the association between circumcision status and optimal penile hygiene”. This, of course, is the reason most frequently given for perpetuating circumcision when there is no other excuse.

The paper gives large coverage to epidemiology and embryologic and anatomic consideration, which is of peripheral interest only to non-medically qualified readers. It does however make the point that “there may [my emphasis] be a concentration of specialised sensory cells in specific ridged areas of the foreskin” and the corollary that sensitivity and therefore pleasure are degraded when the foreskin is removed is ignored. According to a presentation from a distinguished medical source on the subject at last year’s symposium in Oxford, there’s no ‘may’ about it. The tip of the foreskin is packed with sensory cells which are lost through circumcision. The authors do say that “there are

anecdotal reports that penile sensation and sexual satisfaction are decreased for circumcised males” but then quote Masters and Johnson who “noted no difference in exteroceptive (?) and light tactile discrimination on ... the glans penis between circumcised and uncircumcised men”. Once again, Masters and Johnson’s claim has been thoroughly discredited in recent years because of deficiencies in the way in which the test was conducted. The paper goes on to mention that circumcision is uncommon in Asia, South America, Central America and most of Europe. This totally obscures the proper emphasis which is that, apart from the religiously motivated Muslim countries and the Jews, the Americans, who have no such motive, are the only developed people in the world who routinely circumcise their male children.

In the section headed “Complications of the circumcision procedure”, once again statistics are quoted which are at odds with the most recent findings. The paper states that the complication rate is between 0.2% and 0.6% and that most of the complications are minor. Statistics quoted in *NORM-UK* circles suggest that this greatly understates the real situation. They go on to mention some of the more distressing effects of circumcision but brush them aside as ‘isolated cases’. What they do not explain is how you apologise to a child whose penis has been burned off. Even one ‘isolated case’ is one too many, a totally unnecessary tragedy for some poor child, mutilated for so little reason.

Having subtly weighted the paper in favour of circumcision, the authors then establish their humanitarian principles by insisting that analgesia should always be used if circumcision is performed. So that’s all right then. They spoil it by admitting that analgesia is only partially successful. However they do accept that circumcision causes severe trauma to infants.

There is a brief discussion about the relationship of circumcision to HIV and the authors suggest that foreskins are more vulnerable to infection. No attempt is made to explain why uncircumcised Europe suffers only a fraction of the incidence of HIV compared with circumcised USA but they do concede that behavioural factors are far more important than circumcision status. In other words another red herring.

When it comes to ethical issues they start by stating that “the practice of medicine has long respected an adult’s [my emphasis] right to self-determination in health care decision making” and mention the importance of “informed consent”. They go on to say that “for children who lack the capacity to decide for themselves, a surrogate, generally a parent, must make such choices”. The illogicality of such a statement in the context of an unnecessary bodily alteration as opposed to essential medical treatment is breathtaking. The rights of a child to bodily integrity are totally disregarded, as is that of the same child when he becomes an adult, whose stated right to self-determination has thereby been violated. What is also depressing is the total disregard of the distress, anger, desolation and sense of deprivation being expressed with ever increasing vehemence by victims as they find the courage and the voice to do so – and of which the authors must be aware.

The question arises, after initially expressing their view that circumcision was unnecessary in a previous statement, why has the American medical establishment retreated and written a paper which clearly weights or misuses evidence in favour of the pro-circumcision cause? The best that can be said is that they are trying to avoid the issue. The answer to the question is that they wrote it whilst looking over their shoulder, fearful of the unrepresentative but influential body of Americans who demand circumcision with all the blind unreasoning fervour which one associates with fanatics.

The cynical may also suggest that common sense can never prevail whilst the foreskin harvest nets so much gain for those of the medical profession who practice it.

R.B.W.

Celebrity List

Circumcised:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Paul Nicholas | Actor/Singer |
| Anthony Booth | Actor |
| Leslie Thomas | Author |
| Les Dennis | TV Presenter |
| Nicholas Lyndhurst | Actor |

Intact:

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| Wayne Sleep | Dancer |
| Clive Owen | Actor |
| Simon le Bon | Pop Star |
| Max Beesley | Actor |

D.B. – Lancs.

And More

Some celebrity sightings this month include little dancer Wayne Sleep, who is uncut and surprisingly well-endowed. I suspect that this might be an optical illusion as he is only about 5' tall, though?!!

Likely lad Rodney Bewes is also uncircumcised, but not very well-hung.

Stanley Baxter at the age of 70+ has kept his figure and is also well-endowed and uncut.

