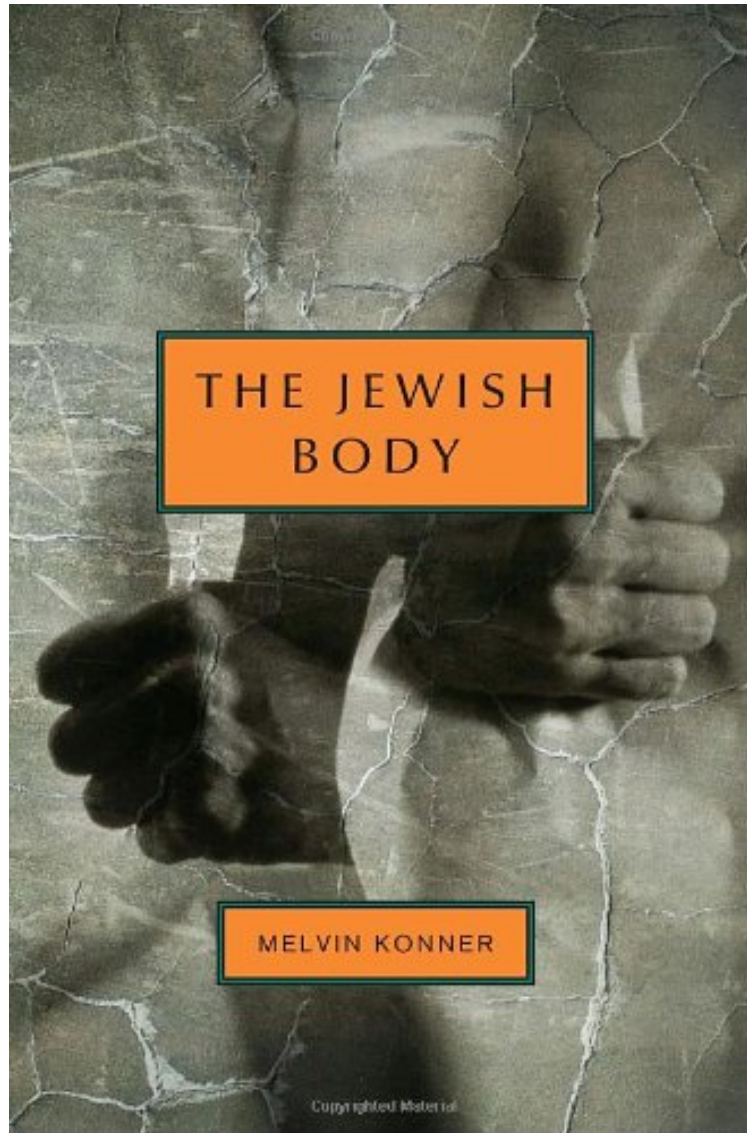


(Ebook pdf) The Jewish Body (Jewish Encounters Series)

The Jewish Body (Jewish Encounters Series)

Melvin Konner

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Melvin Konner : The Jewish Body (Jewish Encounters Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Jewish Body (Jewish Encounters Series):

4 of 9 people found the following review helpful. The Jewish Body By Frances Ivker Interesting. Nothing revolutionary or new to a medical scientist like myself, but a good seminar jumping off point for discussion with an educated lay group. Well written and easily understandable to the non-medical community. 16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. poorly conceived and poorly executed book By Walter Ziffer Book review of "The Jewish Body" by Melvin Konner, Nextbook-Schocken, New York, 2009, by Dr. Walter Ziffer, (a.k.a. "Religious Skeptic") "The Jewish

