

**Main Point:**

Discusses and repeats issues surrounding the different aspects of assimilation and how one-sided assimilation into the dominant cultures is. The act of assimilation is “to make ‘similar’ to the dominant group the process by which newly arrived ethnic and racial groups take on the language, mannerism and customs of the dominant culture. Feagin looked at the assimilation cycle, stages of assimilation and power-conflict theories in order to explain why the dominant culture remains at the forefront of other races and cultures.

**Central Issues and Concepts:**

- There are four stages to the race relations’ cycle: contacts, competition, accommodation and assimilation. In the contact stage, people are brought together by migration and exploration however this eventually leads to economic competition. Contact between hosts people allow competition to flow, which then lead to adjustment, an often-unstable condition in the cycle. The last stage of the cycle is assimilation in which different ethnic groups are expected to take on the mannerisms and language of the dominant culture.
- Many groups have adapted to the cultural differences of the dominant race in the society they live in. The process of assimilating themselves into the dominant culture is done in different phases according to Gordon’s Seven Dimensions of Adaptation. Cultural assimilation: the change of cultural patterns to those of the core society. Structural assimilation: the penetration of cliques and associations of the core society at the primary-group level. Marital assimilation: significant intermarriage. Identification assimilation: development of a sense of identity linked to the core society. Attitude-receptional: absence of prejudice and discrimination. Behavior-receptional: absence of intentional assimilation. Civic assimilation: absence of value and power conflict.
- Although the cycles explain the stages in which many immigrants and ethnic groups move through in order to obtain complete assimilation into the dominant culture, the cycles are often viewed as biased for lack of sufficient analysis of the adaptation of different ethnic groups. But rather exploitation occurs when forcing them to assimilate into the dominant culture.
- The Split Labor Market Theory explains the discrimination that occurs within the Labor Market. Capitalists for low wages bring in nonwhite workers, however the whites already in the labor market fear losing their jobs and as a result prevent Blacks from climbing up the job ladder. As a result of this the labor market is split and Blacks receive less income.

**Two Key Quotes:**

“The traditional assimilation model does not explain the persistence of ethnicity in the United States—the emphasis among immigrants on ethnicity as a way of becoming American and, in

recent decades, the self-conscious attempts to create ethnic identity and manipulate ethnic symbols (p.25).”

“They seem to have forgotten that exploitation is the driving force that gives meaning to the study of racial and ethnic relations (p.25).”

**Two Questions:**

- It is clear that many ethnic groups that come to the United States inevitably assimilate into the dominant culture, but has there been any ethnic group who chose not to in any way? Are any of these ethnic groups present in society today?
- In what ways are different ethnic groups exploited as a way to achieve assimilation?