

A History of Jews in American Higher Education

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Throughout the history of American higher education, Jews have been both marginalized and unaccepted in collegiate life. Their history of discrimination in the United States led to the founding of religious and secular institutions in which Jewish American culture could be explored and celebrated. The following paper provides a historical account of the persecution of Jews and their subsequent responses in the context of American higher education and offers implications for student affairs practitioners.

From the inception of higher education in America with the founding of Harvard College in 1636, Jews were cast as outsiders beyond the realm of normal college life. Participation and eligibility in extracurricular activities was limited for centuries by the dominant Protestant paradigm; for example, institutionalized anti-Semitism across the country denied Jews the opportunity to join historically Christian fraternities (Horowitz, 1987), and similar sentiments drastically affected the admission of Jews to medical schools in the United States (Halperin, 2001). At the turn of the twentieth century, quota requirements limited Jews' matriculation in college and forced them to compete against one another for the few spots elite colleges had reserved for such students. At that time, Jewish American leaders formulated plans to establish their own universities to change the face of the urban educational landscape in cities across the east (Gurock, 1988; Meyer, 1976).

However, despite a lasting and permeating sense of exclusion from college life, the discrimination of Jews was one of many practices of nonmeritocratic prejudice existing in American colleges and universities that continues today. Jews were disqualified as eligible candidates for admission, based not on their abilities to succeed academically, but merely because of what was perceived as their religious conflicts with an institution's Christian values. Until the founding of such institutions as the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary in New York City (affiliated with Yeshiva University), Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, the higher education of Jews and their full integration into American society as participants in a democratic educational system was severely hindered by lasting social injustices and ignorance dating at least back to 1722 at Harvard University (Morison, 1936). Rising ethnic consciousnesses have followed research interests in Judaism by spawning, for instance, Black, women's, and queer studies, all connected to the civil rights movement (Greenspahn, 2000). This paper will outline the history of Jews in institutions of higher education in America. It will describe the establishment of distinctly Jewish institutions as a response to an emerging

Jewish American identity in light of discrimination by higher education's mainstream. The author, a practicing Jew who attended a Jewish-sponsored university, explores the contribution of such institutions to the development of students' spiritual development and of student affairs practitioners' role in enhancing student learning for Jewish students.

Harvard and Yale: The Early Years

Despite the unwelcoming atmosphere to Jews that Puritan settlers created, their Hebrew texts, the Old Testament, and rabbinical literature were highly valuable to higher education for not only their educational purposes but also for their representation of learnedness and elevation of character. Rosovsky (1986) found that such figures in Puritan history as Cotton Mather, Michael Wigglesworth, and William Bradford all practiced Hebrew at Harvard College to promote scholarship and religious adherence. The first Jewish instructor of Hebrew, however, was converted to Christianity (one of the first to do so in the new world) in March 1722 after his methods of teaching were found "so tedious as to be discouraging" (Morison, 1936, pp. 57-58). It is unclear as to whether his pedagogy was disliked because of his style or because of the religious beliefs that may have been connected to his lessons.

The proliferation of college campuses across the country proved less welcoming to Jews in the mid-nineteenth century, intensifying the growing elitism of American life (Horowitz, 1987). Yale College's Congregationalist affiliation helped perpetuate a highly Christianized climate fearful and wary of Judaism, but which nevertheless accepted and taught the Hebrew language. Yale forbade the organization of any non-Christian religious society (Oren, 1985). The first Jews at Yale graduated in 1777 and were actually three half-Jewish brothers who did not practice the religion. According to Yale historian Dan Oren (1985), the first "bona fide Jewish student" (p. 6) was Moses Simons, who graduated from the institution in 1809. Little is known about his education there. Seventeen years later, a Jew named Judah P. Benjamin attended Yale College, only to drop out and later become a United States senator, and eventually Secretary of State to President Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy (Canby, 1936; Horowitz, 1987).

