

# The Anthropology of Education



## Classic Readings

*Revised Edition*

Edited by

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*(City University of New York)*



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# Preface



By David Julian Hodges

## CLASSIC READINGS IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

The formal study of anthropology and education is a little over fifty years old. Many of those who pioneered the field are persons I knew. Dr. Ethel J. Alpenfels, my doctoral mentor at New York University is one of those. A brief mention is made of Dr. Alpenfels' role in the development of anthropology and education in Chapter One of this book in the article by George D. Spindler. Few students who have taken any of my anthropology courses have left the course unaware of my keen admiration of my teacher, or unaware of the profound influence Dr. Alpenfels continues to have on my life and on my career as an anthropologist.

I have compiled this collection of articles because I believe there is a great need today for the insights that the articles provide. The anthropologists whose articles are included here are masters in the field. Their names constitute a veritable who's who in cultural anthropology. Mead, Linton, Benedict, and Redfield, to name a few, are legends in the field. You will see from each of their articles, and from the articles of other authors represented in this text, that they gave specific attention to anthropology and education. The need for their thinking in this important realm of study is as great today, and arguably greater, than when their articles were first written, some as long as fifty years ago. Their incredible work and insights must not fall prey to the awful tendency of our era that scholarship should be both instant and disposable.

Still, many of these articles are out-of-print and otherwise unavailable. In previous years, I could only make a few of them available for the use of my classes in anthropology and education, despite their currency and importance, vis á vis the pressing issues of our day.

Students who are using this anthology are reading articles written by the best of the best anthropologists who have applied their insights to education. The articles are indeed classics, and they are important tools for any teacher of anthropology and education to use in a quest to inspire and influence students, as Ethel Alpenfels inspired and influenced me.

This anthology is divided into five chapters, each dealing with an aspect of its general theme, anthropology in relation to education.

- Culture concept and education—exploration of the idea of culture and the meaning and dynamics of the culture concept in education.
- Anthropology *of* education—the anthropology of how culture is transmitted from generation to generation through child rearing and enculturation in the broadest sense.
- Anthropology *and* education—the conjunction of the disciplines of anthropology and education. Anthropological insights related to the idea of schooling, the institution of the school, and the training of teachers.
- Anthropology *in* education—the influence, effects, and potential of anthropology in education.
- Anthropology of paradox in education—the study of culture patterns and cultural transmission when these conflict with or contradict what society purports to hold in high esteem.

The very useful framework that places emphasis on the prepositions *of*, *and*, and *in* distinguishing various ways anthropology can relate to education was first introduced in *Cultural Relevance and Educational Issues*, by Francis Ianni and Edward Storey. The categories used here differ somewhat from their use by Ianni and Storey, but using a framework of this sort provides clarity and definition, and this previous work is gratefully acknowledged.

David Julian Hodges



# Chapter One



## The Culture Concept

### READINGS IN THIS SECTION

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# Introduction



By David Julian Hodges

Does anthropology have anything to contribute to the enterprise of teaching and learning? What contributions does the culture concept make to our understanding of human behavior and the acquisition of values? The earliest influence of anthropology in education can be traced to the beginning years of the twentieth century—for example with Emile Durkheim, an anthropologist (sometimes claimed by sociology) and philosopher John Dewey who sought to align education with the attitudinal and behavioral requirements of a cultural democracy. The readings in Chapter One, however, are from the middle years of that century, a period we could describe as a tenuous awakening or at least a period of consolidation of perspectives pertaining to the intersection of anthropology and education. These readings set the stage for exploring how culture shapes assumptions, beliefs, and ultimately behavior in all aspects of the human experience and specifically in education.

The readings in Chapter One move quickly from a general introduction to the concept of culture as the core concern of cultural anthropology to the central message expressed as a juxtaposition of the anthropological perspective regarding indigenous cultures and modern ones. The readings provide a straightforward description of the relevance of the study of culture to modern problems and an overview of how the disciplines of anthropology and education have come together around the goals of education. We like to believe that the attributes of our own culture are unique and original. However the final reading in Chapter One, Ralph Linton’s “One Hundred Percent American” illuminates the fundamental error of such a belief and, in addition, points to the need to apply cultural analysis to our own schools and the communities of which they are a part. Readers are encouraged to become aware of their beliefs about culture in general and their own cultures in particular, and to be prepared to challenge their assumptions and beliefs through the readings in Chapter One as well as the readings in the remaining parts of this anthology.

“Magical Practices among the Nacirema” by Horace Miner describes the practices of the familiar-sounding people of Nacirema that seem to betray a strong underlying belief in magic and superstition. Miner, a professor at the University of Michigan for most of his career, was deeply interested in examining the cultural contexts in which the individual actions of people take place. In a surprising and humorous way, this reading puts side by side the anthropological perspective regarding indigenous cultures and what we take to be advanced, modern cultures.

Frederick Gearing begins to make the connection between anthropology and education by connecting the study of American Indians (Native Americans) with the

concepts of anthropology and describes ways in which “educational profits” may be gained by such study. (It should be noted here that Gearing is given a pass in using the term “Indian” in his article, since his article was written in the 60s.) The focus is on teaching anthropology, under some suitable rubric in order to bring about educational benefits in the broadest sense. The first of these “profits” pertains to how a proper study of an Indian community will permit a student to recognize that any culturally patterned behavior, no matter how bizarre it may appear to outside observers, makes plausible sense, is believable, and fully human. This perspective leads one to critically ask, “What don’t I know about what I am observing?” When we come to understand that those who are not like us, “others” so to speak, are not crazy or evil, the risk to our common good may be reduced. The second of these “profits” pertains to how the study of Indians can help students see and comprehend their own world more clearly. To this end, anthropology brings the critical heuristic device of comparison. In heterogeneous educational settings, the study of alien cultures can enable students to develop a deeper understanding and tolerance for their own and other cultures.

The essay by George Spindler is a mid-twentieth century overview of the potential, successes, gaps, and limitations associated with anthropology as a contributor to the field of education and, to some extent, vice versa. It outlines how both anthropology and education relate to mutual interests and influences and chronicles the state of formal and institutional collaboration between these disciplines. Spindler argues that anthropology, as the study of man and his works, provides a loose integration of much that is vitally important concerning man and his behavior. The view of education as a total process of growth and adaptation, leads to the conception of education as the process of transmitting culture, including skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and beliefs as well as specific behavior patterns. Anthropology as content or curricula in education at all levels is identified as one application of the discipline. Anthropology as a frame of reference and a methodology for analysis of educational processes is another application along with the potential to study and influence educational processes as affected by social class and community structure.

The influence of anthropology as a potential contributor to and shaper of *foundation fields* pertains to the context of professional education. These fields provide the framework for the development of programs where teachers, administrators, counselors, and others are trained. The general rubrics of the foundation fields are sociological, psychological, philosophical, historical, biological, and comparative. In Spindler’s perspective, the core of the potential contribution of anthropology is in the attention to culture as an influence on behavior, as a perception mediating a set of patterns, and in the attention to the variable forms these patterns take. There are also many areas of potential application of anthropologically based concepts and methods in educational research in our own society, to which, according to Spindler, more attention should be directed.

# Magical Practices Among the Nacirema



By Horace Miner

The anthropologist has become so familiar with the diversity of ways in which different peoples behave in similar situations that he is not apt to be surprised by even the most exotic customs. In fact, if all of the logically possible combinations of behavior have not been found somewhere in the world, he is apt to suspect that they must be present in some yet undescribed tribe ... In this light, the magical beliefs and practices of the Nacirema present such unusual aspects that it seems desirable to describe them as an example of the extremes to which human behavior can go.