K.G. – London

[We seem to have crossed lines regarding Stanley between this and the next list. – *Ed.*]

And Even More

Here's a new celebrity list. All the information below is based on personal experience. As usual, foreskins in lower case, circumcised in capitals.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Tom Baker | Actor |
| Sean Bean | Actor |
| DAVID BENEDICT | Theatre critic, <i>The Independent</i> |
| ANTONIO BANDERAS | Actor |
| STANLEY BAXTER | Actor |
| RICHARD BRANSON | Executive |
| Nigel Charnock | Dancer |
| ANDY CUNNINGHAM | <i>Bodger & Badger</i> |
| JAYE DAVIDSON | Actor |
| Javier de Frutos | Dancer |
| BEN DOVER | Porn star/director |
| NIGEL FINCH | TV Director |
| Rupert Graves | Actor |
| JEFF GREEN | Comedian |
| JOHN HAMILL | Actor |
| Douglas Henshall | Actor |
| DAVID HOCKNEY | Artist |
| Saul Jephcott | Actor |
| PATRICK MARBER | Writer/comedian |
| Kevin McNally | Actor |
| SPIKE MILLIGAN | Comedian |
| JON MOSS | Drummer, <i>Culture Club</i> |
| Neil Norman | Journalist, <i>Evening Standard</i> |
| John Peel | Disc Jockey |
| Frank Riploh | Film Director |
| JERRY SADOWITZ | Comedian |
| Louis Sheldon-Williams | Actor |
| ANTONY SHER | Actor |
| Bob Spiers | TV Director |
| MERVYN STUTTER | Comedian |
| KENNETH WILLIAMS | Actor |
| Ray Winstone | Actor |

Gary – London

Response To 'Cogitations' (3/99)

I empathise with Anon's feelings on the long tapering elephant's trunk type foreskin being an ugly sight. While not coming under that particular description, I had foreskin problems most of my life, so I've got the baseball cap, the t-shirt and C.D.

It would appear that he and his wife have a perfectly satisfying and fulfilling sex life, so why not leave well alone. After all, he has elected not to have the 'cut' and feels he is better off with his foreskin than without it. I took a gamble and opted for its removal.

He also is still not reconciled to having a small cock. Well, if he can boast 5" when erect, he is certainly not a tiny Tim, and his wife hasn't suffered from a lack of orgasms. I, personally, can only boast 4.5" in length and a girth of 5" when erect, but, since being circumcised nineteen years ago, my sex life has improved. I should also add that my frenulum was removed, and I think that all my nerve endings now converge on that spot, which nearly drives me crazy when aroused. And I'm still enjoying an active and fulfilling sex life at 71 years of age. By the way, I'm 71 years young, not old and, contrary to popular belief, it doesn't fall off, you know!!

Like Anon, I used to have a 'hang-up' about being under-endowed but, let's face it, there is not a lot we can do about it. Instead of thinking the other man's grass is always greener, why not concentrate on perfecting the quality of what we do have.

Yes, we men, whether we like to admit it or not, are curious about each other's tackle, and I also find that younger men are shyer and tend to wear trunks or boxer shorts in the showers. It may be due to their conditioning, or because of greater sensitivity, or even a genuine coyness about exposing their privates. Don't forget that we still live in a homophobic society, and growing up and maturing can be quite a traumatic time for many young people. I remember I was in my forties before I would walk about naked in the showers or changing rooms. As far as adjusting the foreskin to wash one's penis is concerned I think that is a very personal thing, and there are some things that should remain private. I don't honestly think prudishness comes into it.

Regarding 'ball' size, like Anon, I have a smallish cock with larger balls, while my best friend has a large cock and quite small balls. It is simply a matter of coming to terms with what we are given, and the wearing of jockstrap, briefs or boxer shorts is very much a matter of personal choice. Is it not also the case that the continual wearing of tight-fitting underwear can affect one's fertility?

In conclusion, I would be only too happy to discuss any matters sexual and cock-related with Anon in a frank and non-sexual manner. But, one last word of warning (and I speak from personal experience), be very cautious

about approaching any stranger in the changing room regarding his genitalia. I don't think the majority of men are sufficiently well-adjusted yet to cope with that.

J.C. – Ayrshire

P.S. While I fully appreciate the editorial comments about the ratio of letters passed on to items submitted, I still feel very strongly that if a member does send a personal letter for forwarding, the recipient should at least have the common courtesy to acknowledge it, even if only to say that they neither wish nor are in a position to carry on personal correspondence. In the past year I have sent six such letters and had only one acknowledgement. If members are so 'screwed up' or 'secretive' about discussing matters concerning the male genitalia, then they should state in their articles that they are not in a position to enter into personal correspondence.

The Gilgal Society

The *Gilgal Society* is a non-profit organisation which exists to provide accurate, medically approved, information about male circumcision and its benefits in terms of health and self-image.

Its publications include a video of an adult male circumcision, a guidance booklet for those considering circumcision for themselves or their sons, and a leaflet answering some of the questions teenagers and young people have about the operation.

The leaflet is available in English, French and German whilst the guidance booklet is in English and French with a German version to follow later. It is hoped to be able to increase the range of languages in due course.

A provisional list of doctors, clinics and hospitals willing to perform circumcisions is jointly published with the *Acorn Society*.

The *Gilgal Society* acts as the sponsor of a web site for the *International Circumcision Information Reference Centre*, an on-line resource set up to provide correct information and to counter the lies, half-truths and distortions with which anti-circumcision activists have flooded the web.

The *Gilgal Society* and *ICIRC* believe that parents have a right and duty to exercise their choice as to whether or not to have a son circumcised, in the light of available evidence regarding its medical benefits and risks as well as its social and religious significance within their community.

For more information and prices of publications please send an S.A.E. (and a loose 1st Class stamp for expenses) to The Gilgal Society (Dept A), PO Box 21675, London, SW16 4WY.

Vernon – London