Jews and some Catholics remained on the fringe of New Haven life through the end of the eighteenth century, although Blacks and Native Americans remained most removed from society. Tolerance for all four ethnic groups remained low; these students were essentially invisible on small-town campuses and in schools in the American west. Even within the marginalized Jewish communities at both Cambridge and New Haven, discrimination existed between the first immigration wave of Spanish and Portuguese Jews (*Sephardim*, who preferred to distinguish themselves as

"Hebrews") and the second migration, which consisted more of German Jews (*Ashkenazim*) who identified as German ethnics before associating as Jewish (Oren, 1985; Rosovsky, 1986). This German affiliation allowed the Jews to gain quicker acceptance with society at large. The first known Jew to teach at Yale came from New Haven's *Ashkenazi* community, a local immigrant hired directly by the students to tutor them in the new sciences brought to America from Europe (Oren, 1985).

The rise of the "Jewish problem" (the increasing numbers of Jews at universities previously only attended by the Protestant elite) in New England institutions began in the late nineteenth century when a reformed practice of Judaism emerged that conflicted with mandatory chapel attendance for all enrolled students. Oren (1985) describes one Yale undergraduate (Lewis Ehrich, B.A. 1869) who attended services on the fast day of Yom Kippur (he was excused from Sunday prayers to be allowed to attend Saturday services at a local synagogue) and followed suit with dinner at a neighborhood pub. This newly developing Jewish identity confused and offended the strict obedient religious nature of the student population. Further, what few scholarly interests Ehrich had - perhaps due to immigrant expectations of college as a door to success - during the intellectual drain of college life at that time marked him as an outsider (Oren, 1985), giving Jews a reputation for being bookish and snobby that would remain for some time (Horowitz, 1987). The first ideations of the creation of a Jewish interest fraternity were discussed at Yale in 1866. At that institution, Jewish men, for the time being became an accepted part of the campus community, only later to be called into question after the awarding of a coveted literary prize to the first Jewish student in 1878 (Oren, 1985).

Soon after, Harvard's president Charles William Eliot abolished compulsory chapel attendance in 1886 to continue the introduction of non-sectarianism into his school. His open-mindedness allowed non-Protestants to start their own organizations; the Menorah Society (an early national Jewish student organization) was established in 1906 (Rosovsky, 1986). Nevertheless, Eliot's successor A. Lawrence Lowell feared the deterioration of the quality of the institution from the increasing percentages of Jewish students in Harvard's colleges. Not just limited to Harvard, the "Jewish Problem" existed for schools such as Tufts, Bowdoin, Columbia, and even Yale, as discussed in 1918 at a meeting of the Association of New England Deans (Rosovsky, 1986). Newly instituted admissions requirements such as character and psychological tests, in addition to curricular reform, discriminated against Jews as lower-class immigrants who were kept out of many Eastern colleges through quotas concealed behind facades of alumni interviews and preference to students from outside the East (Steinberg, 1974). Harvard began to require passport-sized photographs from applicants, a practice thought to be

American Conditions and Jewish Cultural Continuity.

Because Eastern European culture was neither integrated nor unchanging in the new world, "American conditions selectively reinforced certain characteristics and cultural tendencies and discouraged others" (Gorelick, 1981, p. 16). Certainly, living and working conditions in the United States did not favor Jewish orthodoxy. Even Jewish employers would steal precious moments away from Sabbath preparation on late Friday evenings to discourage piety and practice. In the early twentieth century, culture came to be divided by class (Gorelick, 1981). The employers overworked their laborers in dangerous sweatshops and reaped the benefits, while the workers organized unions, went on strike, and rioted, fighting not only for fair labor laws, but also desperately trying to cling to religious practices and beliefs residual from before their immigration (Takaki, 1993).

The German Jews, often businessmen removed from traditional Jewish culture still practiced by American Jews, sought social, economic, and cultural assimilation into the North American business class. They found orthodoxy alienating and embarrassing. At times these Jews led small congregations of their own despite the lack of ordination by a formal rabbinical body (Hebrew Union College, 2002). When Rabbi Isaac Wise came to America in 1946 from Bohemia, he encountered a leaderless frontier of an emerging form of Judaism, in which Wise saw the need for an educational institution for the benefit of all Jews. Zion College, "an institution for the training of rabbis and teachers in which not only the religious but also secular branches should be taught" (Philipson, 1925, p. 5), opened in 1855 for a short time in Cincinnati, but Wise was not daunted.

