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AUTHOR Rice, M. J.
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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project is to present the organizing concepts of anthropology in curricula suitable for use in elementary and intermediate grades. The philosophic premise of the Project is that a conceptually structured curricula is the most effective means of helping students to acquire a base of knowledge for categorization and organization of phenomena. Project value assumptions deal with the nature of the learner, the organization of the material, the methodology of instruction and the nature of the content. The role of ethnic studies as part of anthropology is pointed out, as is the preoccupation with ethnic studies in general in the United States. The major issue in ethnic studies is felt to be whether it should be used to politicize a particular group in the school population. A project model program should not focus on self identity, be preoccupied with ethnic groups in one country or culture, or have a retrospective emphasis. A suggested model which permits a reconciliation of core values of the national culture with respect for ethnic diversity is the cross-cultural curricula development approach. (Author/KSM)

PREMISES FOR STRUCTURING ETHNIC CURRICULA

M. J. Rice
Professor, Social Science Education
University of Georgia; Director, Georgia
Anthropology Curriculum Project

Purpose of Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project

Since 1964, the Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project has been engaged in the preparation of units in anthropology to supplement the existing social studies program. The primary purpose of the Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project is to present the organizing concepts of anthropology in curricula suitable for use in elementary and intermediate grades. While interest in the structure-of-the-discipline approach has waned in social science education, the Project is still committed to the initial premise that knowledge exercises a liberating influence and that the species homo sapiens is a rational animal.

Philosophic Premises

Project research (Kleg, 1970; Troutman, 1972), as well as that of others (Williams, 1947; Westie, 1964; Simpson and Yinger, 1965), indicates that knowledge per se does not automatically eliminate egocentrism or guarantee a translation to overt, less prejudiced behavior. But it does indicate that our basic model, i.e., that prejudice may be conceptualized as a function of ignorance, is equally as effective as confrontation, social action, participant involvement, and other models utilized to reduce stereotypic and prejudiced thinking about ethnic groups other than the middle-class, white, American.

The Project therefore plans to continue development of essentially cognitively oriented anthropology units on both scholarly and practical grounds: conceptually structured curricula are the most effective means of helping students to acquire a base of knowledge for the categorization and organization of phenomena, and the scientific, non-emotional approach to social phenomena provides a non-threatening context in which students of all ethnic backgrounds can examine social phenomena. A non-threatening context appears to be more desirable in reducing interethnic hostility (Williams, 1947). This, in brief, is the philosophic rationale in which we approach our task of curriculum construction.

Value Assumptions

Curriculum development in anthropology, as well as in any other discipline--natural science, mathematical, aesthetic or motor--also reflects the value orientation of the curriculum developers. The research evidence relating to curriculum development in any field--even with RULEG and EGRULE learning in mathematics--is much too contradictory for a curriculum developer to assume a false posture of scientificism and assert that his content and methodology is exclusively based on scientific evidence. The social sciences are not value free (Shibutania & Kwan, 1965: van den Berghe, 1967). We are thus quite willing to affirm that while we strive to be as objective and scholarly as possible, the final curriculum decisions we make do represent, or at least, reflect, certain value assumptions. Among our explicit value assumptions are the following:

1. As to the nature of the learner. The learner brings to the learning situation a combination of biological and environmental influences which result in an aptitude for learning. Education cannot intervene to change the

genetic inheritance of the learner; education can only intervene in the environment and experiences provided for learning. When typological or geographical stocks of homo sapiens are provided opportunities for learning, all subspecies appear to manifest equal genetic potential for learning, although aptitude as measured by performance may vary as a function of prior experience. As a result, content specific material does not need to be modified in terms of conceptual product as much as in the rate allowed for acquisition. Whatever the reason for slower learning, when there is no variation in time it is still possible for learners from so-called disadvantaged ethnic groups to achieve significantly above chance. Consequently, the Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project does not attempt to provide materials for different levels of aptitude, but recommends treatment of differences in aptitude through differences in rate of presentation (Hunt, 1969).

