



## **The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite (HBI Series on Jewish Women)**

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According to Jewish law, the ritual practice of circumcising male infants signals the male child's entry into the covenant God made with his forefather Abraham. Circumcision, now a common medical procedure for male infants in the USA, has come under increased scrutiny in recent years. Some medical professionals have challenged its purported health benefits, ethicists have raised concerns about the degree of pain involved, and Jewish feminists have questioned the implications of a covenantal rite centred on the male genitals. The 16 essays in this volume explore the history, cultural interpretations and contemporary significance of circumcision from a Jewish perspective, and seek to make a contribution to the informed discussion of current issues and controversies. Framed by Elizabeth Wyner Mark's introduction and section prologues, the volume is divided into three distinct parts which examine circumcision's interpretation in widely varying contexts, through history, and three different rabbinic perspectives on recent debates about circumcision. The epilogue brings together the voices of rabbis and scholars with opposing views.

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