

Summary by Margaret Mead

Mead: I am not going to attempt to summarize the whole conference. And I'm not going to attempt to repeat the things that have been said. I was asked to give a paper and decided not to, as long as I had to give this summary. Therefore, some of the things that I will say will be my points that nobody may have said yet, or that no one has said at this conference in this particular way. So that it will be a combination of some of the things I might have said if I had written a paper, and what I have distilled out of this conference. I suppose it could be described as what I've learned out of this conference, most of which I was not quite certain of before, and I'm going to try to put it in some communicable form.

First, this problem of co-operation between educators and anthropologists. This is a particularly complicated subject. Educators, after all, live in culture, change culture, work with culture, have students of different cultures, and so on, so that they feel *qua* educators a certain, sometimes very large, confidence in their understanding of cultural differences or cultural transmission, and so forth. And anthropologists teach, as Steve (Hart) pointed out, went to school, have children in schools, serve on school boards, and in a variety of ways are active participators in the educational system, sometimes are formal educators for large parts of their lives in many ways. And Fee (Keesing) as an educational administrator of a department in a complex university setting must spend almost as much time on educational problems as many educators here. Now laymen are had enough in some ways when they're not competent; we all know about the amateurs who think that they know all about any subject involving human beings. We know about the people who know about marriage because they were married, and so on. But this is a still more complex problem, because we're both competent acting practitioners in the field of the other's area of competence. It comes up, for instance, in Bill Martin's statement that he wouldn't hire an anthropologist to do a particular job, in this case, deal with a school board. In that case, you wouldn't hire *an* anthropologist but you would hire somebody who knew about school boards, and he might be an educator who knew a lot about social structure and anthropology or he might be an anthropologist who knew a lot about school boards and education. As we work together in any kind of conference like this and in future discussions, these points need to be pinned down—the extent to which each person, each group, has competence in the other group's area of competence.

Now I want to discuss very briefly the formal possibilities of co-operation. This has been set up as a co-operation between the group called *anthropologists* and the group called *educators*. We've had some demonstrations in terms of preferences, of value, and of behavior here that there are many kinds of anthropologists: if you order somebody who's a Fellow of the American Anthropological Association you don't necessarily get anyone who can contribute to education except at the sheer content level of his particular area of professional specialization, whether

it's archeology or physical anthropology or language, or whatever. It's very important—and I think this will help in the problem that Ted (Brameld) raised concerning stereotyping and clichés that are likely to occur—to distinguish between an anthropologist working in some field really relevant to education, either in content or practice, and just anthropologists. It is equally true of course—actually anthropologists are not in a position to do this as a rule because they don't command the enormous institutional structure educators do—that ordering an “educator” would be a terribly dangerous thing to do. It might even be more dangerous than ordering an anthropologist, because there's a certain amount of homogeneity of approach and attitude among anthropologists, whereas educators really span the earth. But I do think that this conference has raised the question rather seriously as to whether the communication is between *anthropology* and *education* as such. I mean, can someone defined as a pure anthropologist who has had no experience in education, who has not primarily studied education in primitive societies, who is not interested in teaching, and so forth—say, somebody out of a museum who is interested in band structure among primitive nomads and so has had no other contacts with educators—engage in a very profitable form of communication except at the book-reading source material level? There is one kind of communication that comes because the anthropologist has been working in the field of education, or the educator for a long time has been using anthropology. Lots of what Hilda (Taba) says is just soaked with anthropology, and it's far better than most anthropologists could conceivably do; but that is not without benefit of anthropology, because she's worked with anthropology and anthropologists and used anthropological material—she's absorbed it into her research approach; she's a research person from whom anthropologists can learn a great deal. Or when Cora (Du-Bois) writes about intercultural education—she's been working in intercultural education and dealing with it professionally and explicitly. So there's a possibility that the communication will have to proceed majorly either from anthropologists who have taken an active interest in education—an acting professional interest—or educators who've taken an active interest in anthropology. Ideally, it would be excellent to have a group of anthropologists who've done some very intensive work on education—the sort of thing that Jules (Henry) has done, having his students or research assistants do intensive observation in the schoolroom so that educational material becomes his research material. That is certainly one type of communication between us; I don't mean this to be exclusive. And educators should be very careful when they want an anthropologist to co-operate with them, either to expose such anthropologists to a couple of years of internship in the situation where they want them to co-operate, or get anthropologists who have really worked in a field that is relevant, and not order them from the supermarket, as I believe Art (Coladarci) said.

