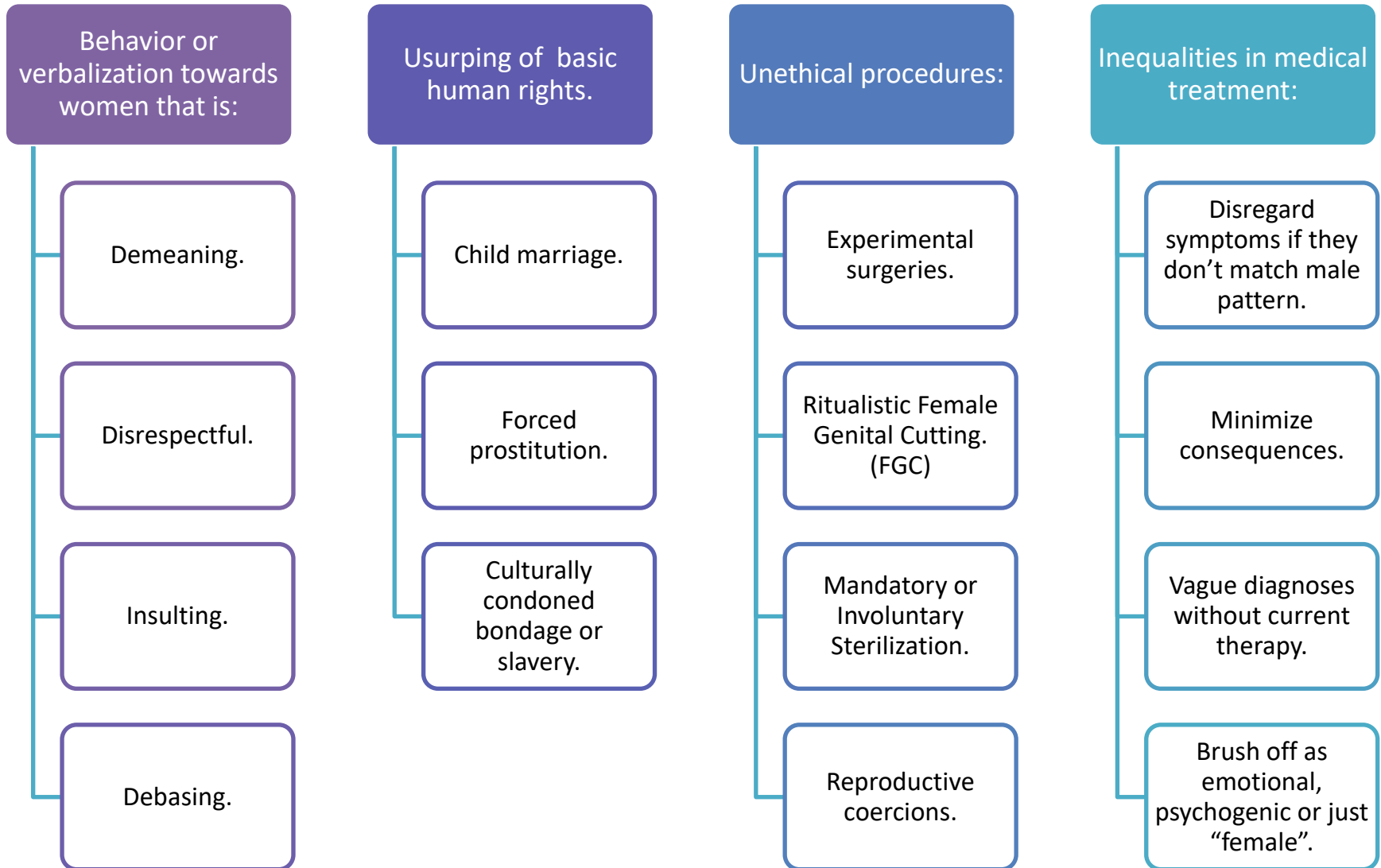


# Session 6

Medical Injustices, Unethical  
Surgeries, Unequal Treatments

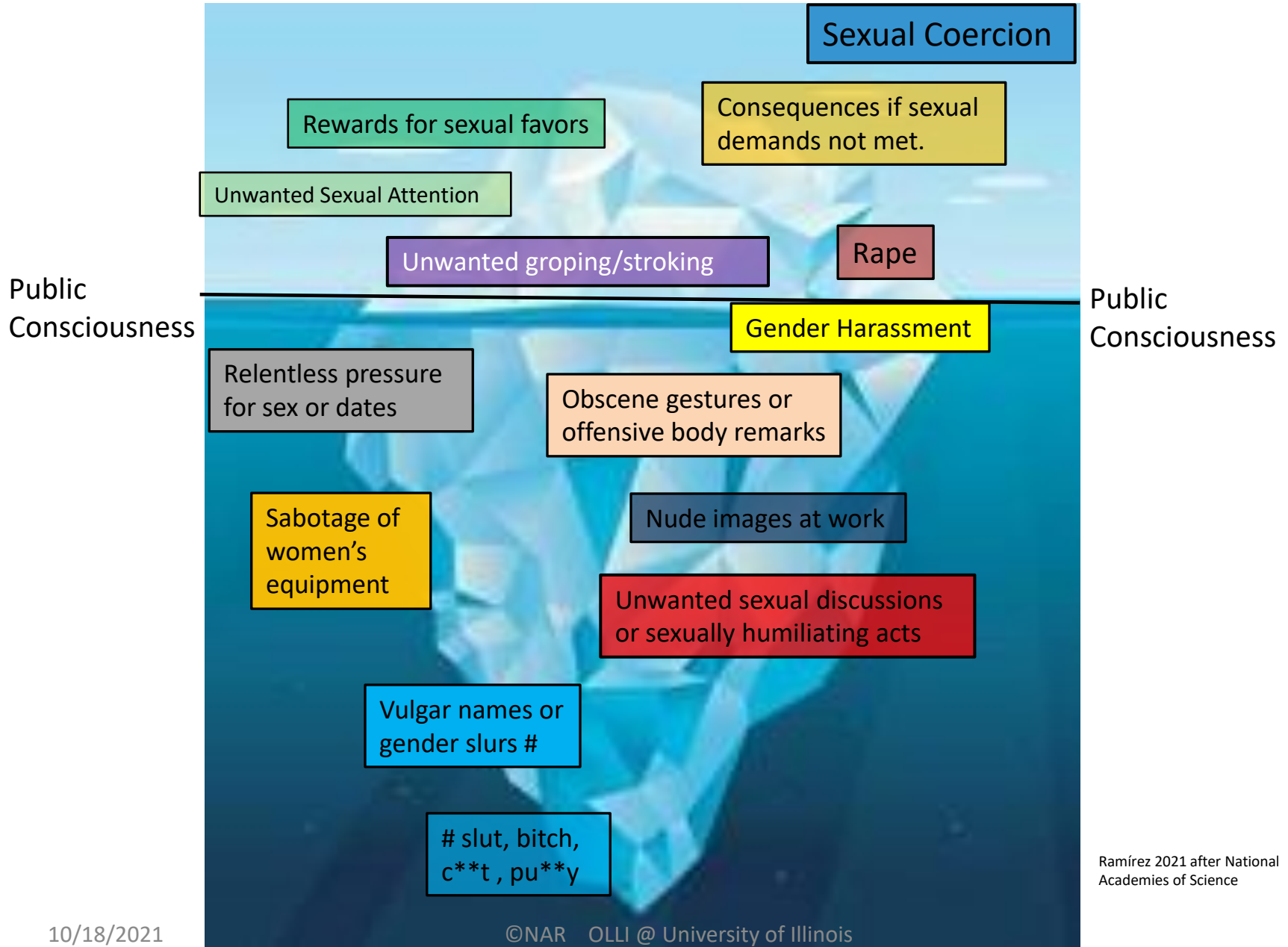
# Plan for the Session



Ramírez 2021

# **GENDER HARASSMENT**

# The Iceberg of Gender Harassment



# Gender Harassment

- Just like an iceberg, we normally see only the 30% that is easily perceived.
- Good old days mentality often overshadows the real optics of the issues.
- Over time, we have buried the wrongness of the actions or words, and candy-coated them:
  - That's our Joe, that's how he talks.
  - He doesn't mean any harm by .....
  - He likes to tell off-color jokes, he's fun.
  - He's not mean, he just shows his authority.
  - Etc., etc,

