



The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture 1880-1950

Jenna Weissman Joselit

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The selective relish with which most American Jews affirm their identity -- consuming kosher delicacies once a year, extravagantly celebrating the bar mitzvahs of their sons and the weddings of their daughters -- has usually given rise to satire or consternation. *The Wonders of America* offers an alternative perspective, for this pioneering social history of Jewish culture highlights the cultural ingenuity and adaptive genius of American Jewish life.

Drawing on advertisements, etiquette manuals, sermons, and surveys, Jenna Weissman Joselit constructs a lively and humorous account of how three generations of American Jews created their distinctive American culture. This provocative, enlightening study describes the forging of a rich and exuberant modern Jewish identity and makes it clear that it is not the theoretical debates of rabbis and scholars but the small choices of daily life that shape and sustain a culture

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