Body" by Melvin Konner is a disappointing book. I am amazed that Schocken Books, a highly prestigious publisher of Judaica-related works, accepted this work for publication. It is hard to know where to begin with a critique because of the book's many weaknesses. Regrettably, many of the statements in the text are not referenced and so the uninformed reader has no choice but to take the author's word for them. The book's structure and content are a veritable hodge-podge. One of the participants of our synagogue book study group compared Konner's approach to that of a stand-up comedian using word association to jump from one topic to the next. Not a single member of our group found the book worthwhile reading. Much of its content is anecdotal, very little truly scientific. After making a quasi definitive statement, the author often backtracks with "buts, however, nevertheless's, etc." canceling out what he previously affirmed. As a theologian and Holocaust survivor who literally owes his life to the fire power of the Allies in WW II and who is grateful for these armies' powerful and violent defeat of Hitler, I am nevertheless appalled by Konner's virtual worship at the throne of power. Rare are the Jews who are not grateful for the creation of the modern State of Israel and who do not support Israel's growth, continued development and security, yet the continued and rather unconditional praise of Israel as a magnificent military power is something that this Jew and Holocaust survivor finds downright repulsive. Konner's racial characterization of Jews in the pre-war diaspora, especially Eastern Europe, is patently unscientific and smacks of stereotyping. Those of us who lived there know better than accepting these generalizations as truth. A statement describing Albert Einstein as a "Luftmensch" (p.141) points to the author's lack of understanding of Yiddish and wrong use of the term. Konner's knowledge of Hebrew is not any better when he uncritically repeats (p.27), the biblical interpretation of the name Abraham as "father of multitudes." Linguistically this is incorrect. When on p.34 the author refers to Spinoza with "apostate as he was" one cannot help but wonder whether Konner has ever read, let alone understood, Spinoza's writings. There is no end to superficiality, biased interpretation of history ancient and modern, excessive occupation with genitalia; a long list of minor and major flaws in Konner's book. Finally: the book jacket's description of "The Jewish Body" as "a work of grand historical and philosophical sweep" strikes me as ludicrous. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Rare, unique, well written By book worm A rare and amazing work on Jewish history- very well written and some pretty new ideas

Part of the Jewish Encounter series A history of the Jewish people from bris to burial, from muscle Jews to nose jobs. Melvin Konner, a renowned doctor and anthropologist, takes the measure of the Jewish body, considering sex, circumcision, menstruation, and even those most elusive and controversial of microscopic markers Jewish genes. But this is not only a book that examines the human body through the prism of Jewish culture. Konner looks as well at the views of Jewish physiology held by non-Jews, and the way those views seeped into Jewish thought. He describes in detail the origins of the first nose job, and he writes about the Nazi ideology that categorized Jews as a public health menace on par with rats or germs. A work of grand historical and philosophical sweep, *The Jewish Body* discusses the subtle relationship between the Jewish conception of the physical body and the Jewish conception of a bodiless God. It is a book about the relationship between a land Israel and the bodily sense not merely of individuals but of a people. As Konner describes, a renewed focus on the value of physical strength helped generate the creation of a Jewish homeland, and continued in the wake of it. With deep insight and great originality, Konner gives us nothing less than an anatomical history of the Jewish people.

From Publishers Weekly Anthropology professor and author Konner (*Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews*) exudes passion and knowledge while gamely evaluating the history of the body Judaic, including customs like circumcision and the way outsiders' ignorant or malicious portrayal-in all manner of historical art and propaganda (from Michaelangelo's horned Moses to children's picture book *The Poison Mushroom*)-have come to impact Jewish identity and physical awareness. Konner also offers his own interpretations of specific Torah passages alongside their historically evolving meanings, as well as more seemingly modern phenomena like nose jobs and "shiks-appeal" (the "ultimate realization" of which is the "Jewish weakness for blondes"). Konner also looks at the Holocaust, Socialist Zionism (and its promotion of gender equality), and the "Jewry of muscles" credited with the victory of Israel over hostile neighbors. In this comprehensive look into Jewish physicality, Konner discusses the most sensitive topics with curiosity, impartiality and an impressive breadth of knowledge. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist This is the eleventh book in the Jewish Encounters series and 17 more are planned. Konner writes that it is his intent to not only trace the Jewish body through its radical, almost magical transformations but also to try to understand how Jewish bodies and Jewish thoughts about them have shaped the Jewish mind and the Jewish contributions to civilization. We will consider how centuries of relative bodily isolation, inspired for better or worse by ideas about the body, may have shaped Jewish genes, he writes. Konner contends that two great events of the twentieth century one the worst thing that ever happened to the Jews, and the other the best turned the tables on Jewish weakness forever. These are the Holocaust and the state of Israel. Konner, an anthropologist, is the author of nine books. His new one helps to shed light on a complicated subject. --George Cohen Konner's examination of the Jewish body ranges from the implications of Jewish genes to visions of master mystics crawling in the dense curls of God's black beard a brief metaphorical corporeality and spans the ages from ancient Israel

to Israel reborn. This range allows us fresh views of Jewish identity and self-identity from a committed and thoughtful author. Jewish Book World
In praise of *Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews* by Melvin Konner
A poignant and highly accessible account of an ongoing story that transcends all telling.
Harold Bloom, author of *The Western Canon* and *Jesus and Yahweh*
Certainly the best one-volume overview of Jewish history and identity available.:
Sander L. Gilman, author of *The Jews Body* and *Jewish Self-Hatred*
This sweeping study of the Jews feels so fresh and alive . . .
[It is] nothing less than inspiring.
The New York Times Book