Professor Linton first brought the ritual of the Nacirema to the attention of anthropologists twenty years ago, but the culture of this people is still very poorly understood. They are a North American group living in the territory between the Canadian Cree, the Yaqui and Tarahumare of Mexico, and the Carib and Arawak of the Antilles. Little is known of their origin, although tradition states that they came from the east. According to Nacirema mythology, their nation was originated by a culture hero, Notgnihsaw, who is otherwise known for two great feats of strength—the throwing of a piece of wampum across the river Pa-To-Mac and the chopping down of a cherry tree in which the Spirit of Truth resided.

Nacirema culture is characterized by a highly developed market economy which has evolved in a rich natural habitat. While much of the people's time is devoted to economic pursuits, a large part of the fruits of these labors and a considerable portion of the day are spent in ritual activity. The focus of this activity is the human body, the appearance and health of which loom as a dominant concern in the ethos of the people. While such a concern is certainly not unusual, its ceremonial aspects and associated philosophy are unique.

The fundamental belief underlying the whole system appears to be that the human body is ugly and that its natural tendency is to debility and disease. Incarcerated in such a body, man's only hope is to avert these characteristics through the use of the powerful influences of ritual and ceremony. Every household has one or more shrines devoted to this purpose. The more powerful individuals in the society have several shrines in their houses and, in fact, the opulence of a house is often referred to in terms

Horace Miner, "Magical Practices Among the Nacirema," from *Exploring the Ways of Mankind*, pp. 521–526. Copyright © 1971 Cengage. Permission to reprint granted by the publisher.

of the number of such ritual centers it possesses. Most houses are of wattle and daub construction, but the shrine rooms of the more wealthy are walled with stone. Poorer families imitate the rich by applying pottery plaques to their shrine walls.

While each family has at least one such shrine, the rituals associated with it are not family ceremonies but are private and secret. The rites are normally only discussed with children, and then only during the period when they are being initiated into these mysteries. I was able, however, to establish sufficient rapport with the natives to examine these shrines and to have the rituals described to me.

The focal point of the shrine is a box or chest which is built into the wall. In this chest are kept the many charms and magical potions without which no native believes he could live. These preparations are secured from a variety of specialized practitioners. The most powerful of these are the medicine men, whose assistance must be rewarded with substantial gifts. However, the medicine men do not provide the curative potions for their clients, but decide what the ingredients should be and then write them down in an ancient and secret language. This writing is understood only by the medicine men and by the herbalists who, for another gift, provide the required charm.

The charm is not disposed of after it has served its purpose, but is placed in the charm-box of the household shrine. As these magical materials are specific for certain ills, and the real or imagined maladies of the people are many, the charm-box is usually full to overflowing. The magical packets are so numerous that people forget what their purposes were and fear to use them again. While the natives are very vague on this point, we can only assume that the idea in retaining all the old magical materials is that their presence in the charm-box, before which the body rituals are conducted, will in some way protect the worshipper.

Beneath the charm-box is a small font. Each day every member of the family, in succession, enters the shrine room, bows his head before the charm-box, mingles different sorts of holy water in the font, and proceeds with a brief rite of ablution. The holy waters are secured from the Water Temple of the community, where the priests conduct elaborate ceremonies to make the liquid ritually pure.

In the hierarchy of magical practitioners, and below the medicine men in prestige, are specialists whose designation is best translated "holy-mouth-men." The Nacirema have an almost pathological horror of and fascination with the mouth, the condition of which is believed to have a supernatural influence on all social relationships. Were it not for the rituals of the mouth, they believe that their teeth would fall out, their gums bleed, their jaws shrink, their friends desert them, and their lovers reject them. They also believe that a strong relationship exists between oral and moral characteristics. For example, there is a ritual ablution of the mouth for children which is supposed to improve their moral fiber.

The daily body ritual performed by everyone includes a mouth-rite. Despite the fact that these people are so punctilious about care of the mouth, this rite involves a practice which strikes the uninitiated stranger as revolting. It was reported to me that

the ritual consists of inserting a small bundle of hog hairs into the mouth, along with certain magical powders, and then moving the bundle in a highly formalized series of gestures.

In addition to the private mouth-rite, the people seek out a holy-mouth-man once or twice a year. These practitioners have an impressive set of paraphernalia, consisting of a variety of augers, awls, probes, and prods. The use of these objects in the exorcism of the evils of the mouth involves almost unbelievable ritual torture of the client. The holy-mouth-man opens the client's mouth and, using the above mentioned tools, enlarges any holes which decay may have created in the teeth. Magical materials are put into these holes. If there are no naturally occurring holes in the teeth, large sections of one or more teeth are gouged out so that the supernatural substance can be applied. In the client's view, the purpose of these ministrations is to arrest decay and to draw friends. The extremely sacred and traditional character of the rite is evident in the fact that the natives return to the holy-mouth-men year after year, despite the fact that their teeth continue to decay.

It is to be hoped that, when a thorough study of the Nacirema is made, there will be careful inquiry into the personality structure of these people. One has but to watch the gleam in the eye of a holy-mouth-man, as he jabs an awl into an exposed nerve, to suspect a certain amount of sadism is involved. If this can be established, a very interesting pattern emerges, for most of the population shows definite masochistic tendencies. It was to these that Professor Linton referred in discussing a distinctive part of the daily body ritual which is performed only by men. This part of the rite involves scraping and lacerating the surface of the face with a sharp instrument. Special women's rites are performed only four times during each lunar month, but what they lack in frequency is made up in barbarity. As part of this ceremony, women bake their heads in small ovens for about an hour. The theoretically interesting point is that what seems to be a preponderantly masochistic people have developed sadistic specialists.

The medicine men have an imposing temple, or *latipso*, in every community of any size. The more elaborate ceremonies required to treat very sick patients can only be performed at this temple. These ceremonies involve not only the thaumaturge but a permanent group of vestal maidens who move sedately about the temple chambers in distinctive costume and headdress.

The *latipso* ceremonies are so harsh that it is phenomenal that a fair proportion of the really sick natives who enter the temple ever recover. Small children whose indoctrination is still incomplete have been known to resist attempts to take them to the temple because "that is where you go to die." Despite this fact, sick adults are not only willing but eager to undergo the protracted ritual purification, if they can afford to do so. No matter how ill the supplicant or how grave the emergency, the guardians of many temples will not admit a client if he cannot give a rich gift to the custodian. Even after one has gained admission and survived the ceremonies, the guardians will not permit the neophyte to leave until he makes still another gift.

The supplicant entering the temple is first stripped of all his or her clothes. In everyday life the Nacirema avoids exposure of his body and its natural functions. Bathing and excretory acts are performed only in the secrecy of the household shrine, where they are ritualized as part of the body-rites. Psychological shock results from the fact that body secrecy is suddenly lost upon entry into the *latipso*. A man, whose own wife has never seen him in an excretory act, suddenly finds himself naked and assisted by a vestal maiden while he performs his natural functions into a sacred vessel. This sort of ceremonial treatment is necessitated by the fact that the excreta are used by a diviner to ascertain the course and nature of the client's sickness. Female clients, on the other hand, find their naked bodies are subjected to the scrutiny, manipulation and prodding of the medicine men.

Few supplicants in the temple are well enough to do anything but lie on their hard beds. The daily ceremonies, like the rites of the holy-mouth-men, involve discomfort and torture. With ritual precision, the vestals awaken their miserable charges each dawn and roll them about on their beds of pain while performing ablutions, in the formal movements of which the maidens are highly trained. At other times they insert magic wands in the supplicant's mouth or force him to eat substances which are supposed to be healing. From time to time the medicine men come to their clients and jab magically treated needles into their flesh. The fact that these temple ceremonies may not cure, and may even kill the neophyte, in no way decreases the people's faith in the medicine men.

