

Senate Judiciary Hearing
On HB 2217
Female Genital Mutilation
March 18, 2013
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Global spread of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Africa, Asia, Mid-East, Indonesia, Europe, UK, and America. Roots of this barbaric practice come out of cultural tradition, religion, and politics. This has far reaching and devastating implications.

Definition: one of four types, from partial removal of the clitoris to entire external genitalia, each type more invasive than the last, cut and suturing until only small openings left for body fluids. Sometimes cauterizing, no anesthesia, no antiseptic, no health benefit.

Context of cruelty: perhaps a family gathering or coming-of-age party. There will be no understanding of what is about to happen. Undressed, held down, cut by someone she may not know while someone she trusted stands by. Free only to scream, she will remember this as long as she lives.

Physical Damage: constant or chronic pain for years, some die from blood loss, all subject to on-going infections, ulcers that do not heal, incontinence, painful sexual contact, difficulty giving birth, inability to experience sexual fulfillment.

Emotional damage: ability to trust, splinters relationships between mothers and daughters, exhibits signs of post-traumatic stress even years later, learns that something bad about her needed correction, which is underscored repeatedly in Islam, maybe withdrawn, afraid, more subservient. A collective shame, sadness, anger.

World Health Organization estimates 140 million women and children have undergone this procedure, but probably higher number. Egyptian physician relates 47,000 interviewed 97% admitted to be subjected, but feels numbers are even greater. Because sex or related topics are often taboo in Middle East, classes not offered in universities. Reliable information very difficult to gather.

Causes: no distinct lines between, religion, politics, family tradition. Women believe they may not be able to find husbands for daughters if not virgin, believe mutilation will decrease interest in sex before marriage, must please husband to attain heaven, may be dangerous not to be found virgin on wedding day. As emigration continues beliefs follow.

Wichita physician (Int. Med. Spec.) indicates he has seen fifty to sixty cases in his practice. Speculate what number in Ob/gyn offices in same city. While Mubarak was Egypt's president was indication the FGM numbers were falling. As Muslim Brotherhood exerts more power, numbers rise openly promoting it as free health service. What the Muslim Brotherhood does in one country it will do in another.

Journey to becoming non-human: woman must decide one of two things;

- 1) Admit betrayal
- 2) Embrace heinous crime as necessary

A comparison of side-by-side lifestyles illustrates in this context that the girl is only a possession and of little value outside of service to a man.