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AJL Reviews November/December 2011 Reviews of Literature Titles for Adults

Moss, Lisa Braver. *The Measure of His Grief: A Novel*. Notim Press, 2010. 344 pp. \$14.95 (9781453720257).

Sandy Waldman, a Jewish physician, is sitting *shiva* for his father in Berkeley, when he feels a strange pain in his penis. When he can find no medical explanation, he decides that the problem is circumcision and becomes an obsessive crusader against *brit milah*. He even tries to undo his own milah. His new activism costs him his marriage, leads to estrangement with his daughter, and destroys his career. It does, ironically, lead him back to Torah study as he searches religious texts to understand the tradition better. He has an adult Bar Mitzvah, at which he reads parashah Korach, which deals with one of Judaism's fiercest rebels. The author of this book is an activist in the circumcision debate, but she treats the issue with respect and even a touch of humor. A discussion with an Orthodox mohel, a feminist woman rabbi who still considers the ritual important, a liberal cantor, and a "conscientious objector" (a Jewish woman searching for a brit without the milah) is very civil, probably more civil than many real-life debates on the subject. This book will lead to interesting discussions at book group meetings. It is a good addition to collections for public libraries and liberal synagogues.

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