There remains one other kind of practitioner, known as a "listener." This witch-doctor has the power to exorcise the devils that lodge in the heads of people who have been bewitched. The Nacirema believe that parents bewitch their own children. Mothers are particularly suspected of putting a curse on children while teaching them the secret body rituals. The counter-magic of the witch-doctor is unusual in its lack of ritual. The patient simply tells the "listener" all his troubles and fears, beginning with the earliest difficulties he can remember. The memory displayed by the Nacirema in these exorcism sessions is truly remarkable. It is not uncommon for the patient to bemoan the rejection he felt upon being weaned as a babe, and a few individuals even see their troubles going back to the traumatic effects of their own birth.

In conclusion, mention must be made of certain practices which have their base in native esthetics but which depend upon the pervasive aversion to the natural body and its functions. There are ritual fasts to make fat people thin and ceremonial feasts to make thin people fat. Still other rites are used to make women's breasts larger if they are small, and smaller if they are large. General dissatisfaction with breast shape is symbolized in the fact that the ideal form is virtually outside the range of human variation. A few women afflicted with almost inhuman hypermammary development are so idolized that they make a handsome living by simply going from village to village and permitting the natives to stare at them for a fee.

Reference has already been made to the fact that excretory functions are ritualized, routinized, and relegated to secrecy. Natural reproductive functions are similarly distorted. Intercourse is taboo as a topic and scheduled as an act. Efforts are made to avoid pregnancy by the use of magical materials or by limiting intercourse to certain phases of the moon. Conception is actually very infrequent. When pregnant, women dress so as to hide their condition. Parturition takes place in secret, without friends or relatives to assist, and the majority of women do not nurse their infants.

Our review of the ritual life of the Nacirema has certainly shown them to be a magic-ridden people. It is hard to understand how they have managed to exist so long under the burdens which they have imposed upon themselves. But even such exotic customs as these take on real meaning when they are viewed with the insight provided by Malinowski when he wrote:

Looking from far and above, from our high places of safety in the developed civilization, it is easy to see all the crudity and irrelevance of magic. But without its power and guidance early man could not have mastered his practical difficulties as he has done, nor could man have advanced to the higher stages of civilization.



# Why Indians?



By Frederick O. Gearing

Like American Indians, it happens, and that creates a certain handicap in pursuit of the current purpose. Liking something is a nice but rather trivial reason for suggesting that students study it, at least during the already crowded school day. The purpose here is to suggest that nontrivial, fully serious educational profit can be realized in the schools through the study of Indian communities, past and present. The case could perhaps be made more compellingly by an anthropologist who knows Indian life and finds that life personally unattractive. (Of which anthropologists there are, contrary to public myth, many; furthermore, to be such an anthropologist is quite respectable.)

Why Indians? I shall put the question in this form: What serious educational profits would accrue to a student who, after study, does not find Indian life especially attractive or fascinating or even interesting in and of itself?

North American Indians form, of course, a highly varied array of communities. Southwestern groups are best known to most and include farmers settled in tightly knit villages, as the Zuni, and include other groups, nomadic and seminomadic, who once lived by hunting and gathering and by raiding. Along the northwest coast, from southern Alaska to northern California, is another array of Indian communities which, as the Kwakiutl, were blessed by bountiful nature (in the form of salmon, mainly) to the degree that they spent a good deal of their time gathering quite useless surplus wealth and giving it away in a stylized, often arrogant way. Southward from that area and into the desert interior lived the economic opposites of the northwestern groups, the very poor, as the Paiutes, whose lives often were an unceasing struggle for survival, so much so that their various cultures seemed to include virtually any practice that would help keep body and soul together. Through the entire eastern half of the continent, from Florida into the far northern interior of Canada, lived a very large array of groups—those of the Great Lakes were gardeners and hunters, and those north of there solely hunters. The Eskimos covered the entire northern fringe of the continent. Finally, after the coming of Europeans and the horse, there occurred a cultural explosion of sorts which resulted in the creation, overnight as it were, of the horse-and-buffalo cultures of the High Plains, as among the famous Dakotas (Sioux) and Cheyenne. All these peoples spoke over 150 mutually unintelligible languages which fall into five large language families. Among these peoples are found all the basic forms of human kinship organizations, a welter of forms of political organization, a wide variety of religious belief and ritual.

Frederick O. Gearing, "Why Indians?" from *Social Education* 32(2), pp. 128–131. Copyright © 1968 National Council for the Social Studies. Permission to reprint granted by the publisher.

It of course follows: one does not in the schools “study Indians,” but one may study some selected group of Indians. For serious educational purposes, it does not matter which, provided only that decent materials are available.

Such materials are becoming more readily available. For example, a recently published annotated bibliography gives as a sampler an outstanding group of books on North American Indians<sup>1</sup>—a survey book, a volume of illustrations and descriptions of two cultures within the area (respectively, *Red Man's America* by Ruth M. Underhill; *The American Indian* by Oliver LaFarge; *The Great Tree and the Longhouse* by Hazel W. Hertzberg; *The Ten Grandmothers* and *Kiowa Years*, both by Alice Marriott).

The serious educational profits to be gained from such study are, I judge, two. First, a proper study of an Indian community will permit a student to recognize that *any culturally patterned behavior, however bizarre it may at first appear, at bottom makes plausible sense, is believable and fully human* (not personally attractive, necessarily, nor “good,” necessarily, but humanly believable).

Educated men, perhaps misled by what they take anthropologists to have said, have become too much preoccupied as to whether one is sufficiently accepting or respectful of an alien culture he might encounter. There is some question as to what one can do about those things; good intent and will power go only so far. A better objective for the schools would seem to be firmly to implant in student minds the working assumption that culturally patterned behavior makes sense, and that any such behavior becomes believable to any man if he knows enough about it. Then, in some future real encounter across cultural boundaries, when an item of behavior is paraded which appears bizarre, or inscrutable (and this is inevitable), a bell should ring in the observer's head which means, quite simply: What don't I know? The first answers will be questions and these may be highly various; and no adequate final answer may be forthcoming, then or ever. But the mind-saving result follows in any case. The observer says, “The behavior appears to me bizarre, because there is something I don't know.” He is at least, answer or not, set to looking. He will say to himself, “I wonder why those people are doing that,” rather than saying, “Look at those crazy people.” This shrunken world would perhaps be a bit less riskful were the concrete visceral recognition more widely spread that culturally patterned behavior at bottom makes human sense.

It is the overwhelming anthropological experience that culturally patterned bizarre behavior does in the end make sense. It is also the anthropological experience that, when men keep looking and look well, respect and the like tend to follow; in any event, it is then and not before that thinking men are able meaningfully to ask whether that behavior is “good.”

The proper classroom study of any Indian community can provide serious educational profit. Given materials that are adequate, bizarre Indian behavior will inevitably

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1 “Two Dozen Anthropology Books” by Kurt W. Johnson. Available from Anthropology Curriculum Study Project, 5632 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

be paraded and, as the study moves forward and additional facts come under scrutiny, some of that bizarre behavior will come to make sense, will be revealed to the student as humanly believable.

An example: Among many Eskimo groups (and among Paiutes as well), very old people are simply abandoned by their sons, or those old people voluntarily walk off into the cold and soon freeze or they ask their sons to strangle them. All these things are not rare but very common. At best such behavior seems to us so bizarre as to be beyond the pale of normal behavior. It perhaps helps one somewhat to take note of the extreme harshness of the Eskimo environment, of the very large demands made by that environment on sheer physical stamina, and thereby to note that Eskimos have, after all, little choice. It perhaps helps somewhat more to note that the question is not simply whether the old will live for a while longer. Rather, the question would concretely appear to a young adult, who is son to his aged parent but simultaneously father to his own young child, in this form: whether the old parent and the young child will live some short while, or whether the old parent will die now and the young child have a chance, at least, to live to maturity. Now, of course, the problem is recognizable as not merely a matter of necessity or utility, but also as a moral dilemma which demands a difficult and highly moral choice. Even so, the behavior—the killing or abandonment or suicide of the old people—seems at best, to an alien observer, hardly humanly tolerable; one cannot quite say, “Yes, knowing all these things I can imagine myself an Eskimo and can imagine myself, faced with that real choice, doing what I see Eskimos doing.” However, the mind of the observer is additionally helped over this very difficult intellectual hurdle by still further information, by some brief glimpse into the mind of the old man himself. Humans unlike other animals, remember and anticipate; a human career is in some large measure memories and anticipations. Out of this can emerge a quietude, surprising perhaps but humanly compelling, in the face of the inevitable end. The Eskimo writer of the following poem knows he will quite soon walk off into the cold.

