THEORIES OF ASSIMILATION - LeMay Ch. 2

What is assimilation?
- Cultural norms: food, clothing, etc.
- Job Market
- Outgroup marriage
- Identification as hyphenated Americans
- Less prejudice by majority
- No discrimination
- No value or power conflict

Why do some groups assimilate at different rates?

Psychological reasons
- Relative hardship: yes, discrimination sucks, but it's better than where we came from

- Drive for Achievement: how is education valued; prestigious jobs valued

- Voluntary vs. forced migration

Sociological reasons
- Amount of contact/competition
- Visible cultural differences

Economic reasons
- Economic conditions (recession, economic boom)
- Economic rank and skills of minority group
SYSTEMS MODEL OF INCORPORATION

What factors are included in LeMay's Systems model?

\[ Y = X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 \]

Incorporation rate = Majority's fear function + Size of Minority function + Marginal membership function + similarity of cultures function

How to operationalize this?

Incorporation rate: block voting, turnout, willingness to vote against one of its own (cross-group voting)

Fear: unemployment, crime, degree of segregation, Time of entry (economic timing, etc.)

Size: relative percentage of a minority group; perception of size, birth rate

Marginal membership: willingness to acculturate: outgroup marriage, size of ethnic press

Similar culture function: location patterns, language, skin color, behavior
STRATEGIES FOR MINORITIES

What are the strategies?
Why are some chosen and some not?

- Accommodation/Economic: occupational niche: Asian Americans

- Accommodation/Political: political machines/Irish, Italians, Greeks

- Separatism/Physical: Amish, Native Americans; Mormons

- Separatism/Psychological: Black Muslims, Hasidic Jews

- Radicalism/old-style: e.g., Socialism (Jews, Poles, Germans, Slavs)

- Radicalism/New-style: Protests, Black Panthers, Cesar Chavez
As early as 1775, Benjamin Franklin, railed against what he declared to be the detrimental influence of German settlers in Pennsylvania:

“How should the Palatine boors be suffered to swarm into our settlements and by herding together establish their language and manners to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our anglifying them?”
APPLYING THE SYSTEMS MODEL OF INCORPORATION

What factors are included in LeMay's Systems model?

Incorporation rate = Majority's fear function (X1) + Size of Minority function (X2) + Marginal membership function (X3) + similarity of cultures function (X4)

Other Factors
  + Timing?
  + Concentration
  + Push/Pull Factors for Immigration

How do these factors apply to the:

Chinese? Greeks
Japanese Latinos
Koreans Blacks
German Arab Americans
Scandinavians
Asian Americans
One of the nation’s smallest racial minorities (5%)
Well-educated
Recent immigrants
Low poverty rates
Business ownership
Diverse languages/nations

Chinese Americans
Largest Asian American Group
Early immigrants were sojourners
Early immigration was mostly male
Welcomed in the beginning
High levels of discrimination, even violence
Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882
Niche labor/business: Laundry, restaurants, textiles
Organized Chinese social, civic, economic orgs.
Cohesive and extended family has facilitated
economic assimilation
WWII: manpower shortage created opportunities

Japanese Americans
10% of Asian-American population
Seen as a cheap labor source
Alternative to Chinese labor force.
West Coast concentration
Majority of young males
Highly literate
Faced immediate hostility (spillover from Chinese)
California Alien Land Act
Ozawa v. the United States (1921)
Immigration Act of 1924
WWII: Japanese easy targets
Korematsu vs. United States (1944) – internment
Wartime relocation spread out the Japanese
Japanese American Citizen League
McCarran-Walter Immigration and Naturalization Act

**Korean Americans**
- Classic case of the economic rout
- 10% of Asian American population
- Early Immigrants mostly male
- Second wave after Korean War (mostly wives of GIs)
- Third wave in 1965 after national quota system ended
- Small business owners (retail and service)
- Often in black areas, causing resentment

**German Americans**
- Largest of the Euro-American ancestry group
- Migration long and consistent
- Over 10 percent of all legal immigrants from 1990-00
- Service during Revolutionary War
- Potato famine pushed many to emigrate
- 1848 Revolution pushed many intellectuals out
- Civil War opened job opportunities
- Homestead Act of 1862 attracted Germans to U.S.
- After WWI ad WWII increased anti-German attitudes

**Scandinavian Americans**
- First to explore New World
Numbers not substantial until after Civil War
Generally very successful
Strong work ethic
Gravitated to Midwest and its cheap land
Protestant, avoided anti-Catholic sentiment
Religion common bond with majority
Recent immigrants highly educated, professionals

**Greek Americans**
Arrived in significant #s after 1880
Economic conditions in Greece was push factor
Overpopulation in Greece was also a push factor
Many early immigrants were young and unskilled
Exploited by padrone system
Small business
Early 20th cent. union issue spur anti-Greek attitudes
Example: McGill, NV, 3 Greeks were killed in 1908
Today, few negative attitudes about Greeks

**Hispanic Americans**
Late 20th century immigration saw declining European immigration & increased Asian & Hispanic immigr. Decidedly young and urban
Over 20% of all Hispanic families below poverty
High school graduation rates 54% (83% for whites)

**Chicano Americans**
Mexican-American War ended 1848
Mexico lost about 45% of its land
Mexican residents mistreated
Early 20th century Mexican labor used to fill void
Left by restrictions on Asian immigration
Bracero program 1942 (pull factor)
Proximity to Mexico, poor education, & racial bias
Slows assimilation