# Gender Harassment (1)

- Gender harassment: disrespecting, demeaning, and deprecating women and their work, abilities, and accomplishments, simply because they are women.
- It is a form of sexual harassment, like sexual coercion and unwanted sexual attention.
- It is the most prevalent form of sexual harassment in academic science and in the regular workplace.
- Sexual harassment in any form is not just damaging to targets and bystanders, but also corrodes the integrity of science.

# Gender Harassment <sup>(2)</sup>

## In Science

- Assuming inferiority due to gender.
- Matilda Effect.
- Restricting or withholding funds.
- Neglecting quality & importance of work.
- Blocking promotions.

# Gender Harassment (3)

## Hostility in the Workplace

- Nude pictures in worksite.
- Crass or lewd jokes or comments.
- Inappropriate comments about appearance.
- Suggestive movements or actions.
- Undesired touching, stroking, caressing.



# Gender Harassment <sup>(4)</sup>

## Hostility in the Workplace

- Tampering with women's equipment.
- Sophomoric pranks.
- Inadequate privacy in restroom facilities.
- Sexual advances:
  - Promise of professional perks if accepted.
  - Threat of professional consequences if rejected.

# **MANDATORY STERILIZATION**

# Mandatory Sterilization

## Indian Health Service

- IHS worked under the historical assumption that native people and people of color were morally, mentally and socially defective.
- Agency believed that the birth rate of Native American women was 3.79 children while the median for all groups in US was 1.79.
- Eugenics doctrine advocated sterilization for those deemed “unfit” (criminals, mentally incompetent, coloreds).

# Mandatory Sterilization

## Indian Health Service

- From 1973 through 1976, the HIS performed 3,406 sterilizations in 4 of the 12 HIS program areas (25-50% of all women were sterilized).
- GAO Report did NOT interview any sterilized women because they believed such an effort “would not have been productive”.
- They also found 36 sterilization of women under the age of 21 during that period.

# Mandatory Sterilization

## Indian Health Service

- The report did not clearly indicate if HEW rules regarding informed consent had been followed and the correct forms used.
- Women were tricked and lied to:
  - The surgery is for treatment, and is reversible.
  - This is part of your appendix operation.
  - Uterus taken out to prevent further Cesareans.

# North Carolina

- From 1929 to 1974, the North Carolina Eugenics Board targeted mostly blacks, females, and almost universally poor citizens.
- They included victims of rape and incest, women who were already mothers – and then their daughters, too.
- The state's remedy for all of them: Forced or coerced sterilization.

# North Carolina

- North Carolina sterilized 7,600 people (including men from prison and asylums).
- Thirty other states had, and enforced, eugenic sterilization laws, on the theory that preventing the "defective" from reproducing would benefit humanity.
- US Supreme Court in 1927 upheld a forced sterilization law for the supposed good of society.

# Supreme Court 1927

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote for the majority:

“It is better for all the world if, instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind.”



Electroconvulsive therapy

Lobotomy

# **OTHER ARBITRARY TREATMENTS**

# Lobotomy

- Derived from Greek: λοβός *lobos* and τομή *tomē* “ cut, slice”.
- Portuguese neurologist António Egas Moni, shared the 1949 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for the "discovery of the therapeutic value of leucotomy in certain psychoses“.
- By 1951, almost 20K had been done in the US.
- In US, 60% were performed on women.