2. As to the organization of the material. The purpose of school instructional material is to facilitate learning as measured by the criterion referenced evaluation instruments. In terms of economy of time in learning (output in relation to input), one of the most efficient methods of organizing material is the expository narrative, logically organized to present inclusive and general concepts as well as illustrative content. The psychology of meaningful verbal learning provides a systematic, psychological basis for the organization of structured material (Ausubel, 1963; Gagne, 1965). Consequently, our units are organized in this sequential manner to develop concept learning. Larry Cuban, in a recent issue of Phi Delta Kappan, dismisses this structured pedgagogy with the denigrative term "white" instruction (January, 1972, p. 270). In rebuttal I would merely note that the structured expository methodology is universal, because it is a characteristic of

homo sapiens to organize material logically for conceptual transmission. When in Africa, I observed such diverse groups as Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Somalis using the methodology of the expository written narrative. All languages embrace a logical and syntactical component, and effective human communication as well as efficient human learning utilizes the method of the systematic narrative in organizing material for transmission to young and old learners alike. The untested assumption that different stocks or groups differ in learning style may lead to the rejection of methods and materials which are necessary to overcome school deprivation. Rejection by minority groups of materials and methods used by the dominant ethnic group may help assure that children of the minority group will not achieve the competencies necessary for school success.

3. As to the methodology of instruction. The two major methodologies of instruction, from time immemorial, have been the deductive and the inductive, the didactic and the heuristic, the closed and the open. Most teachers use a combination of the two modes of instruction, and, except in experimental situations, rarely rely exclusively on one approach. In the social studies today, the current emphasis is upon some variant of discovery, inquiry, or questioning (Fenton, 1966; Sanders, 1966; Massialas and Cox, 1966; Beyer, 1971)--methodologies which are not new but which have merely received a new interpretation.

The Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project has never attempted to prescribe one teaching mode. In the context of classroom instruction, expository written materials may be developed inductively or deductively, according to the teacher's preference or teaching style (Association of Teachers of Social Studies, 1967). The experimental evidence of the

relationship of the method of instruction to the quality of thinking is too tenuous to reach any fixed and firm conclusions (Shulman and Keislar, 1968). In our judgment, the process by which something is learned and retained is less important than the product of learning, since the quantity of conceptual learning functionally serves as a qualitative difference. The enthusiasts for inquiry learning have too frequently confused their advocacy with experimental evidence. Children learn both deductively and inductively, and a teacher in his methodology need not be wedded to any one style, but adjust it to his interpretation of efficiency of learning with a particular learning task in a particular situation.

4. As to the nature of the content. The content of school anthropology should introduce the child to the range of fundamental concepts in anthropology, not merely to ethnology or cultural anthropology. From the standpoint of the subdisciplines of anthropology, undoubtedly the most important is comparative ethnology or cultural anthropology. The subject matter of ethnology consists of the identification of cultural universals and trait variation by group, and provides the essential data for the comparative study of man in culture. People in any and all cultures live in groups, rear families, socialize their children, make a living, worship, play, and adjust to their environment. But ethnic groups make these cultural solutions to the universal needs of living in different ways, and hence traits vary from group to group. It is this trait variation which brings about cultural diversity. In extensive geographic areas nationally organized into one society, as in the United States, trait variation is the basis of cultural pluralism.

In addition to comparative ethnology, the understanding of culture requires a historical dimension. In terms of our preliterate past, the science of archeology is indispensable for understanding a past revealed to us only through fossils and artifacts. Archeology blends with history in the literate cultures of the Near and Far East. But history is always germane to the study of culture groups, for cultures change through time. All groups everywhere have a history of cultural change. Thus the concept of culture change, in addition to that of culture, becomes an important dimension in ethnic study.

While many social studies teachers are uncomfortable with physical anthropology, this area is important to the student in two ways: to help him acquire an understanding of human origins and to help him acquire a scientific understanding of physical variation, utilizing the best information from paleontology and the insights provided by the modern synthetic explanation of evolution. Unfortunately, the presentation of the latter subject in most schools is usually taboo, whether in biology or anthropology. The result is that children grow into adults with explanations of human physical differences based on mythology. Whether of Semitic, African, or American Indian provenance, these mythologies have one common element--the explanation of a particular ethnic group as constituting man, and other men consisting of barbarians or lesser men.

A fourth field of anthropology important to the student is the area of linguistics, for all men have language. The organization of man into speech communities is one of the most powerful determinants of culture and enculturation. Yet all men, everywhere, have the capacity to acquire the language of another group and through language, to gain the insights of that culture which can only come through verbal communication.

In addition to the subdisciplines of anthropology, the Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project is also concerned with the geographic distribution of cultures. While the comparative technique of a generalized interpretation of American culture as a reference group has been extensively utilized, the Project has been equally concerned with a presentation of cultures from different geographical areas. For example, in the description of culture change in a third grade unit, Indians from India, Africans from Kenya, and the Japanese have been discussed in terms of particular types of culture change--urbanization and industrialization in Japan, nationalism in Kenya, and planned agricultural change in India. In a unit on the life cycle, the biological and social changes from birth to death are described in terms of four different cultures--Tiv in Africa, Chinese peasant in pre-Communist China, Serbian peasant in Europe, and American of the United States.