Recognizing the need for "American leaders for American congregations" (Philipson, 1925, p. 6), representatives of Cincinnati congregations, under the leadership of Rabbi Wise, formed in 1873 what is now the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC). At the Cleveland 1874 convention, Hebrew Union College was named as the union's own institution of higher education in which rabbis could be prepared and ordained (Philipson, 1925). In line with the social and political revolutions of the era, rabbis prepared in this Progressive institution would learn to infuse religion with emphases on social justice, environmentalism, and reformation into their teachings, which are values still evident in Reform Judaism today. With an American Jewish population exceeding 150,000, the Hebrew Union College became the first permanent Jewish institution of higher learning in the new world (Meyer, 1976).

Orthodox Jews were concerned with this break from cultural tradition. New York Rabbi Moses Meyer Matlin, an immigrant from Kovno, observed how some Jews in his area blithely ignored dietary laws and his attempts to monitor them; Eastern European religious life in America would not be

revived. In response, his son and some classmates, under the rabbi's tutelage and assistance from other rabbis who desired a return to European-style learning, formalized a study of Torah under the incorporated name of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), which would later become the American counterpart to European yeshivas as the only institution in the United States for the preparation of orthodox rabbis (Gurock, 1988). In 1903, the school's chances for survival, which had been endangered since its founding, were dramatically improved as the newly-formed Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada took RIETS under its wing to ensure the perpetuation of its constituency (Gurock, 1988).

Both Hebrew Union College and RIETS thus served as catalysts for religious educational change in America. Under the auspices of newly created rabbinical assemblies, their student populations would thrive. The Jewish sons of immigrants in the new world attended Jewish institutions of higher learning not only as a result of discrimination encountered in mainstream colleges, but also of the need for maintaining a Jewish culture and tradition in light of the American experience (Gurock, 1988). Despite their founding purposes, however, these two institutions functioned as segregational tools, distinctly separating secular Jews from the more observant ones. Those students not interested in rabbinical ordination would continue to attempt assimilation in secular colleges.

Higher education in America was transformed in part by the social crisis of Jews that helped make educational reform possible. The new capitalist economy, the creation of new social classes, the clash of cultures, and the new social and organizational forms all triggered these educational (and occupational) changes (Steinberg, 1989). However, despite the burgeoning promise of educational opportunity for Jews in eastern cities where they had established schools of their own, they encountered discrimination, prejudice, and exclusion at Ivy League institutions, colleges and universities across the Midwest, and even schools in their own home cities.

The "Jewish Problem": Discrimination in Academe and College Life

The College of the City of New York attracted local Jewish boys as the first tuition-free municipal college, providing the first step towards a public, secular education for the sons of immigrants. Otherwise unable to attend college, Russian Jews found in City College the keys to upward mobility through Progressive learning. At the same time, the sons of New York City's elite families enrolled in a parallel curriculum at the same academy, thus creating a dual system of education in one school based implicitly on social origins (Gorelick, 1981). Perceptions of American democracy manifested in two curriculum tracks designed to keep the upper echelon of Jewish businessmen wealthy while the merchants would learn only enough how to

bargain. Within the Free Academy of City College, the classical course and English course helped to perpetuate and maintain classism within higher education. Jews self-segregated into these two programs, increasing Jewish enrollment at City College overall and giving that institution a reputation for being a "Jewish school" (Steinberg, 1974). By 1916, Jewish college students were "ubiquitous on college campuses in the city - 44 percent of the enrollment at Hunter College and 73 percent at City College" (Takaki, 1993).