# Lobotomy

- Rosemary Kennedy, sister of John F. Kennedy had a lobotomy in 1941 which incapacitated her for the rest of her life.
- American playwright Tennessee Williams' sister Rose received a lobotomy that left her incapacitated for life.
- In 2011, an Argentine neurosurgeon at Yale, examined X-rays of Eva Perón and concluded that she underwent a lobotomy for the treatment of pain and anxiety in the last months of her life.
- In *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, lobotomy is described as *frontal-lobe castration* a form of punishment and control done on McMurphy.

# Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

- About 70 percent of ECT patients are women, maybe because women are more likely to be diagnosed with depression.
- Older and more affluent patients are also more likely to receive ECT.
- The use of ECT is not as common in ethnic minorities

# Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

- Until the 1950s, pharmacotherapy for psychiatric disorders was extremely limited.
- ECT was applied broadly, for substance abuse, schizophrenia, hysteria, and anxiety, and even homosexuality.
- Early forms of ECT often caused memory loss and severe confusion without enough justifiable accompanying benefits.

# Status Hispanicus

## Puerto Rican Syndrome

“Ataque de Nervios” (Attack of Nerves)

Among individuals of Latino descent, characterized by:

- Symptoms of intense emotional upset: acute anxiety, anger, or grief.
- Screaming and shouting uncontrollably with attacks of crying and trembling
- Heat in the chest rising into the head.
- Becoming verbally and physically aggressive.
- Dissociative experiences: depersonalization, derealization, amnesia.
- Seizure-like or fainting episodes, and suicidal gestures.

Prominent in some,  
absent in others.

Generally: Sense of being out of control!

Frequently occur as a result of a stressful event relating to the family.

# STATUS HISPANICUS

# Status Hispanicus

- Somatization of symptoms in a Hispanic patient, especially if there is a large family supporting their member at the hospital; basically a *freak out* attack to show their solidarity.
- Not a nice term, as it stereotypes the patient's condition and puts it into an ethnic niche, which may lead to an incorrect or incomplete diagnosis.
- It is dismissive, condescending and wrong, because it deprives the patient of good medical care.



# Status Hispanicus

A take on medical terms like:

In *Status Hispanicus*, the patient is freaking out, screaming, crying, with waving of the arms and legs for no organic reason.

*Status asthmaticus* - uncontrolled, persistent and uninterrupted asthma attack unresponsive to repeated courses of therapy.

*Status epilepticus* - a seizure that last more than 5 minutes, or more than 1 seizure within a 5 minute period without returning to a normal level of consciousness.

# Status Hispanicus

The stereotypical (**false**) dismissive assumptions:

Don't ask a Hispanic woman if \_\_\_\_\_ hurts, they will always say YES!

The louder the woman, the less real the pain.

Hispanic women are needlessly loud and dramatic.

Knowing a woman patient's ethnicity allows for accurate prediction of the intensity of pain

# Status Hispanicus

- A lot of somatization is due to psychological issues, whether this is underlying depression, prior PTSD or trauma.
- Never ASSuME, you'll make an ASS out of U and Me!
- Even paranoids have real enemies.

# Status Hispanicus

- It is very common for a Hispanic person to have a complaint for every part of their body on one single visit.
- **TMD** - Stands for "todo me duele", (everything hurts). Used to describe the Hispanic patient who has more than 3 organ system or body parts that hurt.
- **Ay! Attack** – If the doctor walks by, many different variations of "AY, AY, Doctor, Me Duele!" (OW, OW, Doctor, It Hurts! can be heard across the ER.

# Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

- Even within a culture some people may see FGC as an empowering procedure that makes silly girls into real women, and others may see it as a brutal method of control.
- On the one hand, it is viewed as one of several steps undertaken by young women on a journey that includes marriage, motherhood, and recognition as fully competent persons.
- Age and voluntary participation of the young women may render the surgery as a positive undertaking.
- In cultures that give FGC these meanings, young women who have been denied the procedure have been known to attempt to perform it on themselves.

# Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

- On the other hand, FGC is viewed as a method of control through which elders guard a girl's virginity, reduce her sexual desire, and permanently mark her as a second-class citizen.
- In these cases the procedure is performed in infancy or childhood.
- The age and forced participation of the girl can make it a terrifying experience.
- It is increasingly common for girls or some of their relatives to resist or delay the surgery, even requesting asylum.

# Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

- FGC is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women.
- FGC reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes, and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women.
- Nearly always carried out on minors and is a violation of the rights of children.
- FGC violates a person's rights:
  - To health, security and physical integrity.
  - To be free from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
  - To life when the procedure results in death.

# Cultural and social factors for performing FGC

- In some communities, FGC is almost universally performed unquestioned, and is often considered a necessary part of raising a girl and preparing her for adulthood and marriage.
- Traditional beliefs about what is considered acceptable sexual behavior, so by reducing woman's libido, they aim to ensure premarital virginity and marital fidelity.
- Cultural ideals of femininity and modesty, including the notion that girls are clean and beautiful after removal of body parts that are considered unclean, unfeminine or male, thus increasing marriageability.



# Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

- The practice's origins are unknown.
- Though no religious scripts prescribe the practice, practitioners often believe the practice has religious support and it is considered a cultural tradition.
- Local structures of power and authority can contribute to upholding the practice or can be effective advocates for abandonment of FGC.

# Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

- There is no mention of FGM in the Bible, but Christian communities in Africa do practice it.
- In 2013 UNICEF identified 19 African countries in which at least 10 % of Christian women and girls aged 15 to 49 had undergone FGM.
- In Niger, 55 % of Christian women and girls had experienced it, compared with 2% of Muslim girls.
- Judaism requires male circumcision but does not allow FGM.

# Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

- The operation is often performed without anesthesia and under conditions that are not hygienic, with a sharpened knife or a razor blade.
- Physiological repercussions increase with the amount of cutting.
- Short-term consequences can include severe bleeding, tetanus and other infections, debilitating pain, and death.
- Long-term consequences can include difficulty expelling urine and menstrual blood, painful sexual intercourse, urethral scarring or closure, and long delays during childbirth that can lead to the death of the mother or the child.
- In Sudan, women are reinfibulated after the birth of each child; in Somalia, postpartum reinfibulation is rarely done.

# Rationale for FGC

- Widespread belief in Mali, Mauritania, Guinea, and Egypt, that FGC is a religious requirement.
- FGC's origins in NE Africa are pre-Islamic, but the practice became associated with Islam because of that religion's focus on female chastity and seclusion; there is no mention of the practice in the Quran.
- A 2013 UNICEF report from 18 African countries showed at least 10 % of Muslim females had experienced FGC, and in 13 of those countries, the figure was 50–99 %.
- It is regarded as obligatory by the Shafi'i version of Sunni Islam, but In 2007 the Al-Azhar Supreme Council of Islamic Research in Cairo ruled that FGC has "no basis in core Islamic law or any of its partial provisions".

# Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Types

- Type I
- Type II
- Type III
- Type IV

# Type I

- Partial or total removal of the clitoral glans (the external and visible part of the clitoris, and/or the prepuce/clitoral hood (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoral glans)).
- The more common procedure is Type Ib (clitoridectomy), the complete or partial removal of the clitoral glans (the visible tip of the clitoris) and clitoral hood.

# Type II

- Type II (excision) is the complete or partial removal of the inner labia, with or without removal of the clitoral glans and outer labia.
- Type IIa is removal of the inner labia; Type IIb, removal of the clitoral glans and inner labia; and Type IIc, removal of the clitoral glans, inner and outer labia.

# Type III

- Infibulation or pharaonic circumcision, is the removal of the external genitalia and fusion of the wound.
- The inner and/or outer labia are cut away, with or without removal of the clitoral glans.
- Found largely in northeast Africa, particularly Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and North Sudan.
- By a 2008 estimate, over 8M women in Africa are living with Type III FGC and 20 % of women with FGC have been infibulated.