1.

Often I return  
To my little song.  
And patiently I hum it Above the fishing hole  
In the ice.  
This simple little song  
I can keep on humming.  
I, who else too quickly  
Tire when fishing—  
Up the stream.

2.

Cold blows the wind  
Where I stand on the ice,  
I am not long in giving up!  
When I get home  
With a catch that does not suffice,  
I usually say  
It was the fish  
That failed—  
Up the stream.

3.

And yet, glorious is it  
To roam  
The river's snow-soft ice  
As long as my legs care.  
Alas! My life has now glided  
Far from the wide views of the peaks  
Deep down into the vale of age—  
Up the stream.

4.

If I go hunting the land beasts,  
Or if I try to fish,  
Quickly I fall to my knees,  
Stricken with faintness.  
Never again shall I feel  
The wildness of strength,  
When on an errand I go over the land  
From my house and those I provide for—  
Up the stream.

5.

A worn-out man, that's all,  
A fisher, who ever without luck  
Makes holes in river or lake ice  
Where no trout will bite.

6.

But life itself is still  
So full of goading excitement!

I alone,  
I have only my song,  
Though it too is slipping from me.

7.

For I am merely  
Quite an ordinary hunter,  
Who never inherited song  
From the twittering birds of the sky.<sup>2</sup>

I have cheaply tricked the reader, it is evident. I set out to show that serious educational profit accrues, as I said, “to a student who, after study, does not find Indian life especially attractive or fascinating or even interesting in and of itself.” And to that purpose I have cited a bit of human drama which cannot but grip one.

I now move to more bland, even “academic,” facets of Indian life. Two examples are drawn from earlier Cherokee life: A Cherokee addresses a dozen or so specified male kinsmen, including his father, by a single term roughly translatable as “father” and some of these “fathers” may be a generation younger than he, others his own age, others much older; he addresses another dozen kinsmen, including some as old as his grandfather or others as young as his grandson, as “brother”; there are other such bizarre uses of kinship terms. These are, it should be noted, in no sense figurative extensions of kinship terms, but are the sole proper modes of address of these specified kinsmen. These facts do not come to make sense simply by learning that such are Cherokee customs; rather they make sense by putting those facts of customary usage together with other similar facts and by recognizing the systematic logic of the whole. The kinship usages at hand are transformed for the observer from the apparently bizarre to the eminently logical when it is recognized that Cherokee life is organized around an array of matrilineal kin groups. Every Cherokee automatically joins, at birth, the kin group of his or her mother; a man must marry outside his own (his mother’s) kin group, and he usually resides, after marriage, with his wife’s kin group; nevertheless he remains a member of his own kin group throughout his life. Most critically, all *these matrilineal kin groups act like corporations*: for example, land is owned by these corporate groups, and the rights to use land are passed from female to female within the kin group, thus a married man helps work gardens on his wife’s land and lives off that produce; similarly, these kin groups act like corporate individuals in political life, thus when political decisions are to be made a married man leaves his wife’s group for the moment and joins fellow males in his own kin group, and that group tries to arrive at a corporate opinion about the matter at hand. In general, in everyday life each Cherokee “sees” his community as a set of such “lines,” matrilineal groups which in many critical realms

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2 Paul Radin, “The Literature of Primitive Peoples,” in *Diogenes* (Number 12, Winter 1955).

act like corporate individuals; of course his welfare is variously affected by the actions of these groups, his own, his wife's, and others. The logic of those "fathers" is by these comments but dimly suggested.

Similarly, a second example: Cherokees once encouraged young men to go on the warpath and gave them formal honors for their noteworthy deeds at war; at the same time, they held the more successful warriors at arm's length and actively disliked many of them. This evident inconsistency similarly makes human sense, not merely because it was Cherokee custom. Rather, Cherokees placed very high moral value on extremely unaggressive behavior inside the group (for example, most kinds of political decisions were made unanimously or not at all), and, generally, the men who paraded out as the best warriors were temperamentally a bit "pushy" at home and so—by these severe Cherokee moral standards—were immoral men.

These Eskimo and Cherokee facts are of little or no importance in and of themselves, and it matters little whether the student finds them fascinating or whether he, for whatever reason, feels drawn to such a pattern of life. What matters is that the student repeatedly experience the transformation of the bizarre into the humanly believable. This is done by encountering bizarre behavior, then seeking additional information, and finally recognizing the ultimate sense of the no-longer-bizarre behavior first encountered. And what matters even more is the resulting visceral belief that, a priori, bizarre, culturally patterned behavior is, whether comprehended or not in any particular instance, humanly believable if and when knowledge is complete. Perhaps, with such a mental set, one can live in a profoundly heterogeneous nation and world in some measure of comfort and with some measure of effectiveness.

The proper study of an Indian community can yield a second serious profit. Such a study can powerfully *help a student to see well—accurately and in some measure of completeness—the social world immediately around him*, his own social world which is often too familiar to quite see. To study Indians is, through comparison, to see ourselves.

Other social science disciplines work in the classroom under a handicap; these other disciplines are in the position of trying, as the saying goes, to teach a fish about water. The anthropological impulse is to toss the fish onto the bank and there to instruct it some brief while about sand and dirt and dry leaves, and ultimately about oxygen. The anthropological faith is that a thinking fish, returned to the stream, would thereafter perceive water differently and better and would, indeed, be then better prepared for serious instruction, by anyone so inclined, about water, oxygen, gills.

The overriding purpose of the social sciences in the schools is to help students to see well. To this task, we are saying, anthropology brings especially the crucial heuristic device of comparison. It seems to be an unyielding and probably neurologically based fact that men perceive best through comparison and that the broader and more varied comparison, the more nearly adequate the perception becomes. Comparison assists powerfully in unclouding the senses. Thus, anthropologists do most literally insist that a student cannot adequately "see" pricing mechanisms in a market economy until he

has looked also at pricing mechanisms in a non-market setting where the exchange price appears, superficially, to be firmly established by traditional usage; that a student cannot adequately see the flow of political influence through impersonal mass media and legislatures until he has also watched influence flow through a community-wide network established by some configuration of kinship relations; that a student cannot see status mobility until he also looked closely at communities where the sole “mobility” is to move from the status of infant to that of ancestor; that, generally, a student cannot see his own very big society until he has also viewed some array of very little societies.

Broad and varied comparison has hardly found its way into social sciences curricula in the schools. Curricular strategy could, to much profit, be exactly reversed and take the position that all junctures in curricula where broad comparison is not explicitly exploited would have to be specially justified.

The study of any Indian community provides just such dramatic comparison in the realm of economics, politics, social organization, subject only to the availability of adequate and appropriate materials. In several Plains groups a man gains stature by giving things to the point of rendering himself (and his family) virtually destitute; this could bring to a student a fresh perception of America’s wealth-and-status system which might otherwise be too familiar and “natural” to see clearly. Many Indian communities, as we saw with Cherokees, make certain kinds of political decisions unanimously or not at all; perceiving this comparison acts to reduce, to some profit, the sense of contrast between modern liberal democracies and other more centralized systems, since both, in comparison, seem a bit “hard” on the dissenting few. And so on.

