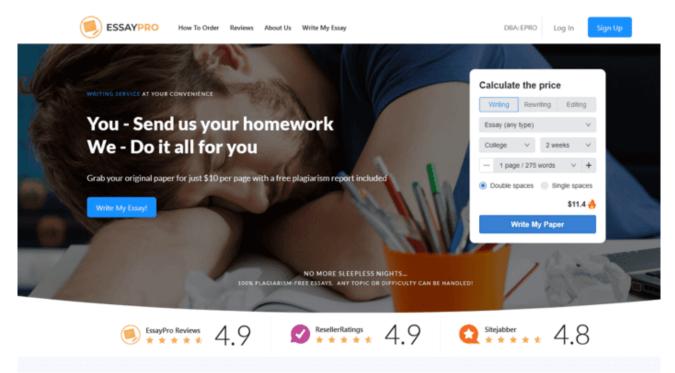
Multiculturalism vs Assimilation



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Multiculturalism vs AssimilationAmerica is a place where many cultures and races co-exist, so there are many different opinions and beliefs. Of course there is bound to be tension and misunderstandings, which unfortunately escalates (in some cases) into violence that we hear about in the media. So what is the solution? Should we all assimilate to one standard or should we recognize our individual cultures and consider ourselves multicultural? The answer is not an easy one to define. America is made up of the gray area between these two opposing views. Thomas Bray, an editor for the Detroit News talks about the recent poll against bilingual education in California in his editorial, Memorial Day and Multiculturalism, in which he presents a strong argument for assimilation, "A nation unsure of it's roots and values may not survive long as a nation- witness how close even `multicultural` Canada is coming to crack up because of the drive by separatist French Quebec to secede and form an independent nation.". (Bray, 3) Bray suggests that to be a strong nation, we need to define what is `American` and everyone should live up to one standard. American culture, beliefs, and values should all be defined. Bray says that if we don't have one standard than how can we be as one nation? How can we be identified as one nation? He emphasizes the need for assimilation, "Assimilation is a bad word these days. But it's a tested method of achieving `E pluribus Unum`. (Bray, 4) Perhaps it need not be harshly administered in the old days, but a country that has no standards to

assimilate to is a country without a core and a country deep in trouble." Bray's view is that of many Americans who think that America and American culture should be defined with roots that go deep into British history, and not by it's many other roots around the world. That America can be defined by one mainstream culture that everyone in the country assimilates to. I believe that there are too many different people in the country to think that everyone is the same. The fact is that people are different, and no one can change that.As part of our study of culture, my peers and I were asked to write a paper reflecting our own cultural background. I have always considered myself "all American". I shop, I eat fast food, I drive my own car, and watch too much television.

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