A third content consideration has been a concern that anthropological concepts be utilized in terms of cultures of different technological development. All too often, classical ethnology has been exclusively concerned with the cultures of preliterate and small tribal groups. An example of this approach for elementary school use is Man: A Course of Study, which uses as its ethnological data the Netsilik Eskimo, developed by the Educational Development Center under auspices of the National Science Foundation. Leon Singer has characterized this preoccupation with preliterate cultures as the "museum" approach to anthropology. In order to avoid this narrow conception of anthropology, the Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project presents students with such diverse technologies as that of the Arunta nomadic gatherers in Australia, Masai cattle nomads in Kenya-Tanzania, Serbian peasant farmers of Yugoslavia, and Japanese industrialists. Whenever possible, within the context of the

material, an effort has been made to depict the industrial and urban development of the non-western world. Thus Nairobi is presented as a case study in African urbanization, so that the student is encouraged to see the range of technological development and human behavior in Africa. Japan was deliberately selected as a case study in urbanization and industrialization, to indicate the diffusion of technology to non-western countries.

These three value considerations--the concepts of the subdisciplines of anthropology, the geographic distribution of culture groups, and the various complexities of culture resulting from technology, size, and political organization--have been reflected in the selection of content.

Anthropology and Ethnic Studies

Thus far my emphasis has been on general considerations relating to the development of systematic and sequential curriculum in the field of general anthropology for school use. These points of view are nevertheless pertinent to the more narrowly focused view of what might be conceived as "ethnic studies."

While cultural anthropology makes use of ethnography, cultural anthropology or ethnology may be distinguished from ethnography. Ethnography tends to be the descriptive presentation of the way of life of a particular group, while ethnology emphasizes a cross-cultural approach utilizing the ethnographies of diverse groups. From the standpoint of scientific organization, one might say that while ethnography is descriptive, ethnology attempts to be explanatory, utilizing the data of many ethnographies to identify similarities and differences in culture (Hoebel, 1966, p. 8).

The first anthropological treaties written in the United States was an ethnography, Morgan's League of the Iroquois. Historically, ethnic studies in the United States have primarily been descriptive rather than explanatory, a

classic example of which is The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. One reason is that both anthropology and sociology, in the tradition of Franz Boas, has placed a premium on direct field work using the major investigative tool of direct observation. Cross cultural comparisons are generally syntheses based on field studies, and involve some theoretical explanatory formulation. As a result, ethnic studies in particular have suffered from a lack of cross cultural comparison (van den Berghe, 1967; Schermerhorn, 1970).

Ethnic Studies as Minority Studies

The contemporary ethnic studies movement, in relation to public school policy and curriculum for instruction, however, tends to be almost exclusively identified with three minority groups--Negro, Indian, and more recently, Americans of Mexican origin.

Any bibliography dealing with minorities in the United States shows this ethnological preoccupation--there are books about Negroes, Indians, and Spanish-speaking Americans, and poor whites. There are no syntheses which permit us to look at these ethnic groups in relation to each other. It is my impression that if there was a synthesis of these studies, trait variation, which is now emphasized, would give way to an examination of universals. It is also my impression that many of the characteristics which are presented as being related to a particular ethnic group might be viewed as a function of the situation. For example, when socio-economic status is controlled, many of the variables that are viewed as ethnically determined are shown to be highly related to social class. This assertion does not deny the nesting effect of ethnic group and social class, but it permits a different cause-effect interpretation of the phenomena (Lewis, 1970).

While the history of discrimination and the economic status of these groups undoubtedly merit special treatment, a preoccupation with minority groups tends to obscure the fact that the population of the United States is an amalgam of ethnic groups. The November 1969 Census of Ethnic Origin indicated that 75 million Americans placed themselves in such groups as German, English, Irish, Spanish, Italians, Poles, and Russians. While such self-identification may be misrepresented or distorted, we are nevertheless reminded that any comprehensive program of ethnic studies must indeed have a very broad base. Students of majority as well as minority ethnic groups attend the public schools. Furthermore, the public schools belong to all citizens, even though, for various reasons, certain schools may be populated largely by one ethnic group, such as Indians in BIA schools, Negroes in de factor segregated neighborhoods, or Americans of Mexican origin who are concentrated in low income residential areas. While local ethnic variations might justify some different emphasis by region, the subject content of ethnic studies must transcend the self-identity needs of any particular group.