Another possibility is that we primarily communicate with each other successfully only when we are interdisciplinary people. Not bidisciplinary—which is an anthropologist who is a specialist on education, or an educator who has worked anthropologically—but when we also command a good many other things, like learning theory, like the use of conceptual models. If you look at the communication that's gone on here, for example,

with Bernie Siegel's models, I think you will find that his organizational model bore some traces of sociometry, although he may not feel that articulately. The other model came from Kurt Lewin's channel theory which was developed in Lewin's psychology in answer to anthropological questions. And then Jules (Henry) used an information theory or communication theory model for communication, and that set up the communication between Jules (Henry) and Art (Coladarci). And Larry Frank all the way through has been using a very large body of interdisciplinary material out of which he moved in every sort of direction in this discussion. There is a high probability that one of the best ways of getting communication between anthropologists and educators is to use those anthropologists and those educators who are themselves interdisciplinary, and especially interdisciplinary in their use of psychology and personality theory—those areas where it is very important that the individual should be included as well as the society. Maybe this is *the* fertile spot of intercommunication.

When it comes to the question of areas in which we can have fruitful sorts of cross-disciplinary communication, I'm not going to try to make this list exclusive at all. We've had a whole series of suggestions; but I think it's probably very important to distinguish between the use of anthropology in teaching—the formal teaching to loosen people up, to widen sensitivity, to increase awareness—and the more systematic uses of anthropology, for instance, in the questions of where the educator is going to use research findings on such points as the relationship between adolescence and conflict as periods of choice. Somebody was worried that in this conference we had possibly given a picture of adolescence as a terrific *Sturm und Drang* period again, that the emphasis here was overweighted negatively. Adolescence is a subject on which educators need to have research findings of all sorts in other cultures; they need to have findings on importance of early learning, etc., that are of a different order from the problem of loosening up, increasing sensitivities, widening awareness in students. For instance, Hilda (Taba) made the statement at some point that anything that is learned can presumably be unlearned or relearned. That is a primary theoretical problem on which we need every inch of cross-cultural material that we can possibly get. It is possibly true that anything that is learned can be relearned, provided that it was learned in a certain sort of way. But the importance of how it was learned may be absolutely crucial. There are suggestions, for instance, that if people initially learn a language as one of many, they can always learn other languages. They have a different ability to learn other languages, to learn to think, read, fantasy, write poetry in other languages, compared to those who learn a language as the only language; and that learning a language as the only language is crippling from the standpoint of moving into other languages and needs at least a rehabilitation course before one is able to learn other languages. We've got a good deal of evidence of this sort about language, and possibly it's true of the whole of culture. It is possible that if one can learn one's culture as one culture among many, which is, incidentally, the way any New Guinea native learns his culture, then a type of flexibility may occur that is quite different than if one learns “this is *the* way to do things.” There is also a possibility that we knew little about, that changing cultures may be like writing a piece of music in another key,

and that there are possibilities of resetting the whole pattern. But everything that's being done in cross-cultural studies at present is relevant to that problem for the educator at a different level from the need to use anthropological material in order to increase sensitivity or widen students' horizons.