Two special applications of such comparison can be briefly named. First, where classrooms are markedly heterogeneous in respect to race and economic class and where there is, in the minds of the students, some anxiety about that heterogeneity: Indian studies, especially drawn so as to focus the student’s attention on realms of experience which particularly “matter” to him (variously, according to his age, as the host of new “rules” in the classroom and on the playground must mystify and deeply bother a kindergarten or first-grade child), can be made to serve as a useful stimulus to cause the members of the class to look newly into their own diverse parallel experience (as to “rules” at home and in the neighborhood and now at school, for example) at first severally then perhaps collectively. Members of the class can frequently in such a context “triangulate,” each with the alien culture and with his fellow’s and with his own. This is especially useful in that, not only does the comparison cause students to see familiar things newly, in fresh perspective, but also the student is left to ponder privately or to discuss publicly, at his discretion, whatever he thinks he has seen in his own experience or in that of his fellows. In heterogeneous classes where heterogeneity itself seems to the students especially touchy, this “third culture” strategy is perhaps the only way to get the students to think afresh about themselves and each other.

A second application can be made in respect to realms of self-realization which are particularly bothersome to students. Materials which depict an array of diverse cultural handlings of such realms provide a measure of detachment which may in turn help the student resolve such a matter adequately for himself. Study of a variety of Indian patterns of restraint on sexuality would be an example; these range from great liberality to restraints of unusual severity. Adolescent students go into "sex education" classes with one over-riding question, and that question is the only one *not* answered. The question of course is, "Shall I? or shall I not?" A cross-cultural study doesn't answer the question, but it may help the student better to see in non-trivial terms the nature of the question and why he is asking it. Which is, at bottom, what a liberal education is about.

It should, finally, be noted: a class would not, as a rule, elect to pursue the first objective or the second, but both simultaneously. Time in the classroom is always at a premium. The study in some breadth and depth of one or two specific Indian communities gives the student much more than would some broad survey of equal duration of some single facet of the life of many Indian communities. The bizarre emerges frequently in in-depth studies and only in such studies is there chance that the bizarre will be transformed into the humanly believable. At the same time, in such in-depth studies, comparison will have a chance, in planned and unforeseen ways, to work its magic.

The thoughtful reader will have by now asked: Would not the Pogo Pogo serve as well? The answer is: Yes.



# Anthropology and Education: An Overview



By George D. Spindler

## INTRODUCTION

Some educational theorists cite the concept of culture as most crucial in their systematic thinking. Textbooks used in the training of teachers contain references to anthropological literature. Elementary school teachers include projects on “Peoples in Other Lands” or “Our Indian Friends” in social studies units. A growing number of departments of anthropology are offering courses with the specific needs of teachers-in-training in mind. Anthropology has been applied to educational problems since at least 1904, when Hewett wrote his first pieces on education for the *American Anthropologist* (1904, 1905). The *Yearbook of Anthropology* contains a substantial review of the work by anthropologists on education (Hoebel, 1955). An important lecture series in 1961, the Martin G. Brumbaugh lectures on education, is devoted exclusively to anthropology and education (Gruber, 1961).

But education was not even listed as an area of application for anthropology in the encyclopedic inventory, *Anthropology Today* (Kroeber, 1953). Education is not in the subject index of the *Decennial Index: 1949–1958* to the *American Anthropologist* and *Memoirs* of the American Anthropological Association. Only a handful of joint appointments in education and anthropology exist in American colleges and universities. Very few anthropologists have attempted to study the educational process in our society. Despite the steady increase of interest, anthropology and education still maintain a tenuous relationship as Brameld has pointed out (1961). It is a frontier area.

The purpose of this overview paper is to survey this frontier area—to outline the parts of both anthropology and education as they relate to mutual interests, to indicate those points where the anthropologist can help formulate meaningful educational research and theory, mention what anthropologists have written about education and what educators have used of what anthropologists have written, describe some special problems that exist in the relationships between the two fields, and provide useful bibliographic citations for those who may wish to read further ...

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## RELEVANT FIELDS AND INTERESTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

### *Anthropology as a Resource for General Education*

Anthropology as the “study of man and his works,” with its traditional interests in cultural process and in language, race, and human evolution, is a potential contributor to a good general education at all levels of educational experience. This potential contribution of anthropology as a source of data and of concepts to be used in the development of curricula will be discussed first ... While no claim is made here that anthropology should become the core of a complete social studies program in the secondary school, or in the liberal arts (or “general studies”) program at the college level, it seems clear ... that no other existing discipline provides an integration, however loose, of so much that is so important concerning man and his behavior. The study of man thus broadly conceived makes it possible to bridge the gap between the animal and the human being, to conceive of both the relativity and universality of human behavior and propositions about it, to project human affairs upon a time plane that stretches far into the past and future, and turns the focus upon the basic round of life and man’s relation to nature.

The implication is clear that anthropology should be used as a contribution to general education more widely than it is. It should not be taught as it must be to graduate students training to become professional anthropologists. Nor should it be taught as an introduction to a scholarly discipline, as it often is at the college level, even in the beginning course. It should be taught as an introduction to a new perspective on human life, as a way of thinking that we might call “humanistic objectivity.” This is not merely a personal opinion. It is a value judgment, but one shared widely by professional anthropologists who are teaching introductory courses in colleges and universities. The overwhelming majority of anthropologist respondents from thirty-seven colleges and universities placed humanistic purposes first and training in the “science” of anthropology second (Bruner and Spindler, 1961). The anthropologist has a point of view and wants to communicate it.

Anthropology should probably also be taught in the secondary school (Lee, 1960; Mandelbaum, 1961), possibly under some already existing rubric (Spindler, 1946). As Mandelbaum has pointed out, most American anthropologists would agree that “... modern concepts of culture, cultural similarities and differences, race, and evolution should properly be a part of the high school curriculum,” (Mandelbaum, 1961b). But at the same time anthropologists will agree that these concepts are easily misinterpreted. Uninformed teachers will make serious errors that are all the more serious because the concepts are so powerful. It is crucial that teachers who are going to use anthropological concepts and data get good training in anthropology ...

Anthropology is being taught at the elementary school level when teachers develop lesson units or activities centering on American Indian tribes or peoples in other lands—but sometimes badly because the teachers have had little or no exposure to

anthropology as such and consequently contravene their primary goals. A teacher who has had no direct exposure to another way of life, particularly a primitive way of life, and who has had no instruction in how to objectify perceptions of other cultures or how to control value judgments, is very likely to communicate prejudicial views when he or she teaches a unit on the Hopi, or Navaho, or the village peoples of India. It is hoped that teachers in elementary schools will be able to obtain training in anthropology as a part of their preparation in social studies.

Anthropologists have been aware of the potential contributions of their field to general education and have written about it (Ehrich, 1947; Howells, 1952), but they have until recently rarely done anything about it . . . We can expect these efforts to have an important direct effect on the teaching of anthropology in colleges and universities, and an equally important, but less direct effect, on the use of anthropological resources in the secondary school. The *Teaching of Anthropology*, to be published as a Memoir of the American Anthropological Association, edited by David Mandelbaum, Gabriel Lasker, and Ethel Albert, out of the many conferences held, will include papers on most phases of the use of anthropology as an educational resource for higher education, and supplements on teaching aids and recommended bibliography will either be included or published separately (Mandelbaum, 1961a).

As a source of materials to be used in general education all of anthropology is relevant. Selections need not be made only from the sociocultural side of the discipline. The most important contribution of physical anthropology to education has been on the subject of race and the relationships—or rather lack of them—between race, culture, and intelligence. Anthropological perspectives on the meaning of race and the myth of racial superiority have been popularized by Ethel Alpenfels in her capacity as staff anthropologist for the Bureau for Intercultural Education, and have become familiar to many social studies teachers through this and other agencies. Otto Klineberg has given us the classic treatment on relationships between race, culture, and I.Q. (1935), that has had wide circulation in an encapsulated form in a UNESCO pamphlet (1951) and in a symposium edited by Linton (1947). Teachers will find G. Lasker's introduction to physical anthropology (1961) and the articles by Washburn, Deevey, Dobzhansky, Howells from the September, 1960, *Scientific American*, useful for information on various aspects of physical anthropology and human evolution.