A number of other Eastern colleges also showed rapid increases in their Jewish enrollment. Because Jews were generally assimilated within the American culture, they had not clearly formed a separate element or ethnic group. During this period of growing elitism and intolerance, they remained impoverished, blending in with other immigrants in urban slums and ghettos. Aspirations of parents to see their children succeed in America's alleged meritocratic economy, however, led students to attend public schools in large numbers. Horowitz (1987) found that many were "encouraged to learn and excel, [taking] the next step and [entering] college" (p. 76). Sons of Jewish immigrants chose institutions close at hand like Columbia, New York University, Harvard, and the University of Pennsylvania (Horowitz, 1987). As these schools grew to become universities, their curricula, organization, and pedagogies changed, often violently affecting Jews and their comfort on campus. Horowitz (1987) found that in light of their exclusion from social and even co-curricular organizations such as literary societies, Jews used education as a means of social and economic uplift when their efforts to participate in the traditional "college life" were deterred. Epithets and expressions of resentment further pushed Jews from campus activities and deterred them from applying to college at all (Takaki, 1993).

Jewish academic success came not from any particular aptitude or genius, wrote Steinberg (1974), but rather merely from their willingness to undergo sacrifices, persevering beyond discrimination and social injustices to make the most of their academic career. The perception of a "Jewish invasion" of elite Eastern colleges came from the fact that Jews sent their children to college a generation or two before other immigrants such as Italians, Armenians, and Slavs. Nearly anyone with a penchant for education and the determination to succeed, Steinberg (1974) continued, could have availed themselves of the newly created opportunities for outsiders. Nevertheless, through curricular reform and the explosion of interest in student activities, Jews were made aware - and caught in the center - of a battleground between the old class and the rising bourgeoisie. Without the economic resources to join forces with the leisure class, Jews were forcibly excluded from groups of privileged background (Horowitz, 1987; Steinberg, 1974).

Finding no welcome from their classmates, Jews faced a profusion of

anti-Semitism on campuses across the country; college life essentially confirmed and intensified the growing elitism of late-nineteenth-century American life. Most students learned to live the high life by buying exorbitantly and rarely paying the bills. This indulgence, wrote Canby (1936), "was scurrilous but not insolent, bawdy but not obscene." The overwhelmingly white and Protestant men who participated in college life gained contact with young men from other regions, but they did not become tolerant of those from other ethnic groups (Horowitz, 1987). Jews remained wary of their origins, keeping a low profile and focusing on their schooling rather than on their wallets.

Nevertheless, exclusion from the mainstream did not necessarily shape their choices within college life. Like other serious students who had preceded them, most had not come to college to play games and pranks. Most Jews imagined that Ivy League schools would provide the opportunity to advance in society. It was assumed that academic success would lead to law school or medical school, although as Halperin (2001) found, Jews would encounter anti-Semitism even more often in admissions policies for the top schools of medicine in the United States, along with discrimination against Blacks, Catholics, and women. Jewish quotas limited enrollment at the medical schools of Yale, Dartmouth, and the Universities of Michigan and Pennsylvania (Halperin, 2001). Nevertheless, the Jewish respect for scholarship set them further apart from other students.

The clubbish atmosphere established in institutions of higher education by an environment of friendships, social development, fraternity houses, good sportsmanship, [and] athletic teams (Rudolph, 1962) alienated Jews. What had begun as a caste system separating the sons of Jewish businessmen and the sons of Jewish merchants evolved into a hierarchy of elitism on the college campus dominated by the wealthy Protestant men who set patterns of discrimination that seeped into all aspects of college life. Literary magazines, debating societies, and musical clubs refused membership to Jews in fear that their numbers were simply too great for their campus (Horowitz, 1987). They were certainly excluded from historically Christian fraternities and thus began to form their own in response.

Despite the expectations of collegians' parents who hoped for their children's assured economic well-being through public education and college studies, college and university life did not necessarily give Jews the social experience they might need to advance in the new world. Schools were supposed to be hospitable to their students. These "outsiders" wanted to succeed in their undergraduate academics so that they would have hopeful futures as doctors, lawyers, or in other professions (Horowitz, 1987). They had no time for extracurricular foolishness, and thus largely ignored the college life altogether. Those that were interested in Greek life formed their

own fraternities and sororities. Jews seemed to threaten the holy balance of "getting by" in one's classes, "destroying the unity of the college" by raising the expectations for schoolwork by the professors (Horowitz, 1987, p. 79). Jewish students were the scapegoat of college men (and later women) who decreased the value of their "gentleman's C" (Steinberg, 1974), a grade considered honorable and praiseworthy by those students who spent more time in pubs and on the athletic fields than in the library. Steinberg (1989) wrote that given the "taboo on scholarship" by non-Jews, "Jewish academic success aroused considerable resentment" (p. 230).

