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PRISONERS OF RITUAL
An Odyssey Into Female Genital Circumcision in Africa
Hanny Lightfoot-Klein, MA, Educator and Family Counselor, Arivaca, Arizona

"Hanny Lightfoot-Klein has dedicated the past decade of her life to studying firsthand how and why these things are done. She did most of her research in the Sudan, which is perhaps the most tenacious stronghold of these mutilations. She describes herself as an amateur, but she explores, takes chances, asks questions, reasons and writes like an anthropologist, so as far as I am concerned she is one. Prisoners of Ritual is her superb account of what she discovered. Although it is part travelogue — and an exciting one at that — it is mostly solid ethnographic research focused on the enigma of female genital mutilation."
—The New York Times Book Review

This unique new volume focuses on the psychological, sexual, and social effects of female genital circumcision, a widespread practice in Africa. Author Hanny Lightfoot-Klein spent six years backpacking through Sudan, Kenya, and Egypt and living with African families. She provides an unusual and surprising dimension to the knowledge on women's sexuality in detailed interviews with circumcised women and their husbands who discuss the effects of the procedure on their marital lives.

Volume 2 of the Haworth Series on Women.

WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH IN AFRICA
Edited by
Esther Rothblum, PhD, Department of Psychology, University of Vermont
Ellen Cole, PhD, Human Development Program, Prescott College, Arizona

This landmark volume looks closely at the mental health of women in Africa, a topic that has been virtually unexplored until now. Replete with some of the most provocative feminist issues of the day, Women's Mental Health in Africa examines the economic, physical, and social factors that have a major impact on the psychological well-being of women in African countries. Feminist researchers unravel the enormously complicated social system and the traditional cultural values and taboos that are directly related to women's self-concepts. Because the etiology of women's suicide is central to sexual and reproductive issues, these topics are an important focus of this volume. Authoritative contributors discuss the common practices of clitoridectomy and infibulation and the resulting infections, infertility, problems in childbirth, and lack of sexual response. AIDS, a disease whose widespread transmission in Africa is directly linked to unprotected heterosexual intercourse, is another issue vital to women's physical and mental health. Education as a means of role fulfillment is also covered in this fascinating and empowering book.

(A monograph published simultaneously as Women & Therapy, Vol. 10, No. 3.)
Available Fall 1990.
Journal of Social Development in Africa

School of Social Work, Harare, Zimbabwe

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