Throughout the last few decades, Jewish college students in the United States have become increasingly secular, displaying their religion much less often. It seems as if this trend will only continue in the next decades to come. Research in the area of Judaism on American college campuses has followed several avenues. Markoe (2015) was concerned with the advent of anti-Semitism on college campuses in the United States and how it impacts Jewish students. The Pew Research Center (2013) focused more on the growing number of Jews who say they have no religion, comparing millenials to older generations who were much more religious. As of now, it is unknown as to why the younger generations of Jews are becoming more secular.

Several researchers addressed possible reasons for the rise of Jewish secularism. Kosmin (2014) examined modern Jewish communities, suggesting that Jews today have become a “mainstream” part of American culture, and will remain that way if they do not place great emphasis on their religious beliefs. Freidersdorf (2011) argues that Jewish college students’ loss of religion is a part of the overall rise of secularism in American universities. When students leave home, they are further away from their families, religious institutions, and this the pressure to be religious, and closer to people of other faiths, so naturally their religion will become less important to them as time goes on. Kwait (2014) agrees that the world has become much more multicultural, and Jewish students tend to think of themselves as in more of a cultural than a religious group. Mehta (2014) believes that this is a positive change, as religion has led to numerous political and social conflicts that could have been avoided. However, Shire (2015) believes that rampant anti-Semitism at even some of the nation’s finest colleges and universities has placed Jewish students in a position of fear—if they reveal their religion, they may be less likely to advance within the school, or, even worse, they could be the victims of an attack.

In this project, I attempt to explain why Jewish college students have become less attached to and connected with their religion. The information will be gathered by a survey shared via social media. In this survey, I will try to uncover the reasons as to why these students are participating less in religious activities, and I will also try to examine how important religion is as a central aspect of their lives. The information I gather will be unique in that no researcher has ever attempted to gather data from the most direct source- the students themselves.

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