### *Anthropology as a Resource in the Analysis of Educational Process*

So far the relevance for anthropology as a body of knowledge and way of thinking to the development of curricula and programs in general education has been discussed. Now attention shifts to the contributions of anthropology as a frame of reference for analysis of the educative process. This is a different kind of utilization of the resources of anthropology. It is not, however, an attempt to create an "educational anthropology." Though they demonstrate some unique properties, the processes and structures

of education are not fundamentally different in kind from the processes and structures involved in other areas of human life. Anthropology can help shed light on human behavior in educational situations just as it has on behavior in factories, hospitals, peasant communities, air force installations, Indian reservations, New England towns, and various primitive societies ...

Directly relevant are the concepts and data of specialized and relatively new fields in anthropology, such as personality and culture (“psychological anthropology”), and cultural dynamics (culture change and acculturation). In fact, when use of anthropology as an analytic frame of reference in education is considered, this is usually where people in both fields begin to look first (Kimball, 1956; Taba, 1957; Rosenstiel, 1959) ...

For certain purposes it is useful to view education of the child to human, group-accepted status as a total process of growth and adaptation. The center of the process is the child—adapting to an environment structured by culture, as well as by group size, climate, terrain, ecology, and the personalities of his always unique parents or parental surrogates. Education may also be thought of as a more limited process—what is to and for a child, by whom, in what roles, under what conditions, and to what purpose. Jules Henry has given us the first substantial cross-cultural outline for the study of education from this point of view (Henry, 1960). Education in this focus is the process of transmitting culture—including skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values, as well as specific behavioral patterns. It is the culture of the human being—where culture is used as a verb.

There are many books, monographs, and articles by anthropologists on socialization of the child—education in the total sense—in different cultures. One of the most significant problem-oriented comparative researches is Whiting and Child’s *Child Training and Personality* (1953). Spiro provides us with a very interesting analysis of socialization and education in Israel, in his *Children of the Kibbutz* (1958) ... A recent survey by the Whitings provides reference to many of the relevant publications (Whiting, 1960). There are relatively few studies on education in the more strict sense of the word. British anthropologists, with their functionalistic predilections, have provided relevant analyses (e.g., Read, 1960). Pettit has provided one of the most useful studies by an American anthropologist on the who, what, when, and where questions of educational process seen cross-culturally, as he summarizes education in North American Indian cultures (Pettit, 1946) ...

The data used by Whiting and Pettit were provided by ethnographies written by others. The fact that such analyses could be carried out despite the fact that the people who did the actual studies in the field could not have anticipated their use is a tribute to the inclusiveness of a good ethnography. But only too often, Whiting, Pettit, and others who have attempted similar analyses, have looked for the pertinent facts in ethnographies and have not been able to find them, or find them partially or ambiguously stated. Most often anthropologists will describe the *results* of education but not the *process*. There is a great deal more to be done with the materials furnished by

ethnographies and other field studies already completed, but it is crucial that future studies in the field be done with a good cross-cultural outline of education in mind. Henry's (1960) outline will doubtless prove very useful in this respect. What is lacking, however, even in Henry's excellent attempt, is a consistent, underlying theory that can give coherence and organization to the categories of behavior to be observed and their interpretation. Culture theory, personality theory, and social interaction theory must be joined. When such an "outline" for the cross-cultural study of education is developed, with a comprehensive and consistent theoretical structure behind it, we will be on our way towards a truly *comparative* education. The indispensable, basic requirement for the development of a comparative education is that there be a systematic frame of reference, with consistent theoretical underpinnings, to guide the collection and interpretation of relevant data cross-culturally, so that meaningful processual comparisons can be made. Anthropology can provide a significant part of the frame of reference needed ...

Anthropological work in cultural dynamics is concerned primarily with those processes of cultural change and stability that are frequently included under the heading "acculturation." For our purposes we can define acculturation as subsuming those processes that occur as a society (or a group of people) with a distinctive culture adapts to changes in the conditions of life brought about by the impact of another population and its culture. Much of the work done so far on acculturation has been characterized by a lack of penetrating interpretation—most of the issues are left at the descriptive level—and very little attention has been paid to the role of cultural transmission and education in culture change. Cultural change as well as stability must be mediated by what is transmitted from parents and teachers to children. Unless these variables intervening between changes in the conditions of life and the adaptations of people to them are understood, much of the "dynamic" part of cultural dynamics is left unilluminated. Anthropologists have done little here. All of the studies by anthropologists of the socialization and enculturation of children in different cultural settings are contributions to our knowledge of how education functions to preserve cultural continuity, but few of them have focused on cultural transmission or have been explicitly concerned with the problems of cultural change. Herskovits has supplied one of the few explicit statements of some relationships between education and cultural change in his "Education and Cultural Dynamics" (1943). Dorothy Eggan's analysis of education and cultural continuity among the Hopi Indians and the author's analysis of the Menomini ... give us insight into the stability-maintaining functions of education in situations where external pressure for change is great. In her ... "Our Educational Emphases in the Perspective of Primitive Societies," Margaret Mead shows us how our educational process is geared to change—to the creating of discontinuities in experience for the child. She provides an illuminating analysis of the role of education in induced cultural change in ... "Cultural Factors in Community Education," ... and Jack Fischer ... shows us that many of the same processes are activated even when

the inducing or “donor” culture is non-western. Bruner (1956a, 1956b) has provided pertinent analyses of the influence of experience in the primary group on cultural transmission in culture change situations. Fred Warner has analyzed a culture conflict situation in college experience ... Other relevant writings include Frank (1959) and Mead (1959, 1960), which are less explicit in their use of concepts and data from the field of cultural dynamics but illuminating in their attention to cultural change as the context of modern education.

One field of interest in anthropology that has realized relatively more of its potential in relation to educational problems is that of social structure. If the interests here are conceived as broadly relating to group alignments, prestige ranking, status and role interrelationships, and social control in the community context, all of the very useful work of the Warner group and other closely related efforts may be regarded as a contribution from this area. The contributors include, besides Warner, such workers as Davis, Gardner, Dollard, Loeb, Withers, Useem, and many nonanthropologists who have been strongly influenced therein, such as Havighurst, Hollingshead, the Lynds, Taba, and so on. The relevance of this field to education, particularly with respect to a concept of social class that has been regularized by Warner and his associates, is indicated by two special issues of the *Harvard Educational Review* on the subject (1953). Recent textbooks on the social foundations of education, such as Mercer (1957), Cox and Mercer (1961) use these materials extensively. No claim is made that this is exclusively an anthropological domain or contribution, but one of the mainsprings driving the interest and its application is fastened to an anthropological pivot.

In this instance the situation as it exists otherwise in the various potential or emergent articulations with education is reversed. More is known about how the educative process is affected by social class and community structure in Jonesville and Elmtown than in the nonliterate societies that are the accustomed habitat of the anthropologists. To be sure, nonliterate societies rarely have social classes in the same sense that Jonesville has, but some do, and all have groups structured into a social organization. Whether a social structure is formalized by a widely ramifying kinship system, or by inherited statuses, or by a complex political-social power system, or is atomistic and individuated—the who, what, when, and why of education—will reflect this structure at every turn, since education must produce the men and women to function in the structure. For the sake of a clearer concept of education as a sociocultural process something more should be known about these functional interrelationships between educational goals, educative process, and social structure in non-western societies ...

Other uses for the anthropological frame of reference in analyses of educational process will be discussed below, as fields and interests in education are surveyed.