The same thing, I think, may be true of the whole question of social organization and social structures. We want the student to learn about different sorts of social structures and to become conscious of the existence of social structures, so that a teacher knows she's in a school system, and she knows it is a system and not just an arbitrary set of pressures. That is rather different from the research level of what we know at present about institutional change, and the limits of institutional change. Jules (Henry) brought up the point about the areas where one feels one can't move at all—where one's position is perceived as a cog in a system and the only thing to do is to get out if you don't like it. Hilda (Taba) then showed that in teaching teachers she could show them that much of what they thought was being a cog wasn't a cog. That's one part of the picture, where the relative "coginess" could be discussed; but there's another level that's closer to what Ted (Brameld) is interested in—that is, *where you can really make an institutional change*—and what do we know about social systems that could be used there? So I think in this conference from time to time there has been a confusion between these levels. When do you need an anthropological description of Centerville in order to operate in Centerville? When do you need an anthropological description of Centervilles in order to teach people who will go into a Centerville? And when do we need material on what happens with rapidly growing communities, at a quite different sort of theoretical level?

In terms of interchange or borrowing of methods from one discipline to the other, the whole emphasis on the natural history approach is one that I think can fit in very well with the history of education and what we teach students about it. But in the anthropological statements here, I think there's often been one striking omission, which may conceivably even be a very bad omission in the structure of the conference—or at least in a conference ten years from now. That is, I think that history ought to be here too. Ten years from now the distinctions between anthropology and history will not be such as they are now; those gaps are going to close, they are going to close very rapidly. It will depend on several things, such as how many historians the directors of the Ford Foundation Behavioral Science Center decide have anything to do with human beings; it will depend on how many historians have time to learn any biology. It will depend on a lot of things, but eventually a part of history and a part of anthropology are going to be combined in the sort of area that we've been working on here. Then the methods of anthropology, the methods of history, and the specific applications of natural history and of historical methods to education will fit in quite differently from the way they're fitting in now.

There's one other methodological problem, which I think has vexed educators and anthropologists for quite a while when they have worked together, that perhaps ought to be made explicit. It came up once or twice. I think Fee (Keesing) made it more explicit than anyone else here did; and it also came out of Professor Kroeber's statement about the different

sources of anthropology. There is such a thing as collecting data in such a way that you minimize bias. But that does not mean you get rid of bias completely; it doesn't mean that you get rid of your perceptual modalities; it doesn't mean that your data on a particular society aren't going to be more visual than auditory. There are uncounted levels of the intervention of subjectivity into material. Nevertheless, with the adequate use of machine recording—with films and tape recordings and various devices of that sort—we're going to be able to get chunks of material that are multi-sensory, that are large enough. In such chunks, limits can be redefined, so that even if the anthropologist did say, "I'm going to take a four-hour shot," somebody else could carve a thirty-seven-minute shot out of the middle of it that the anthropologist did not plan to carve out, and look at it later. We've had arguments in the past, severe arguments, as to whether introducing recording into the school system would interfere with the children's learning in some way, and then the educator had to protect them. With the growth of machine recording of various sorts, the participant anthropologist doesn't have to be so conspicuous and therefore such a thorn in the flesh of the local social system as he almost always is. If primitive people had school principals, probably no anthropologist would ever have been allowed to get in and study the native tribes. There is usually nobody in the native tribe who can say, "I don't want life disturbed," and so the anthropologist can get in. But anthropologists are not angels of noninterference and they usually make a certain amount of trouble in the village, and they can make a dreadful lot of trouble in the school system. But with the growth of machine recording we're going to be able to get away from that. We're going to be able to collect large chunks of material without too much active participant observer intervention in the system, on the one hand, and with increasing minimization of the distortion of the material from the point of view of the collector. In this way, we can separate the material from the interpretation, which is, I think, one of the points of view that the anthropologist, as a field scientist, is going to continue to stand for.

There's another use of anthropological materials that's been raised here also, and that's the use of anthropological records of primitive societies; or one may, from the point of view of a cultural analysis, look at ancient societies, exotic societies, and so forth, as living models that will widen our picture of the potentialities of what human society could be. One of the sources for new cultural invention is what other people have done. It is from that point of view that Steve (Hart) presented his material on initiation. This is something that cultures have done; this is the way it was done; these are the elements that recur. This gives us something to think about, not in order to transfer it directly, or to create a Utopia (for Utopias are extraordinarily deadly—no one wants to live in one after they've read about it), but it gives us an element that we might be neglecting at the present moment, or that we might combine with something else.