The Major Issue in Ethnic Studies

This leads to the major issue in any ethnic studies program. Is the purpose of ethnic studies to help all Americans understand and appreciate the diverse cultural influences which contribute to the richness of American culture and the need for all ethnic groups to make their contribution to the dream of a democratic society? Or is the purpose of an ethnic studies program to politicize a particular group in the school population? The answer to these questions will make a major difference in content and in emphasis.

A Cross Cultural Ethnic Model

From the general orientation I have given, working from the context of general anthropology, it appears that cross cultural ethnic studies are defensible from both the standpoint of scholarship and the long-run understanding of diversity-within-unity in the United States. In contrast, it appears that the over-emphasis on the self-identity approach may not only contribute to an inverse ethnicism but may further contribute to ethnic polarization. Ethnicism and group polarization are not desirable products of schooling.

Although there is a lack of conclusive evidence, it appears that the self-identity type of ethnic program, which focuses on one group to the exclusion of another, exaggerates negative feelings in the other group. This reaction has been reported in connection with Puerto Rican studies in mixed classes in New York City and in mixed classes in black studies in various parts of the country. Last Spring in Atlanta, Georgia there was negative white reaction in mixed high schools which observed Negro History Week. Could one not legitimately raise the question "Why not observe an American History Week in which contributions of various ethnic groups might be considered?"

Our work in cultural anthropology has indicated that no multi-ethnic culture can successfully survive unless there is general agreement among the ethnic subcomponents about the core values of the culture which transcend particular ethnic groups. Mono-cultures, characterized by people of a common racial stock, speech community, level of technology, and system of values, are not faced with this problem of unity in diversity simply because there is no diversity. The process of acculturation among European immigrants in the British Colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries permitted the

United States to begin its existence as an independent nation committed to the ideals of equality. Admittedly, the ideal has not been equally applied to all groups. The Indian was killed or pushed to the west to reservations; the Negro was kept in servitude. There is a long list of departures in practice from the professed ideal creating an American dilemma (Myrdal, 1944). But all evil does not reside in the United States.

A preoccupation with ethnic groups in one country or culture gives a distorted basis for ethnic studies. For example, the travail of Bangladesh consumed millions of lives; the more recent struggles between Hutu and Tutsi in Barundi have devoured thousands. These and other illustrations are not intended to imply that we should not be concerned with the problems of ethnicity in the United States. They do help to remind us, however, that the democratic ideal in the United States does function in the collective consciences of its citizenry: the Brown decision of 1954, the Civil Rights Act of 1965, the various compensatory programs of education, the emphasis on more equitable employment have been delayed both in time and remain imperfect in fulfillment. And, at the present time, the "rising tide of expectations" has created elements of disillusionment (van den Berghe, 1967) and undoubtedly stimulated conflict as traditional patterns of ethnic relations fall while new patterns remain to be created (Schermerhorn, 1970). Measured against 1950, or 1900, there are indications that the change process is taken place and that the acculturation which comes from the interaction of ethnic groups continues to take place.

Many ethnic studies of Indians and Negroes spend a disproportionate amount of time extolling the evils of white omission and commission. We, the generation of the 1970s, are all the heirs of this past. It would seem that

the focus of an ethnic studies program should be prospective in its emphasis, not retrospective. The lives of our children belong to the future, and the challenge is how to use ethnic studies to contribute to a better future for the living, and not to lament the dead. The undue stress from a past perspective creates what Schermerhorn (1967) calls a "victimology" model of ethnic relations. A victimology model permits only a one-sided consideration of secessionist and militant groups in various cultures (Wirth, 1945). It has been of limited utility in scholarly research. In the context of school curricula, the victimology model may create negative feelings in non-minority children by forcing them to accept responsibility for the acts of their antecedents. Appeals to the sense of fair play in the American present and a respect of ethnic diversity based on trait variation may be more effective, in the long run, than ethnic studies based on a model of victimization. Admittedly, the evidence supporting this approach, as with all other approaches to ethnic relations, is inconclusive (Blalock, 1967). However, cross culture comparison of universals and trait variation presents a model which permits a reconciliation of core values of the national culture with respect for ethnic diversity. Emphasis in school curricula should be placed on prospective factors which facilitate the integration of ethnic groups into their societies, rather than on the retrospective emphasis of how one group excluded another from participation.

The official designation of this ethnic study center at the University of Texas, El Paso, is the "Cross-Cultural Southwest Ethnic Study Center." The diversity of peoples and cultures in this area permit unusually rich opportunities for cross-cultural study. The cross-cultural curricula development approach I have stressed appears to be compatible with the framework and purposes of this center.

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