## RELEVANT FIELDS AND INTERESTS IN EDUCATION

When we view education as a field with its own problems and institutional structure, it becomes clear that there are more relevant problems and interests than anthropologists could begin to bear appropriate gifts to—even if they were so motivated. Some of the particularly significant problems have been succinctly described by James Quillen. The discussion below will approach some of these same problems from a different perspective and describe certain interests and fields in education in which these problems occur.

### *The Foundation Fields and Professional Education*

The first part of the discussion will be concerned with the institutional context called “Professional Education”—programs where teachers, administrators, counseling and guidance personnel, educational psychologists, and others are trained, usually in schools of education or teachers’ colleges. That part of these programs that most clearly provides a suitable context for anthropology is that of the “foundation” fields. The general rubrics are social, psychological, philosophical, historical, comparative, and biological. They represent what is drawn into education as a professional field from the behavioral and social sciences, the humanities, and natural sciences, as their data and concepts are used in educational research, the building of educational theory and philosophy, and in the training of teachers. It is important to understand how anthropology as a contributing discipline and the anthropologist as a contributing professional can function appropriately in this context. The fact that few anthropologists hold positions in Schools of Education and that there are few joint appointments in education and anthropology despite a professed interest on both sides suggests that the institutional arrangements do not function satisfactorily in some cases. The organization of courses and their purposes will be discussed now. Later on, the role of the anthropologist in the milieu of professional education will be described.

Anthropology has only recently begun to make a significant contribution to the social foundations of education. Educational psychology has clearly dominated the scene, partly because of a historical accident that institutionally wedded psychology and education rather early in America and partly because the need for tests and measurements and applied principles of learning have been particularly obvious in the educational milieu of American schools and have been appropriate for psychological applications. In many teacher-training institutions psychology is still the only behavioral science explicitly recognized in the organization of professional education courses.

Education as a professional field has also drawn from political science, economics, and jurisprudence, but particularly from sociology. Educational sociology has its own house organ, numerous texts bearing its name, and an impressive pile of research to its credit. Most foundation courses in professional education in the social area are called “educational sociology” ...

At Stanford University, as an illustration of the ways in which anthropology can contribute to the foundation fields in education, relevant materials are presented in two courses: "Social Foundations in Education"; "Cultural Transmission"; and one seminar, "Social Anthropology in Education." They are given under the aegis of a joint appointment in the School of Education and the Department of Anthropology. Credit is given to students in both fields in their respective undergraduate majors or advanced degree program and the courses are cross-listed in the course announcements of both the School of Education and Department of Anthropology.

"Social Foundations in Education" is required of all upper division education students and all candidates for the Master of Arts degree in education, as well as for the various professional credentials. It combines selected materials from sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. The anthropological contribution lies mainly in a systematic analysis of American cultural patterns and values as they bear directly upon the role and functions of the teacher and public school system. Cross-cultural data are used here for illustrative purposes. Other topical areas covered include social class and education, problems in student-teacher communication, group stereotypes and prejudice in schools, the community context of the school, and the school as a social system.

"Cultural Transmission" is offered as a course at Stanford, for advanced degree candidates and is presented jointly within the advanced social foundations sequence in education and the advanced offerings in the Department of Anthropology. In this course a frame of reference for viewing transmission and enculturation processes is constructed. This frame of reference is then used in the analysis of these processes in nonliterate societies, European societies, and American society. The course ends with case studies of selected types of teachers in their classrooms and schools in our society. Sociometric, autobiographic, socioeconomic, observational, and community "social base" data are included in the case study materials.

"Social Anthropology in Education" at Stanford is a seminar taken by advanced graduate students in education, anthropology, and psychology. It is likewise listed as part of the advanced course offerings in both the school of Education and the Department of Anthropology. It has been devoted so far to an analysis of the educative process in nonliterate societies, using ethnographic references and the Human Relations Area Files. Special problems in cultural transmission are explored, such as explicit and implicit transmission of values in the education of adolescents, and the application of learning theory to the analysis of educational situations and events reported for other cultures by ethnographers.

These courses accomplish different things in different ways. An important point in relation to the problem of an education-anthropology articulation is that the frame of reference is not exclusively anthropological; in all of the courses it seems essential to include selected aspects of sociology and psychology. When the educative process is the focus, and particularly in our own society, the anthropological frame of reference is not



sufficient by itself. But it is essential. The core of the contribution is in the attention to culture as an influence on behavior, as a perception-mediating set of patterns, and in the attention to the variable forms these patterns take. *Cultural awareness* is one vital aim of each course, but not merely generalized cultural awareness; the aim is to create in the teacher an awareness of how his own culture influences specifically what he does as a teacher and how his students' cultures influence what they do, and how to think about, observe, and analyze these influences. Cultural awareness as one goal in professional preparation with which the anthropologist can help is also particularly important for the administrator, since he manipulates the setting in which the teacher interacts with students and parents. He must not only display cultural awareness but must also understand the mechanics of culture change, the cultural expectations affecting the leader's role, the concrete as well as idealistic meaning of cultural values, and the social system of the school in the setting of the encompassing community and national social structure ...

Courses in conventional anthropology do not serve this same purpose directly, even though they are necessary as a phase of professional educational training. By the time the student is preparing to be a professional educator, or is improving his already established proficiency, he should have had an introduction to the materials of at least cultural anthropology as a part of his general education, though he should also have some experience in intermediate and advanced course work in anthropology as a graduate student. Many graduate students majoring in the social foundations of education, comparative education, educational administration, and elementary education at Stanford take advanced degree minors in anthropology. The anthropology a student gets in his *professional* education within the college or school of education should be integrated with the other foundational offerings and applied to analysis of educative process. Otherwise we are asking him to provide this integration and make this application; and most students—in education or otherwise—simply cannot do it without expert help ...

### *Educational Research*

Education as a professional field is not only concerned with teacher training, teaching, curriculum design, and administration of schools; it has a research base. Probably no social or behavioral science has as great a backlog of research nor encompasses such a high degree of variability of quality of research. The reason for the first fact is obvious. The reason for the second one is partly that education cuts across every phase of human activity, and it is impossible to do good research without specialization in the science or discipline treating with selected dimensions within this range. This is very difficult when so much has to be done all at once.

There are many phases of research within the framework of education that call for anthropological attention. There has been an incorporation of anthropologically

based concepts and methods in the studies of social class influences on learning (Davis, 1952), social class and community structures in relation to the social organization of the school and educational opportunities (Warner, Loeb, et al., 1944), and problems of adolescence (Havighurst and Taba, 1949), in the extensive study of the relationships between intelligence and cultural differences by the Chicago group (Eells, et al., 1951), and in the studies of social class differences in socialization with their implication for education (Davis and Havighurst, 1947). This interest in social class and learning, and social class and school organization, has been the main stream of influence on research directly relevant to education and stemming from anything that can be regarded as an anthropological source. The main contribution of anthropology, other than in the form of some of the personnel involved, has been in the notion of cultural relativity and in a functional total-community approach.

Thus a definite and extensive contribution to research on educational problems, in American society at least, has yet to be made by anthropology. This reflects the fact that until quite recently anthropologists have not been very interested in our own society. Their proper object of study has been the nonliterate peoples, in their pure or reconstructed form, or as these peoples have struggled to adapt to the impact of the industrial-based civilizations.

Anthropologists have been interested in and involved with the problem of education in dependent, trust and colonial territories, and Indian reservations, where nonliterate or recently nonliterate indigenes have been exposed to a Western-mediated education. But the involvement has been largely in terms of an applied anthropology in various administrative and consultative capacities, and actual research reports on the processes involved, are quite scarce. Felix Keesing has described some of the interesting problems that arise in these contexts in a summary of a seminar conference, including educators, anthropologists, sociologists, and government officials, on the problems of education in Pacific countries (Keesing, 1937) ...