For most Jews, training in *yeshiva* (Jewish school) and in family had instilled a devotion to learning surpassing that of Gentiles. Their persistence resulted in the winning of college honors far greater than their ratio to the student body (Horowitz, 1987). The growing numbers of Jews seemed to threaten the Protestant world, rising to an intense pitch because they had become attuned to the new possibilities of learning. Jews entered a situation of expanding educational opportunity, and with the goals and changing curriculum of higher education closely aligned with Jewish interests and talents, Jewish students were bound to succeed. Steinberg (1974) questioned whether the Jews would have distinguished themselves so academically if coursework had retained its emphasis on Latin, Greek, and other classical subjects.

Collegiate culture thus drew careful battle lines between the Jews and the rest of the community. On one side were the students who looked to the extracurriculum of athletics, journalism, fraternities, and other clubs for the real education. The other side held Jewish students inculcated with aspirations of upward mobility who knew that academic success would open the door for professional opportunities in the future. For those who chose secular educations over strictly Jewish institutions like those established in New York and Cincinnati, Jewish identity, regardless of saliency, proved to be a real barrier to success; quotas limited Jewish enrollment regardless of observance (Gorelick, 1981; Horowitz, 1987; Steinberg 1974). Such issues would be addressed in the establishment of the first Jewish-sponsored, non-sectarian university in the United States in 1948.

Brandeis University: A Host at Last

The former site of Middlesex University in Waltham, Massachusetts was a likely setting for the founding of a Jewish-sponsored institution of higher education. Founded in 1926 and primarily a veterinary and medical school, in its evolution the university had quickly evolved to become a refuge for Jews discriminated against elsewhere (Sachar, 1995). Despite his upbringing in the Protestant elite, Dr. John Hall Smith, the school's founder and foremost advocate, later grounded Middlesex's accreditation problems in its

high graduation rate of Jewish doctors. When he died in 1944, the school struggled to remain open, abandoning many Jewish students' hopes for success in the medical field (Goldstein, 1951).

Long before inquiries into Middlesex's standards, however, Rabbi Israel Goldstein of New York had assessed the need for a Jewish-sponsored institution of higher learning in America that did not have integral ties to a rabbinical school such as Yeshiva University/RIETS (Goldstein, 1951). It was evident to Goldstein that a secular school based on broad Jewish values, open to both Jews and Gentiles, should be organized by the collective Jewish community to answer the problems Jews were having when quotas and practice rigorously limited their participation in college life. With the endorsement of physicist Albert Einstein and the financial backing of Julius Silver of the Polaroid Corporation, the Jewish communities of Boston and New York approved the founding of Brandeis University in 1948, named for the Jewish Supreme Court Justice from Louisville whose services to the Jewish people would serve as "an inspiration to American youth" (Goldstein, 1951, p. 79).

The curriculum was a prescribed program for a degree in liberal arts, but with direction and guidance a student could follow pre-medical pursuits; the medical and veterinary schools had been eliminated at the time of Middlesex's demise (Brandeis University, 1954). The campus had to be immediately renovated and expanded upon to accommodate increasing enrollments due to the G.I. Bill of Rights and residential students. The school's first president, Abram L. Sachar, was charged with shaping an institutional culture commensurate to the founding mission and goals. Despite the example of other emerging experimental schools at that time such as Bennington, Antioch, Reed, and Sarah Lawrence, Brandeis University would remain a testament to the core curriculum of natural sciences, humanities, and the social sciences (Sachar, 1995). Early faculty members included composers Irving Fine and Leonard Bernstein, former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, socialist Herbert Marcuse, journalist Max Lerner, and civil rights activist Jacob "Jerry" Cohen. In its formative years, Brandeis quickly established itself as a haven for students of all backgrounds with real interest in furthering their knowledge led by world-renowned scholars (Brandeis University, 1954).

