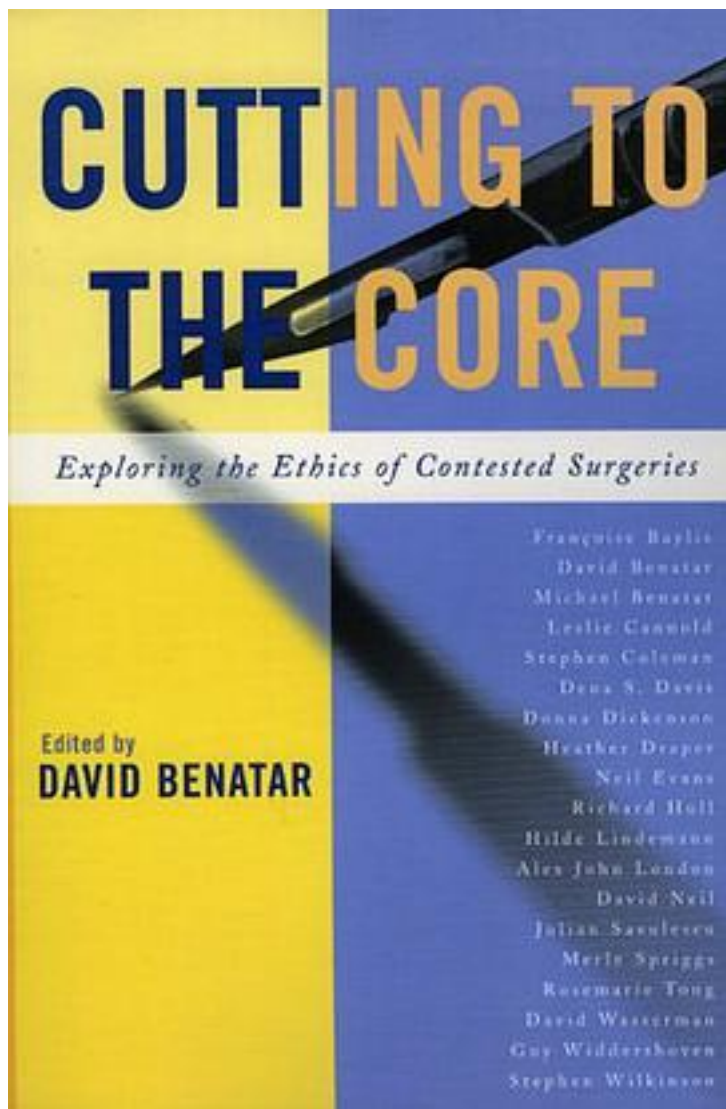


Cutting to the Core



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Surgery inevitably inflicts some harm on the body. At the very least, it damages the tissue that is cut. These harms often are clearly outweighed by the overall benefits to the patient. However, where the benefits do not outweigh the harms or where they do not clearly do so, surgical interventions become morally contested. Cutting to the Core examines a number of such surgeries, including infant male circumcision and cutting the genitals of female children, the separation of conjoined twins, surgical sex assignment of intersex children and the surgical re-assignment of transsexuals, limb and face transplantation, cosmetic surgery, and placebo surgery. When, if ever, do the benefits of these surgeries outweigh their costs? May a surgeon perform dangerous procedures that are not clearly to the patient's benefit, even if the patient consents to them? May a surgeon perform any surgery on a minor patient if there are no clear benefits to that child? These and other related questions are the core themes of this collection of essays.

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