# Type IV

- Type IV is “all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes”, including pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterization.
- It includes nicking of the clitoris (symbolic circumcision), burning or scarring the genitals, and introducing substances into the vagina to tighten it.
- Labia stretching is also categorized as Type IV.
- Common in southern and eastern Africa, the practice is supposed to enhance sexual pleasure for the man.
- Girls in Uganda are told they may have difficulty giving birth without stretched labia

# HYSTERIA

# Hysteria (1)

- From the Greek word *hystera* for uterus.
- Ancient Greeks believed that a uterus could migrate around the female body, placing pressure on other organs and causing many ill effects.
- The *wandering uterus* theory was supported by Plato and the physician Areteaus; was called *hysterical suffocation*.
- The offending uterus was coaxed back into place by placing good smells near the vagina, bad smells near the mouth, and sneezing.

# Hysteria <sup>(1)</sup>

## Symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Fainting
- Amnesia
- Paralysis
- Pain

- Spasms
- Vomiting
- Deafness
- Bizarre movements
- Seizures
- Hallucinations
- Inability to speak

# Hysteria (2)

- Galen believed that the cause of women's symptoms was retention of *female seed* within the womb.
- In classical texts, just about any symptom could be attributed to the female sex organs, from fevers to kleptomania.
- At that time, others blamed the retention of menstrual blood for “female problems.”

# Hysteria (3)

- The obvious solution was to purge the offending fluid, so regular sexual intercourse was the general recommendation.
- Male semen was also believed to have healing properties.
- For young or unmarried women, widows or nuns, midwives were employed to manually stimulate the genitals, and release the offending liquids.

# Hysteria (4)

- A 1637 text explains that when sexual fluids are not regularly released, 'the heart and surrounding areas are enveloped in a morbid and moist exudation'.
- In France, in 1880 Jean-Martin Charcot first took a modern scientific look at the female-only disease of hysteria.
- He lectured to his medical students on the symptoms he believed were caused by an unknown internal injury affecting the nervous system.
- One of these medical students was Sigmund Freud.

# Hysteria (5)

- Freud and his partner Breuer, wrote several studies on female hysteria from 1880-1915.
- Freud believed that hysteria was the result of a *psychological scar* produced through trauma or repression.
- This psychological damage was a result of the male sex organ being removed from females.



# Hysteria (6)

- Freud considered hysteria as characteristically feminine, and basically recommended: get married and have sex.
- The idea was that a woman could regain her lost penis by marrying one, and potentially giving birth to one.
- If marriage wasn't possible, another treatment for hysteria, fallen uteri and any gynecological problems was uterine massage.

# CHRONIC PAIN

# Chronic Pain

- Current medical conception is that it is a disease in its own right.
- Pain that lasts more than 3 to 6 months or persists past the point of normal healing.
- Majority of the 100 million Americans who live with chronic pain are women:
  - Osteoarthritis (30 million Americans)
  - Chronic low back pain (20 million Americans)
  - Irritable Bowel Syndrome (44 million Americans)
  - Migraine (36 million Americans)

# Chronic Pain

- Concept of pain that can occur without a lesion.
- Medical training in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century taught that pain that wasn't explained by organic pathology was to be seen as hysterical.
- When cause isn't found, then patient's pain gets brushed off as psychological, caused by stress, anxiety or depression.
- Especially if the patient is a woman!

# Chronic Pain

- If the pain is somewhere in the abdomen, it may be attributed to female problems, cramps or hormonal imbalance.
- Women experience multiple tests, see many specialists and get shrugged off and told that their symptoms are all emotional.
- It is worse when they get disrespected and demeaned by: “Honey, It’s all in your head”.

# UNEQUAL MEDICAL TREATMENT

# Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

- Should be a diagnosis of exclusion.
- It is a blanket to cover the lack of knowledge about women's illnesses and their symptoms.
- Fails to recognize the reality of the complaints and concerns of women patients.
- Perpetuates misconceptions and creates a label and a perpetual burden on the woman.

- Undiagnosed Women's Disease (UWD)
- High-Maintenance
- Drug seekers
- It's all in your head
- Psychosomatic is not psychogenic



# Unequal Medical Treatment <sup>(1)</sup>

- Modern Male-Centric Medical System is failing women.
- Male “assumption” in
  - Research
  - Therapy
  - Diagnosis
  - Outcomes
- Women are an afterthought?