Brandeis' commitment to non-sectarianism under the sponsorship of the Jewish community was manifest in all forms of student life. Although the majority of students have always been Jewish, the 1952 student body became outraged over the rumor of the building of a single chapel to be used for Jewish purposes only. In response, President Sachar announced plans for a three-chapel complex in which Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism would each find a home (Sachar, 1995). The following year, Brandeis gained accreditation and opened its first graduate school, and conferred honorary

degrees to scholars and politicians of various religions.

Today, the delicate balance between non-sectarianism and Jewish sponsorship presents many opportunities for multicultural and diversity programming with stress on Jewish pride and outreach. The context and climate of college campuses today creates an atmosphere ripe for religious exploration and involvement, providing a sense of community involvement and ties to a spiritual outlet (Levine and Cureton, 1998). The following section illustrates the role of the university in enhancing student learning through religion. Specifically, student affairs practitioners can use religion and spirituality to inform practice with students whose Jewish beliefs are a salient part of their identity.

Jewish Students in the American University: Implications for Student Affairs Practitioners

American colleges and universities have reported an increase in the number of students from religious minorities (Schlosser & Sedlacek, 2001). As a result, institutions of higher education must be sensitive to the needs and issues of their students (Temkins & Evans, 1998). Over 65 years ago, the Student Personnel Point of View (American Council on Education, 1937) indicated that moral and religious values are a significant component of a student's being. As the face of American Judaism evolves, student personnel must become actively aware of the institutional role in using religion to holistically develop students as integrated citizens of the university community and provide a framework for spiritual development (Temkin & Evans, 1998).

Research continues to demonstrate that religion plays an important role in the lives of college students and has a significant effect on moral and ethical development (Butler, 1989; Dillon, 1996). Religious involvement thus appears to provide rich opportunities for student development as a whole. However, as Temkin and Evans (1998) noted, "cooperation between student affairs staff and campus-based religious personnel...is virtually nonexistent" (p. 65). Collaboration between these two groups can foster relationships that contribute to a Jewish student's sense of belonging and meaning on a campus whose population is predominantly of another religion (Schlosser & Sedlacek, 1998; Temkin & Evans, 1998). For example, Jewish organizations can inform housing and dining personnel of traditions that may affect the life of students in the residence halls. Students may then be permitted to light Sabbath candles in their rooms under staff supervision as part of a religious observance or know what ingredients go into recipes at the dining halls.

Diamant and Cooper (1991) expand on this theme by emphasizing that a student may choose to matriculate at a college merely because of its ability to cater to the student's needs as a practicing Jew. Most colleges and

universities in metropolitan or suburban areas with high concentrations of Jews offer an academic track in Jewish Studies. Even if a student chooses not to major in such a field, one may take the opportunity to use such offerings to explore the academic and historical nature of Judaism and perhaps meet other Jewish classmates. Diamant and Cooper write that "Jewish academics are less important than Jewish social life for many students, who want information about the presence of other Jews on campus and the availability of Jewish social, cultural, and religious programs" (p. 160). As a result, many students tend to choose Jewish-affiliated universities or at least urban institutions, where Jewish communities tend to be larger and Jewish culture is stronger (Gose, 1999).

For student affairs professionals, this means that not all Jewish students are interested in a curricular examination of Judaism, but that they may merely need to connect with a group of students whose interests match theirs on different levels. Hillel, the International Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, offers on its website a comprehensive search of nearly 500 colleges and universities across the globe and offers contact information to prospective students (Hillel, 2003). Its professionals are a mixture of student affairs personnel, Jewish scholars, social workers, and grant-writers who advise students and offer weekly religious services, student offices, common areas and recreation facilities, kosher kitchens, and a number of student clubs (Jacobson, 2001). Temkin and Evans (1998) stipulate that in order to facilitate holistic growth, religious advisors must work with other campus student services to "enrich the quality and extent of programs for students" (p. 68). An environmental approach to working with religious minorities can make the campus climate more welcoming.

