increasingly difficult to labor in their own interest, they are likely to acquire the self-defeating habits she mentions, e.g., domestic violence, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy. In other words, among any marginalized people, constrained opportunity impedes adaptive abilities by undermining social integrity.

Jones might cite how white dominance of Hispanicized African-American women imposed similar constraints on their household "labor of love" as Whitten did. Very similar to Anglicized American blacks, the struggle of Colombian blacks to maintain autonomy was undermined, mainly through the invalidation and cooptation of female labor. Colombian blacks recognized that working for white owners in exchange for wages would entrap them in a new economic relationship, free of overt bondage, but labor enslaving nevertheless. However—and despite centuries of effective resistance—Hispanicized black women have found themselves recently urbanized as domestic servants as well. Their urban "labor of sorrow" is likely to disturb their "labor of love" just as it is now doing among the poorest American blacks.

Jones will find that her data does not reflect an African-American problem only. It can be validated cross-culturally, and certainly in the black diaspora. As chronic unemployment (in any country) pressures the male/female relationship, the frustration of failing to meet hopeful female expectations repulses many men from home-life. The result is the same as Jones describes: growing numbers of female-headed households are surviving either on sub-standard wages or welfare. Thus, the experiences of African-American women must be compared with those of other oppressed women everywhere.

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Jenna Weissman Joselit. *Our Gang: Jewish Crime and the New York Jewish Community, 1900-1940.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983) xii, 209 pp., $9.95 paper.

A book-length study of Jewish crime in the United States ventures into uncharted territory, because rarely have Jews been associated with crime; in fact, Jewish life and criminal activity have been considered antithetical categories. This historical injunction against violence and illegal acts is the very myth with which Joselit opens her well-documented study of criminal involvement among New York Jews, beginning with its immigrant origins and concluding with the rise of the Jewish middle class in the interwar years. The dominant socio-cultural imperatives against malfeasance among the Jewish population provides the struc-

tural frame in which Joselit describes, with detailed bibliographic references, the conditions in the Lower East Side, which led to the rise of crime among the Jews.

This sense that the Jews are somehow habituated against general malfeasance was reinforced by the Jewish community, who seemed by all accounts to perpetuate the myth that Jews were "above" immoral and illegal acts committed by other, less "civilized," groups. And this posture, as Joselit argues, made sense both in terms of the historical and contemporary situation of the Jews. It is not surprising that Jewish immigrants, after centuries of persecution and compliance in Europe, felt themselves "outside" the criminal mentality, guided rather by religious laws governing daily conduct and by a keen sense of survival. Nor is it surprising that the Jews, newly arrived in America, should continue to react with concern at any suggestion of criminality among their own, especially in light of America's growing xenophobia.

Joselit delineates the crime patterns that emerged on the Lower East Side, the increased visibility of Jewish criminal behavior, and the response to such activity that helped to define and mold the New York Jew's identity. Joselit describes well the reaction among the Jewish community, an evolution from denial to shock and finally to deliberate efforts to eradicate crime. In charting these activities, Joselit takes us from the establishment of a rehabilitation home for Jewish youth, the "Hawthorne School," to the growing Jewish "underworld," concluding with chapters describing individual criminals and kinds of crimes. While these chapters offer detailed accounts of criminal activity, the tone and structure of the accounts shift abruptly from exposition to narration. In the midest of what appears to be a documentary, the exposition gives way to a narrative not unlike fiction. Unfortunately, the effect is often artificial, for such underworld figures as "Mother Hertz" and "Waxy Gordon" never come alive as full-fledged characters.

The strength of Joselit's study resides in her final appraisal that such research about Jews and crime ultimately tell us more about American urban experience, its "limits of community," than about Jews as a unique group. The text's concluding argument, that the "embourgeoisment of New York Jewry" brought about a significant reduction of crime, speaks to the dramatic socio-economic impact of the rising middle class in America. As the Jew left the confines of the Lower East Side for white collar occupations in the suburbs, the crime rate diminished. That such mobility and economic stability should reduce crime certainly comes as no surprise. Nonetheless, *Our Gang* provides a useful complement to the corpus of extant sociological studies on the rise of crime.

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