There are many areas of potential application of anthropologically based concepts and methods in educational research in our own society to which more attention should be directed. The roles of teacher and school administrator in American society call for treatment from a cultural point of view that will focus on some of the paradoxes projected in the role expectations ... New approaches to the study of the school as a social system need to be devised—perhaps in the manner of the factory system studies that were in part anthropologically inspired. James Coleman (1961) has provided a most significant analysis of the social climates in high schools and the development of a separate teen-age culture. American culture as a specific context of the goals, expectations, and functions of education needs exploration—possibly in the vein of national character approaches ...

Particularly appropriate to anthropological interests is the need for cross-cultural research in education. Culture is idealized in the educative process. Every teacher, whether mother's brother or Miss Humboldt of Peavey Falls, re-enacts and defends the

cultural drama. As the culture is passed on from one generation to the next in the hands of the teacher, it assumes a patent and rationalized shape. The world view is somehow encapsulated in each gesture, admonition, indoctrination, or explanation. And this seems true whether physics or sacred origin myths are being taught. Cross-cultural research on education puts our own educational process in new perspective. Education is a pan-human process, but one that varies sharply from culture to culture ...

## THE ROUTES OF DIFFUSION

### *Anthropological Routes*

The institutional and research routes of diffusion of knowledge between education and anthropology have been described. The routes of diffusion through anthropological and educational literature exhibit certain characteristics that have affected the articulation of the two fields and will be analyzed briefly.

Maria Montessori's influence is of particularly long standing (1913). Her principal assumptions have been integrated into the framework of modern education through the progressive "school." She saw clearly the need for stressing the "organic" relation of the whole child to the environment; emphasized the developmental process so that the child was not seen as a "diminutive adult"; anticipated the problem of the differential meaning of school experience to children from various social classes and ethnic groups in her concept of a "regional ethnology" and study of local conditions; called for respect for individual differences in growth and function; demanded that a "scientific pedagogy" concern itself with normal individuals primarily; and developed a "biographical chart" that took the place of the report card and included "antecedents"—vocation of parents, their aesthetic culture, their morality and sentiments and care of children—as well as reports of physical and psychological examinations and ongoing observations in the form of "diaries."

Educators may contest the characterization of this work as an anthropological influence, since Montessori is so clearly a part of the educationist's heritage, but she called her approach a "Pedagogical Anthropology," and used what were regarded as anthropological concepts, methods, techniques, and data. Though her cultural anthropology is guilty of what today would be regarded as certain racist errors, and her physical anthropology is now outmoded, her farsighted anticipation of much of the best of the contemporary art and science of education is impressive. Whether this is true because she had genius or because she had an anthropological orientation cannot be divined. She had both.

A history of anthropology-to-education diffusion cannot omit the early contributions of Edgar L. Hewett (1904, 1905). His articles "Anthropology and Education" (1904) and "Ethnic Factors in Education" (1905) in the *American Anthropologist* were the first and almost the last contribution of their kind in that journal. He argued for

an “enrichment of the course study of every public school in the land” through the incorporation of ethnological materials, particularly on culture history not confined to the Western world; called for joint meetings of the national education and anthropology societies to discuss mutual problems; scored culture historians for misuse and lack of use of ethnological data; claimed the clear relevance of an “ethnic psychology” that would contribute to the teacher’s understanding of the fact that “... Italian and Bohemian, Celt and Hebrew, Anglo-Saxon and African look upon questions of honor, morality, and decency out of separate ethnic minds...”; asked educators to realize that “a civilization imposed from without is usually harmful, often destructive, always undesirable,” because the “development of a race must be from within”; and suggested that for all these reasons “normal schools and other institutions for the training of teachers should give a prominent place to the anthropological sciences.” The fact that none of his calls was implemented reflects partly an ethnocentrism of American culture, partly the peculiar conservatism of American public education, and particularly the fact that American anthropologists did not have time for much of anything but ethnographic and culture history salvage until the 1930s.

Franz Boas, the dean of American anthropology, clearly saw the relevance of anthropological and educational interests. In his *Anthropology and Modern Life* (1928) he devotes one whole chapter to these interests. He points out that “anthropological research offers, therefore, a means of determining what may be expected of children of different ages, and this knowledge is of considerable value for regulating educational methods.” He talks of “normative data for development,” sex differences, ethnic differences, and differences in environmental conditions that should be taken into account. He treats of some of the problems of cultural transmission, and points out that “our public schools are hardly conscious of the conflict” between democratic ideas of freedom and flexibility, and coercion; “they instill automatic reactions to symbols by means of patriotic ceremonial, in many cases by indirect religious appeal, and too often through the automatic reactions to the behavior of the teacher that is imitated.” He suggests that tradition-based transmission of values and ethics is particularly strong among intellectuals and that the “masses” respond “more quickly and energetically to the demands of the hour than the educated classes ....”

Articles by anthropologists on education have turned up persistently in educational journals and elsewhere for the past twenty-five years. The place of anthropology in a college education, the contributions of anthropology to the training of teachers, the place of primitive education in the history of education are the favorite themes. The articles add to what Montessori, Hewett, and Boas spelled out, but few of them produce clear innovations. Exceptions to this general rule include Mead’s suggestive article on education in the perspective of primitive cultures (1943) and her Inglis Lecture, under the title, *The School in American Culture* (1950); Kluckhohn’s comments in *Mirror for Man* (1949); Opler’s “Cultural Alternatives and Educational Theory” (1947); Goldenweiser’s “Culture and Education” (1939); and Herskovits’

stimulating discussion in his text, *Man and His Works* (1950). The whole issue of the *American Journal of Sociology* (1943) devoted to "Education and Cultural Dynamics," including articles by Johnson, Redfield, Malinowski, Mekeel, Benedict, Herskovits, Powdermaker, and Embree is an especially outstanding contribution. Fred Eggan (1957, 1959) and Dorothy Lee (1957) provide useful perspectives on the relevance of anthropology to education. T. Brameld (1961) reviews recent contributions.

It seems clear, upon examination of what has been done, that anthropologists have not been able to say much more than was said fifty years ago by Hewett when they talk about the general relevance of anthropology to general education. This is primarily because there is not much else to say. When the anthropologists have either analyzed their own intimately understood cross-cultural data or have analyzed the educative process in our society, using empirical data, they have made a definite contribution.

### *Educational Routes*

Irrespective of the attentions by anthropologists to education, the educators have gone ahead on their own to search out and utilize what seemed relevant to them of the anthropological products. An examination of representative and substantial texts in the psychological, sociocultural, philosophical, and comparative historical foundations of education used in professional teacher-training institutions about the country reveals a clear shift toward appropriation of social and cultural concepts and data produced by anthropologists.

In educational psychology, for example, the text by Pressey and Robinson (1944) mentions no anthropological references, and uses no cross-cultural data for illustrative purposes. Cronbach, in his model for educational psychology texts (1954) draws upon Mead, Davis, Warner, Benedict, and Kluckhohn, among others, and makes considerable reference to cultural pressures, different cultural settings influencing personality development and learning, and formation of social attitudes and values. Martin and Stendler's text, *Child Development*, intended for use by educators and non-educators both, and already used widely in elementary education and other professional education courses, places a very heavy emphasis on culture-personality relationships. Culture case data are cited for the Alorese, Balinese, Comanche, Japanese, Kwoma, Mentowie, Navaho, Samoans, Sioux, Tanala, Tepoztecs, Yurok, Zuñi, and others. Cultural relativism has found its way into the heart of this book. McDonald in his popular text (1959) depends less heavily upon cultural concepts but does cite numerous works by anthropologists. Of the seven textbooks in educational psychology examined, published between 1958 and 1961, five cite anthropological works, but mostly the same works by Mead, Benedict, and Linton.

In educational sociology—a field that is rapidly being expanded into a sociocultural foundation of education—a like trend is occurring. The Cooks' book (1950, revised edition), a text of long standing and wide use in educational sociology and