In the areas where educators and anthropologists are going to cooperate, inevitably these are normative areas. At the research level, you can call in an anthropologist to make a study of Centerville and give you the data if you want to. But the minute you want to change the teachers in Centerville or give the children in Centerville an experience their par-

ents didn't have, this is inevitably normative. And I think it's important to make the difference explicit. The applied anthropologist must recognize when he's being an applied anthropologist that he's a practitioner and subject to the same sorts of pressures as those the educator is subject to—including in time, probably, various sorts of licensing and control—so that he isn't allowed to go and mess up Centerville without a minimum of control by the society that he's operating in.

Now, with respect to what Ted (Brameld) was calling for here, it seems to me he was calling for tough-mindedness and dedication, for people who were interested in change and who would take into account everything we know from all the social sciences about the difficulty of change, but nevertheless who wanted it, who had a positive motivation moving forward in a direction of social change. On the edge of that position, where the anthropologist, psychologist, educator—a whole group of people—will work on the problems of social change, there's the anthropologist who doesn't notice the lack of the kind of dedication that Ted (Brameld) was calling for, because he's majorly motivated by delight in curiosity, and he's more or less remained in the humanist position, and he's so happy being led from fact to fact, from theory to theory, that he's completely motivated, but his dedication is of another order from the necessary dedication to social change. Then there's the educator who is happy with that set of new faces in front of him, who's continually revived by the job of teaching a new group of youngsters—something new. So such educators in turn are not preoccupied with social change. They've got their own regenerative device. Now, Ted specifically, and to a degree this whole conference, need to direct their appeals not to the educator who finds sufficient reward in that fresh group of faces of any age, and not to the anthropologist who finds sufficient reward in discovering a lovely new kinship system—both of whom can be very happy—but to the group of people who care about change and who have a dedicated commitment to change in some way—enough so they want to work on it—and who are interested in obtaining the skills and research information that are necessary. I don't think the dedication of skill alone is going to be enough. Usually the expert who relies on technical virtuosity alone doesn't survive under the emotional pressures that are involved in the ups-and-downs of attempting to introduce change. This is a statement of opinion that I think can be pretty well documented with the breakdown rate for overseas technical assistance experts.

Next, I'd like to say a little about the question of lag. Some of the ideas that we've been working with here are on the edge of being superseded. I want to illustrate this by one point. Almost everything that we've said here today, in the last four days, takes off implicitly from the idea that change takes time. Even the most violent advocates of doing something will stress, "But you have to grow." Hilda (Taba) gave us a very clear statement of what she regards as the steps in change. Cora's (Du-Bois) paper discussed the periods, the steps that change has to go through, the trajectory of learning and change. I suspect that in the next five years our major emphasis is going to be on the fact that if you have enough speed you can have a great deal more change. That is an idea that was very unfashionable twenty years ago. It was unfashionable because the ideas of change were partial. We were trying to work with little bits;

we were trying to put a tractor into a medieval economy; we were trying to lead people to new hygienic measures where they were living in the same kind of house, going to bed in the same kind of bed, and yet wanting to give them a little bit of change. Now, what we see in many instances is that very rapid total change—for instance, where a population if they're going to work in a factory also go to live in a new kind of town—makes it possible to build new patterns extraordinarily rapidly. Take, for example, the present marriage pattern in the United States since World War II, which differs in about a hundred significant respects from the pre-World War II marriage pattern. It's been built under conditions of speed of migration and change in the whole social structure. There are a whole series of areas where possibly speed that doesn't give a chance to mobilize resistance, that doesn't give a chance for the partial learning to become pickled and crystallized, is going to be an important point.