Conclusion

Today's practices on campus are informed by injustices throughout the history of American higher education. Student affairs professionals can use research and scholarly works to help Jewish students find a sense of belonging on a campus in which their religious values and traditions are not visibly accepted. Partnerships across functional areas are necessary to integrate the campus as a total living environment for students with Jewish lifestyles. As students find themselves more interested in exploring Jewish identity, the campus should provide the necessary resources for them - both academic and extracurricular - to begin to investigate how the university setting can enhance their moral and spiritual development.

A historical survey of Jewish students in American colleges and universities finds them caught between wanting to merely be an included part of the campus atmosphere and seeking an educational haven for Jewish thought and study. On mainstream campuses, integration into the student body actually began with an immersion into study and learning, which

paradoxically separated Jewish students from the rest of the population (Horowitz, 1987). As they gradually became accepted by others, Jews sought to embrace their individuality through the development of Jewish student groups and organizations (Steinberg, 1974). Organizations such as Hillel and Jewish-interest Greek organizations offer a network for students to find a community and place where they can find support for the values they uphold (Diamant & Cooper, 1991). Today, students have reached their goal of assimilation without sacrificing their religious practices.

On predominantly Jewish campuses, students have the experience of being in a religious majority whose traditions are explicitly supported by administration, academic departments, and fellow students. Students at Yeshiva University, Hebrew Union College, and the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary embrace the opportunity to publicly practice lifelong traditions and worship along with the rest of the student body. These unique institutions afford students a learning environment nearly free from anti-Semitism or persecution that historically prevented Jews from partaking in activities that campus life has had to offer.

Despite the difficulties, Jewish students have had throughout the history of American higher education, their contributions to individual campuses and to the face of American colleges and to universities in general are manifold. Consequently, Jewish students themselves have exploited the values of university learning to uplift and support American Judaism as a whole. Although the early colonial colleges offered few chances for a Jewish student to matriculate and learn, the various opportunities for Jewish students today allow them not only to choose a campus, but also to have the support of college or university administrators in addition to fellow students. Student affairs practitioners can better assist their Jewish students by partnering with other campus resources and offices to create an inviting and inclusive community.

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Self-Efficacy and Student Leaders: The Effects of Gender, Previous Leadership Experiences, and Institutional Environment

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This study assesses the self-efficacy of 188 undergraduate student leaders at a large, public, Research-I institution in the Midwest. Specifically, this study examines the impact of prior leadership experiences, gender, and perceptions of institutional support on student leaders' self-efficacy. Findings suggest that men and women differ in leadership self-efficacy and perception of their environment. Support and organizational type appear to impact self-efficacy, but past leadership experiences do not.

Introduction

On college and university campuses, students play an essential role in the development and implementation of policies, events, and campus climate (Astin, 1984; Kuh 1993a, 1993b, 2000; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Strange, 1996). Student leaders emerge and direct their peers in these efforts (Depp, 1993). In order to effectively promote development and growth in these student leaders, a student affairs practitioner must be educated about student leadership. Typically, student leadership theories focus on personality traits, innate abilities, established positions of authority, and leadership styles (Rost, 1991). In contrast to focusing on how students lead, this study considers leadership self-efficacy, a different and distinct approach in examining student leadership.

Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as the "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Self-efficacy is highly domain specific (Pressley & McCormick, 1995) in that it can be unique and separate for specific tasks or situations (Bandura, 1997). Leadership self-efficacy ultimately determines how leaders behave, think, and become motivated to be involved with particular roles (Bandura, 1993, 1995, 1997). As a leader develops greater levels of self-efficacy, motivation to complete the specific task also increases (Pintrich & Schunk, 1995; Stage, 1996). Therefore, increased self-efficacy strengthens motivation which in turn influences a student's behavior to complete the given task. Though the main factors in the development of self-efficacy are based on personal experiences and continued participation in a particular activity (Bandura, 1993, 1995, 1997; Pajares, 1996; Stage, 1996), other factors such as gender (Depp, 1993; Mayo & Christenfeld, 1999) and institutional environment (Bloland, Stamatakis, & Rogers, 1996; Kuh, 2000) can also have strong effects.