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English III
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The Need for an Anglo American Lifestyle

While many cultures have successfully assimilated into Anglo-American society, there are other cultures whom have found assimilation either impossible or ho have chosen not to fully assimilate, yet retain their own culture, while reaping the benefits of the American lifestyle. America is perceived as the great melting pot; the land of endless opportunity. Fixed as they were on this image, many immigrants fled a disruptive revolution to find a place in America (139). Be it a revolution in their home land or being detained behind barbwired fences, the immigrants I'm speaking of are all in search of a better life for tomorrow in America.

The Cubans assimilated into the American culture by opening businesses, restaurants, night clubs, and by holding prominent political positions. In doing so, the Americans felt as though the Cubans were trying to recreate pre-Revolutionary Havana. However, the Cubans only wanted a better life. They had no intention of mixing with the American culture. The Japanese Americans assimilated into life in the Manzanar internment camp by making their surroundings as they were in Japan, creating lush gardens filled with cactus plants and rock gardens which resembled Mount Fujiyama (100).

Both the Cubans and the Japanese were deemed less than American. The Cubans were acceptable as long as they did not assert their hotness, nor their Cubanness on the street under a shady palm tree(136), or hold a prominent position in Anglo Miami. The Japanese Americans were bearable as long as they were locked up. The public anger at the "treachery" of the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor left many fearing disloyalty and sabotage (98). Although both cultures were deemed unacceptable by Anglo-American society, the Japanese Americans and the Cubans went about setting up their lives as if they were in their homelands, not fully assimilating into the American culture. During this process, the Cubans started a new little world within Miami and the Japanese Americans too started a new world, a world within confinement.

The Japanese Americans were forced into confinement camps due to the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Here in these confinement camps they were forced into exile from the American way of life. Although, most were born in America; they had no other models, no other way of life, no choice but to assimilate (102). Whereas, the Cubans, made a choice to leave their home land due to a political revolution started by Castro. The Cubans chose to stay segregated. Not to become part of the American culture, yet become a culture of it's own within America. They desired to hang on to the essence of their culture, their "hotness" (136).

Another difference between the two cultures was how they went about prospering. The Japanese had to find employment within the internment camps, while many successful Cubans were able to pool their resources and become prominent within the business world of Miami.

The fact that Anglo Americans excluded both cultures, Anglos simply did not understand the assimilation process, nor the desire for a better life; a life that was considered a doubtful goal at best (139). Both Cubans and Japanese were perceived "satisfactory" (141) when they appeared to fully share the same wants and needs as the Anglo Americans. Both Miami and Manzanar had "become a world unto itself, with it's own logic and familiar ways" (101).

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