Now I would like to discuss another problem that I don't pretend to understand well at all. This is the tendency of educators to take up fads or to produce things in cliché form, which, stated in more general terms, is the tendency to form cults rather than open-ended social systems. The little bit that we know about cults (and my recent Manus study is probably the most detailed study that's ever been made *in situ* of the fight between becoming a cult and remaining a part of the society, which struggle is what the Manus community is going through at present) suggests that the cult may be related to types of pressure. It may be related to the fact that the innovating educator has been under too much pressure, has been too much alone, and therefore has been on the defensive, and has tended to crystallize his thinking because he has had to fight so hard. We know that one of the things that leads to this crystallization of nativistic cults is the fight that goes on to get the particular new point accepted. But I think it's something, as Ted suggested, of which we as students of wider cultural processes should be extraordinarily aware—that educators have tended to settle down on clichés, to turn an insight into a cliché; and then of course they have to reject it later because it's become shorn of wider meaning, it's become isolated. For instance, let's take the sort of thing that's been said here quite often: "There was a psychological phase of education; now there should be the anthropological." That is a dreadfully dangerous thing to say, because every single valuable thing that came into education out of psychology needs to be kept, plus allowing for a continuous new stream, and anthropology needs to be combined with what is there. The danger of going from the child-centered school to the community-centered school and back again, which has been the sort of experience we've gone through in education, is one of which educators are extremely aware and in which cultural knowledge used by educators and by anthropologists interested in education might help.

Then we come to this question—the problem of the value of awareness. I think that there we have another angle on which anthropologists and educators are going to have to work together very closely. Radcliffe-Brown, a structural anthropologist, used to ask how much awareness can a *society* stand? Sapir was saying, in the quotation used in Ted Brameld's paper, how much awareness can an *individual* stand? If you are aware that the language you're speaking is one of seven languages, that as you use the word "cat" in a sonnet there are six other words for cat, that the

structure of metaphor in English is different from the structure of metaphor in Russian, that when you're using an image in English poetry such as "He flew like an eagle" you get a very different imagery structure from "Not like an eagle he flew, but like a man" in Russian. If you think of all those things at once, can you ever write a poem? That was Sapir's position, and it was a very important one. There seems to be no doubt that people who have a lot of half-baked unindividually realized new scientific ideas in their heads produce very peculiar poetry, and very peculiar fiction, bad plays, and imperfect music. There is undoubtedly a process of assimilation that is necessary if we're going to have genuine aesthetic experience and genuine artistic work by individuals.

This is probably equally true of cultures in respects that we don't know. We don't know where the insight level operates. Now, I'm going to give you a kind of brief intermediate example, and that is McCarthyism. I think that if we could have found and invoked the analysis of the people who know most about McCarthyism, who know most about the Soviet Union, who started to think about interaction between the Soviet Union, Germany, Britain, and the United States in the late 'thirties, they would have been able to work out a series of predictions and we would have been able to give most liberals in this country the perfectly adequate prediction that (a) McCarthyism was predictable, and (b) it wouldn't be as bad as was expected; but this would have harmed rather than helped the vibrant furious indignation that has made the prediction actually work out. So that you lose, in communicating the insight, the very thing on which your prediction is based. Thus every time you communicate an insight or an awareness, you change the course of history. Do you actively want to change the course of history in this particular respect? Yet I agree with Ted that we are committed to building a society in which we have more and more insights and awareness. And Larry has made the point that we want a society that is regenerative spiritually in the sense that it continually reassays its goals, and at the same time, hopefully, will set up better mechanisms for reassaying its goals—of which, of course, a conscious educational system is one definite mechanism. But it's a problem we haven't solved. It's a subject on which a great many people are reacting today, and they're reacting in a variety of ways: some with a return to neo-orthodoxy, some with a desire for various and sundry sorts of control, some with a desire to return to the three R's. There are dozens of these reaction formations against uncontrolled insights that we don't yet understand.