# Unequal Medical Treatment (2)

- Drugs
  - Metabolism
  - Interaction with hormones
  - Generics are tested in young healthy males.
- Excipients: PEG increases bioavailability
  - In men: 63% ranitidine (Zantac)
  - In females: decreased 24%
  - Also Acetaminophen, Lexapro and oxycodone.
- Women complaining that generics are bad, get told they are equal, proven in research.

# Unequal Medical Treatment (3)

- Women are whiners and complainers.
- Amplification effect by healthcare team.
- Minorities don't feel pain as whites do.
- Judgement and minimization of symptoms.

# Unequal Medical Treatment (4)

- Woman's pain is not real, and her symptoms are emotional, caused by stress.
- Implicit bias: medical prejudice against women.
- Women can be less sympathetic than men
- Paramedics, OB/GYN's, endocrinologists, ER doctors, cardiologists, and now NP's and PA's.

# Unequal Medical Treatment (5)

- Frequent Flyers: office, ER, UrgentCare, phone.
- Same old, same old...
- Encore performance, but no new routine.
- Familiarity breeds contempt.
- Trainees follow the party line.

# Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

- It's possible to develop generalized anxiety disorder as a child or an adult.
- Generalized anxiety disorder has symptoms that are similar to obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder and other types of anxiety.
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder should be a diagnosis of exclusion not the default .

A woman with long, wavy brown hair is shown from the chest up. She has a pained or distressed expression, with her eyes closed and a furrowed brow. Her hands are clasped over her chest, and a bright red glow emanates from the area of her heart, indicating physical or emotional pain. She is wearing a light-colored, sleeveless top. The background is a plain, light gray wall.

# YENTL SYNDROME

- Stroke
- Heart Disease
- Anxiety
- Women-specific symptoms




# Yentl Syndrome













- Often refers to the different treatments given to men and women when suffering a heart attack.
- Term from a 1991 paper by Bernardine Healey.
- Medical research has focused primarily on male heart attacks.
- Women are misdiagnosed and poorly treated when their symptoms or diseases don't conform to that of men (it can be fatal).

# HEART ATTACK SYMPTOMS: MEN VS. WOMEN

By American Heart Association News

The most common symptom of a heart attack for both men and women is chest pain. But women may experience less obvious warning signs.



<b>MEN</b>	<b>WOMEN</b>
Nausea or vomiting 	Nausea or vomiting 
Jaw, neck or back pain 	Jaw, neck or upper back pain 
Squeezing chest pressure or pain 	Chest pain, but not always 
Shortness of breath 	Pain or pressure in the lower chest or upper abdomen 
	Shortness of breath 
	Fainting 
	Indigestion 
	Extreme fatigue 


Source: American Heart Association's journal, *Circulation*  
© 2019 American Heart Association, Inc.



















# STROKE SYMPTOMS: WOMEN VS. MEN

By American Heart Association News

Men and women share a common set of stroke symptoms. But women also can experience more subtle warning signs.



<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>MEN</b>
Face drooping 	Face drooping 
Arm weakness 	Arm weakness 
Speech difficulty 	Speech difficulty 
Vision problems 	Vision problems 
Trouble walking or lack of coordination 	Trouble walking or lack of coordination 
Severe headache without a known cause 	Severe headache without a known cause 
General weakness 	
Disorientation & confusion or memory problems 	
Fatigue 	
Nausea or vomiting 	

Sources: American Stroke Association; Gender Medicine; Journal of Neuroscience Nursing  
Published May 31, 2019 | © 2019 American Heart Association, Inc.

# Unequal Treatment

- Women can and do have :
  - Real pain.
  - Heart attacks.
  - Stroke.
  - Mental health issues.
- Healthcare team needs to:
  - Listen to women's complaints and symptoms.
  - Evaluate without stereotypical assumptions.
  - Treat the woman and her issues.
  - Accept own shortcomings and ignorance