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Infibulation, Orgasm, and Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual experiences of Eritrean women, who have undergone infibulation
and of Eritrean men who are, or have been married to such women

Thesis submitted
by

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Bachelor of Social Work (Hons).
February, 2006

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, School of Social Work and
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Mansura Dopico

February, 2006

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the impact of infibulation on orgasm, sexual gratification and marital relationships. In providing a synoptic account from the perspective of infibulated women, the thesis aims to improve understanding of the subject and to challenge current logic with respect to it. The researcher conducted interviews, in Melbourne Australia and Hal Hal Eritrea, with 20 Eritrean women who have undergone infibulation, either married or divorced, and 10 Eritrean men who are or have been married to such women. The findings, underpinned by grounded theory, corroborate earlier research and suggest not only that infibulation does not eliminate female sexual sensation and that the practice has no negative impact on psychosexual life, but also that orgasm is not the principal measure of sexual satisfaction. They also reveal the additional burden placed on infibulated women by living in Australia, and the thesis recommends policy implications and practical applications for assisting such women with the resultant problems. By virtue of the population studied and the dimensions examined, this thesis provides an original contribution to the literature in this field.

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