We've kept saying, as an aim, "How are you going to get people to recognize that feelings are facts?" but we have not discussed methods at all. And this is an area where the anthropologist has traditionally been a specialist and where we are going to have to evaluate not only awareness, but the forms in which awareness can safely come: the places, for example, where it is safer to leave the awareness to the arts than to the expository, and the degree to which it is possible to direct the arts without making them the sterile, hopeless implementers of an economic or social point of view that they became in the 'thirties in this country, that they are in the Soviet Union today—in which they are so harnessed with some infernal social purpose that they lose all freedom. I think that's about the strength of what I'd like to say.

OPEN DISCUSSION

The Anthropologist in the School as a Field

Henry, Mead, Spindler

Henry: Margaret (Mead), I want to talk for just a moment on a point you raised. In this group we are emphasizing the importance of co-operation between anthropologists and educators, and one of the things that anthropology can do—you might say in a sense, its birthright—is to observe directly in a natural history way. And one of the things it seems to me you were doing was emphasizing the extent to which the anthropological observation itself could distort and upset the situation. Of course I was touched by this in my narcissism; I was also touched by this in regard to the profession. My students and I have observed in classrooms almost without causing a ripple, and these students were completely untrained for this. I would say that we paved the way very carefully throughout the whole school system before we went in to observe, and this may be one of the reasons why no trouble ensued.

The other point I want to make involves what has been called traditionally, and I think rather naively, distortion. And this insight came to me not out of my own perception of the situation, but from the people I spoke to when I went to Washington to talk to the U.S. Public Health Service. I said to them, "Now these are situations which I distorted," and gave quite a number of examples. And they replied, "Why do you call that distortion? These are situations which you observed, which because you observed them and recorded them can be exploited therefore as particular experimental insights." I think that you have taken a rather traditional position as to what a distortion really is, and also have over-emphasized how anthropologists can upset the situation.

Mead: Yes. I agree that we've experimented for years—feeding back into the group the results of the observation and making it part of the on-going process. And you can do that, and we've done it very many times. Nevertheless, the observer when he enters in does add to the situation and change it. Now, the word "distort" is evaluative. I've been in many experiences of doing research in such fields, and have listened to the educators, social workers, and psychiatrists complain about anthropologists or social psychologists (any kind of research worker, it isn't just the anthropologist), that they were interfering in some way. On the whole, if you can use forms of observation in which you don't have quite as active an intervention, it may be better: that's what I meant by machine recording, that we have now available means of recording that don't require quite as active intervention and therefore don't cause quite so much trouble.

Henry: It cannot be doubted that naive and inexperienced observers can mess up certain situations; but I would be very much disappointed if this got into the record as an official anthropological point of view—that there's so much danger that the anthropologist is going to mess up the situation.

Mead: This is true of all social scientists, not just anthropologists. It happens whenever research is introduced into processes designed to teach, or help, or cure, or convert individual human beings.

Spindler: May I intervene at this point? I find myself in partial agreement with Jules, in that I think it's very important to keep the doors open in our own thinking regarding this kind of observation-participation. But I find myself in agreement with Margaret also. We have worked in a number of school systems through the Stanford Consultation Service. There are many things the same about going into this kind of situation that are also characteristic of going into a field situation; but the educational system is a relatively more defensive field and a very sensitive one. There are some kinds of things present there that are not present in the usual field situation. One of them is a rejection of expertism; that is, external expertism. You come in and say, "I am an anthropologist; I'm here to observe you"—now there's a value and some covert culture involved here. "Observe," to a teacher, does not mean just to watch and describe; it means to observe, evaluate, and supervise. Suddenly you have this outside expert who is coming in to do something that has a familiar kind of ring, and the teacher can go berserk about your particular role in the situation. That can all be avoided by the proper kinds of communication; but it takes a long time. You have to start at several different points at once and you have to talk to a lot of different people. You have to explain and you have to go in and refrain from "observation." You come in to learn as a "student." You assume a familiar role. You say to the teachers, "I'm a student; I'm trying to understand something about the situation; maybe you can help me to understand it." If you put yourself in this role, and do your participant-observation from that point on, I think usually you can become accepted.